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

ALL THE YEAR ROUND,

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

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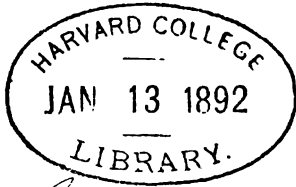
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POETRY.

THE EXTRA SUMMER NUMBER

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No. 431. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER III. BASIL AND I.

It was more easy to talk to Basil than to Nick. There was, I think, a more feminine vein, if I may say so, in Basil's nature. He had sense enough, with yet an inclination towards sensibility; and he was tolerant of nonsense—a girl's nonsense—when Nick would have been decidedly contemptuous. And Basil was appreciative of that sort of twilight between sense and nonsense, in which so many of us seem to live. He could understand that I did not mean quite all I said; that there was often jest in my earnestness, and earnestness in my jest. And he had a quick perception of the humorous. And that sort of faculty brings with it, I think, a great power of sympathy.

It would have been no good whatever my saying to Nick the things I said to Basil. Nick would only have scolded me; or have frowned and scowled, clenched his fists, and wanted to scold, or to punish someone else. In a quarrel it would be as well, perhaps, to have Nick on one's side. Otherwise, one might have a more agreeable companion.

He was a very good boy, however, was Nick; very staunch and straightforward. I should not like to say that he was clever or bright; yet it would not be fair to charge him with being stupid or dull. One thing—he was perfectly satisfied with himself. Whatever he did, or said, was

right to his thinking. I greatly envied him that condition of mind; clearly it made things about him so much more comfortable to him; and it enabled him to despise those who differed from himself.

I used to liken Nick to a horse in blinkers, seeing his own way perfectly, and proceeding directly upon it; but precluded from knowing much about the doings of others, or the objects upon either side of him. He couldn't understand why we did not all follow his lead; go where he did; do as he did. And he thought poorly of us because this was not possible to us.

"What had I to complain of?" Nick would demand. "Had I not food sufficient, and raiment, and a roof over my head?" He did not ask for more than that. He could not understand anyone asking for more. Why should I, of all people, ask for more? The only explanation he could think of was to the effect that I was a girl, and that girls were rather unaccountable creatures, not particularly gifted with reason; not knowing their own minds, if indeed it was certain that they possessed minds. He was of opinion that Mr. Leveridge was a very worthy gentleman; that Miss Leveridge was a very nice old lady; and that I ought to consider myself very fortunate that such excellent people had showed kindness to me.

I could not help studying and considering my brothers after this fashion—holding a sort of inquest upon them. We had been long separated, while I stayed with my aunts in Bath and they remained in London with my father. But we had parted as children—only knowing each other as children; that is to say, without much thought or understanding of each

other. We met upon altered terms. I was a woman, or nearly so. And time had told upon them; and perhaps trouble too. They were something more than boys now; young enough in many ways, no doubt, but rather old in others. Basil, whom I had left almost a baby—whom I had of old conspired with Nick to tease and depreciate—wore now a curiously grave expression, and spoke with a surprising air of wisdom and experience. But he was without Nick's confident, self-sufficient manner; to Basil it seemed probable that there were other rational opinions in the world beside his own, and two sides to almost every question. And he was less tall and handsome and robust than Nick. Basil was indeed very slight of figure, with a pale, thin face, lit up by very fine eyes; otherwise his features were ordinary enough. He almost looked as though he had outgrown his strength; for he stooped rather as he walked, and he was fond of crouching attitudes, curling himself up in easy-chairs, or bending over the fire. He was more of a student than a man of action. Yet he did not give himself dry, bookish airs. There was often a very merry light in his eyes, and he would talk pleasantly about all kinds of things. It was easy to forget now that he was younger than I was; certainly he was very much wiser. He had thought so much. To me it was oftentimes quite impossible to think.

That I loved my brothers I need hardly say. My love for them, indeed, was so much a matter of course that I have a difficulty in speaking of it. I suppose family affection has always about it something mysterious, inscrutable, inexplicable; it is so much part of oneself, of one's nature, that there is no reasoning upon it, or discussing its why or its wherefore. It had been as a settled conclusion with me, from my first intelligent moment, that I loved Nick and Basil, that I should always love them, and that they would love me. A cessation of that state of feeling was not conceivable. But, of course, the affection that united us did not hinder certain occasional divisions amongst us. We squabbled in our nursery times; now I sided with Nick against Basil; now with Basil against Nick; and now I stood alone, defying their opposition, joint or single. And as we grew up it was inevitable that differences of opinion should arise between us upon various topics. Nor could I resist sitting in judgment as it were upon my

brothers; weighing their merits or detecting their differences, and musing over their characters. Yet thus doing I could not charge myself with unsisterly conduct, or with departure from that original, natural position of affection for them I had occupied from my early entrance into the world. And so I took for granted that, as I did to them, so they did to me, and that they thought of me much after the manner of my thinking of them. I am certain that it never occurred to any one of us to charge the others with lack of affection or what is called "family feeling."

I had been talking to Basil, complaining of my life at Miss Leveridge's. He had listened to me with his usual patience, not looking at me as I spoke, yet appearing to consider attentively all I said.

"But you do not really mean that you are miserable? That is an exaggeration surely."

"I am not miserable as those who are destitute and starving are miserable, if you mean that. But I am miserable as a caged bird is miserable; the poor thing may be well fed and cared for, yet for all that it is tempted to beat itself to death against the bars of its prison. What is a girl like me to do, Basil, when she feels miserable?"

"Well, she can do various things. She can cry, for one thing."

"You are laughing at me. I have cried for one thing."

"Poor Doris! But you felt the better for it. Of course you did. Crying is a great privilege, which women should prize. A man may not cry; he is scarcely permitted even to complain."

"But besides crying and complaining, Basil, what am I to do?"

"Well, you can hope."

"I have hoped. I do hope; but nothing has come of it yet."

"But something may—something will—only hope mustn't be hurried. Change will come to you, as to all of us. May come, perhaps, sooner than you expect."

"What does that mean?"

"It has no special meaning. It is only a commonplace. Are you ambitious, Doris?"

"I don't know. I have no grand views, I cannot see that I have any great aims in life. I want only to live as happily as I can. I am not clever."

"You are clever enough, I think. It seems to me that you are cleverer than

most girls. But it is not perhaps a question of cleverness; at least there must be feeling behind the cleverness, forcing it into action."

"But what am I to do, Basil? What am I to do? You see we come back to that."

"It so much depends upon ourselves. You want success, prosperity, upon easy terms. Well, that is possible to you. You are a woman; marry a rich husband."

"A rich husband! That is easily said. Where is he to be found?"

"Well, I think he is already found."

"You mean ——?"

"Yes, I mean the person you think I mean."

I could not speak for a moment, and I felt that my cheeks were very red.

"Well?" and Basil looked at me with eyes that were rather curious and rather laughing, and yet anxious too.

"Mr. Leveridge?" I asked, though perhaps I had no need to ask.

"Yes, Mr. Leveridge."

"But, Basil, he is old, he is very ugly."

"But, Doris, he is rich, and he loves you."

"You are sure he loves me?"

"Are not you sure he loves you?"

"But, Basil, you would not wish me to marry Mr. Leveridge."

"It is not a question of what I wish or do not wish. You seek to change your way of life. Well, there is a way open to you. Marry Mr. Leveridge."

"Basil, I could not marry Mr. Leveridge."

"You have quite decided?"

"He has been very kind, he has been too kind. I owe him too much gratitude. I can never love him."

"Perhaps he does not ask or hope for your love. Perhaps he demands only permission to love you."

"Yes, to love me because I am like mamma. I don't care to be loved for such a reason as that."

"One reason is almost as good as another, if love results."

"But such love as that could not last. The foundation is too fanciful. Some day he would wake to the discovery that I was not really so much like mamma as he had believed me to be. And then his love would depart, and he would despise me, almost as much as I should despise myself."

"I think not. Love may be won by one means and retained by another. Say

he loves you in the beginning because of your likeness to our mother, whom he loved, it seems, a score of years ago. Well, surely in the end he would learn to love you for your own sake."

"Basil, I could never marry Mr. Leveridge. At least I don't think I could. No, no. I am sure I couldn't."

"May I count it as a settled thing?"

"Basil, if you were me, would you marry Mr. Leveridge?"

"My dear, if I were you, I would rather starve than marry Mr. Leveridge." He laughed quaintly; then he stooped down and kissed me. "But I am not ambitious, you see. I am not miserable; at least not particularly so. I don't look to meet with good fortune very suddenly—to win prosperity with a rush."

"What are you doing now, Basil?"

"For my living, you mean? Well, I am earning bread and cheese. Not much more than that; and I am obliged to go, as you see, with rather threadbare clothes. I write in Mr. Grisdale's new paper, *The Wacry*. And I sit next Uncle Junius—Mr. Junius Grisdale, I should say—who, as you know, plays the French horn, and I play the flute, in the orchestra of Sadler's Wells Theatre."

"That sounds humble."

"It is humble. Yet it serves my turn. I live by it."

"I'm afraid I couldn't be content with that. Even if I could play the flute—and I can't. What does Nick think of it?"

"Nick thinks it low—decidedly low; Nick, who is a clerk in a bank at the East-end. The other night he sat in the pit—quite close to me—I could have touched him. He came with an order I had obtained for him. But he would not speak to me. He ignored me. He was a patron of the drama! I was one of the performers."

"Sometimes I think I should like to be an actress."

"For the money you would earn? The weekly salary?"

"Well, yes. I could only do it to earn money."

"Ah! It would be better to do it because you felt something within you impelling you; because you couldn't help doing it; because you had put your whole heart and soul in it; because it seemed to you the finest, noblest, grandest thing in the world to do."

"I don't think I could feel about it like that."

"Perhaps not. It may involve a touch

of genius to be able to think about it like that."

"I haven't that touch of genius."

"Perhaps not."

"And yet it is not indispensable to success?"

"There may be success without genius, of course; indeed there is a great deal of success which is quite independent of genius. And sometimes genius doesn't prevent the occurrence of failure."

"How could I become an actress, Basil?"

"Well, you would have to learn the business; for, after all, it is a business; and not a very easy one, to my thinking. But there are masters and teachers of the craft who would instruct and prepare you, if you were in earnest, or only half in earnest. There is Mr. Toomer Hooton, for instance."

I had not heard his name before. Basil now told me, how that he met Mr. Toomer Hooton in the Bench—when poor papa was a prisoner there—that he was a professor of elocution, and prepared pupils for the stage. Basil, it appeared had, after a long interval, again encountered Mr. Toomer Hooton, whom fortune had of late been treating with some kindness.

"I think I should like it, Basil."

"My dear, I don't think you would."

"But surely it would be better than marrying Mr. Leveridge?"

"But that is not the only alternative. We have been talking at random, Doris. We may even be doing injustice to Mr. Leveridge." He was speaking now in a more serious tone. "We were wrong perhaps—I was wrong in any case—to jest upon such a subject. I have, in truth, the greatest respect for Mr. Leveridge. He has been to us a kind and good and true friend."

"I own it," I said. "But if he asks me to be his wife, it will be very trying to me, Basil."

"Well, well, perhaps he doesn't mean to ask you; or he will not, if he reads objection in your face. Men may love and yet hold their tongues, I suppose. Sometimes love is a secret that is never told. Even death does not disclose it; it goes to the grave unrevealed, locked up in a heart that has ceased to beat for ever."

I had never heard him speak so earnestly before. He went on in a calmer fashion.

"I should be sorry if he felt his disappointment very gravely, as he would, assuredly. And yet it is impossible for

me to wish success to his suit—if it is to be called a suit. There will be little sympathy in store for him, anyhow or anywhere. He will be laughed at perhaps, if people come to hear of it. And no doubt it is difficult to think of romance and sentiment in association with such a man. And yet, poor old fellow, I can't but pity him. And he is famous in his way, you know, Doris; really a great artist. We must deal as tenderly with him as we may. Spare him, as much as you can, Doris, should he speak to you of his love—promise me that. Be gentle with him. Don't, for heaven's sake, wound him with ridicule. After all, a man's love is no slight thing—even though the man be of Mr. Leveridge's age, and possess his very strange looks."

"He is so very like Punch," I said with a laugh I could not resist. Basil smiled rather sadly.

"He is very like Punch. I thought so from the first moment I ever saw him. All the same, Doris, he is not made of wood."

CHAPTER IV. TITIAN AND VANDYCK.

I HAD other conversations with Basil, to much the same purport. For my sense of weariness and dreariness was not to be dismissed or repressed. I grew quite vexed by the sight of Miss Leveridge's meek, sleek, white rabbit face. Her feeble, timid, nerveless airs, irritated me. I longed almost to slap her, just to see if she could not be stimulated into some show of animation and revolt. And I yearned to lead another sort of life, for change of scene. I felt stifled in Powis-place, weighed down by its stillness, its dulness, its monotony. I longed for liberty, activity. I wanted to get on—as men get on—by energy and movement of mind and body.

Mr. Leveridge encouraged me to continue my painting, and spoke kindly of the progress I had made; but indeed, he never spoke to me otherwise than kindly upon any subject. He aided me in my studies. It was due to his agency that I obtained admission as a student to the National Gallery. Perhaps he thought the change might benefit by amusing me, for he must have known that unrelieved association with his sister was too tedious to be long endured. My pretensions as an artist he did not rate highly, I feel assured. But, of course, he was unable to accompany me to the Gallery upon every occasion. Should I be afraid, he asked, to go there alone, to

stay there alone? Certainly not! What was there to fear? "You are not timid, I know," he said with a smile. And he seemed to imply that I might even be fairly described as bold.

"Not but what," he added, "your mother was a very delicate, shrinking woman, pallid and fragile, and bending like a lily in a storm. And you have grown to be like your mother—in some things, not in all. Basil is more like her about the eyes; and he reminds me of her in his looks and ways at times. And yet Basil is plain to be the son of so beautiful a mother. For poor Phillis was very beautiful."

It was at the National Gallery I first met M. Paul Riel.

He was engaged upon a large copy of the Bacchus and Ariadne of Titian. He worked leisurely, as it seemed, in a calm, cool, almost uninterested way, and yet he really made very rapid progress. He appeared to know exactly what to do, and when to leave off. I was much struck by the vigour, and the spirit, and the certainty of his method of execution. From glancing now and then, I took to observing him more and more intently, until I found myself quite absorbed in studying the quick growth of the picture under his hands. He had secured an accurate outline—to this he had clearly devoted time and pains—but now he was plying his brushes with a sort of triumphant adroitness. I felt that I obtained a fuller enjoyment of the original, in seeing the gradual accomplishment of the copy. I had often before noted the beauty of the work; its poetic air of revelry; the harmony of its lines; the grace of its composition; the lovely lustre of its colour. I seemed to prize these in a more artistic spirit from seeing them, as it were, severally produced and conducted by the dexterous hand of the young painter I was to know presently as M. Riel. The picture had before affected me as a whole; but each portion of it now asserted its individual power to impress. The rich landscape with the distant sea, whereon is to be discerned the galley of the departing Theseus; the beautiful figure of the hapless Ariadne, shrinking timidly as the joyous Bacchus, returning from a sacrifice, with a train of nymphs, fauns, and satyrs, leaps from his chariot to address her. The drunken Silenus, crowned with vine-leaves, and laden with grapes, follows, riding upon an ass. Above is the constellation of the

golden crown, bestowed upon the princess as the bride of Bacchus.

The painter worked on. He did not or would not note my presence. Without doubt he was aware that I was watching him, for he was not wholly engrossed by his occupation. There was something even careless in his manner, as his brush wandered hither and thither apparently at random, but really with the firmest intention. His head rocked a little as though following the motions of his hand; and now and then his lips were drawn together, as though he were whistling idly.

I started when I found him speaking to me.

"Mademoiselle is an artist then?—Yes?"

I was too scared to answer. Yet his manner was most polite, and his voice very musical.

"But I need not ask. I can see for myself. The head of Gevartius—as it is called. Yes, it is a favourite study. Yes, and mademoiselle is engaged upon a very admirable copy in water-colours."

There was only a very slight trace of foreign accent in his speech, and his command of English was complete. He might even have passed for an Englishman, but for his care to articulate distinctly, and his habit of repeating the word "Yes"—now as a redundancy, and now interrogatively.

I felt that I had blushed, and was looking foolish. I scarcely knew what to say to him. I could not resent his addressing me, for I had almost brought that about by so persistently observing him, although hardly conscious of my own persistency; and then it had not occurred to me that he could be so fully aware of my presence.

"Yes," he said with a little laugh, "I have eyes at the back of my head."

It was as though he had power to read my thoughts.

"Mademoiselle was so kind as to contemplate my poor labours, and with interest. It was flattering to me. I tender my sincere homage and gratitude. And mademoiselle will pardon me that I took the liberty to speak to her. But—I could not refrain. Let my art—may I say our art?—be my excuse. And if I can be of service to mademoiselle, though it be only in the slightest degree—let her delight me by commanding me. I can paint—at least I can copy—it is my trade, my calling; it is almost the only thing I can do. I boast some experience. I am older, much older,

than mademoiselle—I shall be very glad and proud if I can help her, and if she will permit me to help her.”

This was very pleasantly spoken, and it pleased me the more for a certain steady composure and calmness that marked his manner. I felt that there was only politeness in his address to me, a desire to oblige; and that otherwise, there seemed to be but indifference towards me. I could not be sure that he even admired me; and—being young, and a woman—I perhaps searched his face for some look of that kind. In brief, he did not alarm me in any way, after my first feeling of perturbation, and I could not but forgive what seemed simply and kindly intended. Indeed, I thanked him for his offer of assistance, and explained to him, what scarcely needed to be explained, that I was no proficient; that I was compelled to proceed slowly; that I was conscious of my own faults and shortcomings. Viewing my Vandyck by the side of his Titian, I had small reason to be satisfied with my own performance.

“Yes, but you have been well taught,” he said. “Your papa or your professor—the little elderly gentleman who is here with you sometimes—he is not your papa? Ah, but he is a fine painter—a great man. I know of him. His carnations are worthy of Rubens, of Tintoret, nay, of Titian himself. Yes, under his instruction you will go far. You will little need assistance from me or from others. This is a fine Vandyck—the head has been ascribed to Rubens, but that is, I think, an error, It is commonly called Gevartius—another error. Vandyck died in 1641, when John Caspar Gevaerts, or Gevartius, the Flemish philosopher, was but forty-eight. This is the head of a man some twelve years older. A very noble head, with a touching pensive expression. A brave man who has thought and suffered—a gentleman—most picturesque. Observe his shapely features, his fine, gray, wavy hair, his broad, firm forehead, his lace frill resting upon his deep black dress, his gray moustache and pointed beard, his tender, dreaming, liquid blue eyes. Such a man should have a history. Yet no one has ever told it of him. He remains unknown. There is uncertainty about his name—dispute as to his identity. It is even thought that he may be but a Dutch burgher, Cornelius Vander Geest, an amateur of the fine arts, and a friend of Rubens. However, to have been the friend of Rubens in-

volves a certain distinction. You admire the picture? I sympathise with your admiration. You selected this to copy out of all the examples here? Well, that is the usual way with students. They copy this Vandyck, often, very often, too often, perhaps. They think it is easy to copy, and it looks easy, for it is simply painted, although by a master's hand. Yes, but to catch expression is very hard, and this work depends upon its expression. That is what really impresses you, and occupies you, and even haunts you, always, afterwards. For your copy, well, yes, it is of promise.”

I felt obliged to him for his sincerity in that he had refrained from awarding higher praise to my drawing. I was sensible of its many imperfections. I said as much.

“Ah, yes, you have wearied a little, and your task has troubled you. In such case you should rest from your work for a while, that you may return to it with freshened eyes, with restored powers. Yes, it is with the eyes we paint, as much as with our hands. When fatigue comes, or a sense of disappointment, it is time to rest. When you take a dislike to your work the fault is often in yourself, not in the picture. You leave it wrong, as you think. You return to it, it is right! The defect was in the painter, not in the poor picture. Now see, I may touch on your work? Yes? Ah, but it is a liberty I take; mademoiselle will never pardon me. But there, your hand has weakened and the colour has become confused. But there, with a fresh brush, it is already better, is it not?”

As he spoke he had with a few adroit strokes brought my drawing to look far more shapely and correct. And he had dismissed from it a certain crudeness of colouring, due to my unskilled system of art, which had, for the moment, discouraged my further progress. I thanked him sincerely for his assistance.

“Ah, mademoiselle, it is nothing. You overestimate my services. They are indeed, trifling. If gratitude be due to me—but, indeed, none is due—let it take the form of permitting me to serve mademoiselle again. I shall rejoice in the opportunity. But mademoiselle will soon have little need of my poor aid. I am no great artist, mademoiselle. But, of course, you have never thought so for one moment. I am a copyist only. I am skilled, so far, it is true. But there is nothing of

the divine gift about me. I am without imagination, invention, fancy. In art I am a mere mechanic, an artificer, a tradesman, a shopkeeper. I could paint portraits, possibly, if sitters came to me, but they do not. For the rest, I can paint only what is placed before me to paint, as, for instance, this Titian. It is a divine work, but the divinity is in the original not in the copy. I am to be hired to perform these offices, for so much. A few pounds and I copy this, that, anything, everything. This is for Mr. Plumer, the Honourable Mr. Plumer, a member of your Parliament House; a patrician and yet a demagogue, a combination that is privileged to exist in England only. Mademoiselle will pardon my frankness, my talkativeness. I have been led to say so much, to speak of myself. I scarce know why. It is due to mademoiselle's kindness and forbearance, upon which I have trespassed far too much. Adieu, mademoiselle. May I trouble you with my name? It is Paul Biel. Mademoiselle will soon forget it, very likely. If she remembers it but for ever so little, I shall be grateful."

"And my name is Doris Doubleday," I said. "I thank you very much for so kindly helping me to-day. Good-bye, M. Riel."

"Adieu, mademoiselle."

He looked as though he would have pronounced my name, if he could, and we parted.

FROM THE STATES.

AMERICAN newspapers, with their narrow columns of small type breaking out unexpectedly with startling lines in capitals, with their Websterian spelling, their odd phrases, and their lavish introduction of strange new words, are trying reading to unaccustomed English eyes. But the toil is well rewarded. We may learn something of our cousins from books; but, to understand them—to see them as they see themselves—it is to the newspapers of the day that we must go; and, while thus making ourselves really acquainted with America and the Americans, we are pretty sure to learn some things about ourselves and our own land, which were never dreamed of in our philosophy.

It is not generally known to Englishmen that Queen Victoria has invested the bulk of her savings in real estate in New York, and owns a handsome property on

Broadway. Nor are they possibly aware that we are so dissatisfied with the national coinage as to be ready to hail the establishment of the American dollar as the common currency unit, so that we may be brought into unity with the people of the United States. We fear that unity will not be furthered by the knowledge that Uncle Sam tolerates the existence of a Fenian Volunteer Corps, enrolled, not to fight, but to demoralise our gallant soldiers and sailors, and destroy our barracks; and allows Mr. O'Donovan Rossa to levy contributions in aid of a skirmishing fund for the equipment of men ready to sacrifice their lives in striking England a blow she shall feel and remember. Already, it is said, a hundred of these skulking heroes have left America to work us mischief. Fifty betook themselves to New South Wales, and, aided by a Yankee skipper, enabled the Fenians in durance there to escape and reach New York in time to assist at the production of Tullamore, or the Boys of '98, at the Bowery Theatre; the patriots being escorted to the theatre by the officers of the Irish Legion and Mutual Alliance Honour Guard. The other fifty have as yet made no sign, although their friends credit them with causing the explosion on board the Thunderer, by mixing dynamite with the coal supplied to the ironclad. When interviewed on the subject, O'Donovan Rossa neither denied nor admitted the impeachment, but smilingly observed, that the war committee was very well employed. It is well to know that profitless murder is still delightful to the Fenian mind. It is well to know, too, how admirably the British Government is served abroad. Our readers have heard of General Ignatieff's scheme for partitioning the Sultan's dominions. Well, that diplomatist's establishment contained a French governess, a handsome, gay, coquetish girl. To her did a shrewd young attaché of the British Embassy pay assiduous court, and often did he steam out with her into the Bosphorus, on board the yacht belonging to the British Government. Divining her admirer's purpose, the lady determined to make the most of her opportunity, and soon came to an understanding with him. Some say she demanded ten thousand pounds—whatever she asked she had; and, in return, handed the attaché the famous document which she contrived to abstract from the file of the Russian Legation. A special mes-

senger carried it to London, and photographic copies of it quickly reached the foreign ministers of France, Austria, and Germany. The principal actors in this diplomatic drama left Constantinople for Calcutta as man and wife; and when the story was told to Marshal McMahon, he exclaimed: "Faith, it was the Crimea over again! France hauling the English chestnuts out of the Turkish and Russian fire!"

After such a pretty bit of fiction it is unpleasant to become acquainted with the very ugly fact, that slavery still exists under the stars and stripes. Let not the friends of our ebony brothers be alarmed; the only slaves in America are white ones. By the law of North Carolina, all persons unable to maintain themselves are subjected to a certain term of imprisonment, and then put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder for twelve months, to be employed by him in any capacity he thinks fit. Last year, at a sale in Jones County, a Mrs. Nancy and her three children were knocked down to an illiterate negro, at the price of five and a half dollars a month; another white woman went to a black master at the same rate; a blind man, with a wife and large family, found a coloured owner for five dollars a month; while Alfred Davis, being afflicted with a cancer, went at a dollar less. A number of other unfortunates were sold to white farmers. The commissioners, under whose authority these auctions are held, being all of one political party, are, we read, particularly severe upon every one of Democratic proclivities, but tender to a degree with the poor belonging to the Republican party—if eligible as a voter.

The mercy denied to poverty is wasted upon crime. Better steal than starve; better kill than steal. Said a lately-released murderer: "I never did a minute's work in the prison in the six years, and never took a mouthful of the prison food. I paid for all I got, and might have lived cheaper at Delmonico's." As he came out of Auburn prison, "his diamond studs sparkling in his shirt bosom," a crowd of sympathising admirers greeted the good-looking fellow who had killed his man—not in fair fight. Boys and girls, market-women and loafers of every degree, cheered him as he entered his hotel; and one Irish enthusiast, as he shook his hand, cried: "God bless ye, my boy! come wid me; there's nothing in my house too good for yees!" A woman, found guilty of

murdering her husband, is tried again six months afterwards, acquitted, and set free. "Criminals," writes an indignant journalist, "who submit to the temporary inconvenience which is called 'being brought to justice,' are not to be pitied. They have killed men whom they hated, or have stolen money where they could, or have committed some other technically illegal act which they felt a strong impulse to commit. Thus they have fully gratified their desire, and achieved the ends they most earnestly sought. For this they pay the ridiculously small price of a few weeks' residence in a prison, and the subsequent notoriety of a public trial. The final result being that the jurors call them temporary lunatics; or the complaisant deputy-sheriff assists them to some foreign clime, where there are no extradition treaties to annoy them. Such men are to be called successful rather than miserable. If murderers were hanged, or those who steal millions were sent to the state prison, the fleeing felon caught by the police would indeed be a miserable man; but we do not manage things in that way." How things are managed is told in an official report upon the causes of the increase of crime in New York. Thieves and bad characters are habitually protected by the police-captains, who receive from them large sums of money; the detectives, for similar weighty reasons, stand between criminals and their punishment, and give them their constant and systematic aid; magistrates are elected who possess no legal knowledge; and prison officials prey upon the prisoners committed to their charge, one gaol being especially "a money-making machine for the sheriff."

It is a far cry from New York to San Francisco, but there would not seem to be much to choose between them. We had, for private reasons, hoped otherwise, and were delighted to find our favourite journal lauding 'Frisco "as one of the best-conducted of cities, blessed with an admirable government and a low rate of crime;" but a few hours later, opening a San Francisco newspaper, the first words we lighted upon were: "Although we have some of the best laws in the world for the repression of crime, nowhere is it more open. It would make your hair stand on end to witness one night's carnival in our fair city. Murder, manslaughter, and suicide are daily occurrences; gambling, in all its forms, abounds. Unlimited greed destroys the minds, the morals, and the

lives of our citizens." In another column we are told a rich man may do anything, and yet meet with tender consideration; a poor man must walk straight, or the felon's cell awaits him. A fancy young man embezzles silver spoons and "other jewelry," valued at eighteen thousand dollars. He is regarded as an aristocratic prisoner, and furnished with a room as nice, snug, and private as his own parlour. No charge is entered against him. He waits, like a gentleman, some chance to compromise and buy his way out without disgrace, that he may plunder somebody else. Another very respectable offender, married into a fine family, forges a cheque, gets the money, and is caught. He is detained in one of the nice parlours till the money is forthcoming to pave his way to liberty. San Francisco may well abound in rogues, for so lax are its prison regulations, that it is chronicled as something extraordinary that a noted bad character should be kept within the prison walls during the whole term of her sentence, former jailers having always let her out in the daytime! No such tenderness is displayed towards naughty Chinamen; they are ruthlessly despoiled of their pigtailed for the benefit of the jailers, who sell the cherished appendages to the hairdressers, for conversion into "waterfalls" for the adornment of Californian belles. John is in very ill odour just now. Restaurant-keepers advertise that all Chinamen have been kicked out of their establishments; and a newspaper editor, threatened with an action for circulating a scandalous story, writes: "We never said it was true, and we are certain no jury will convict, as the article was published solely to prevent the employment of the heathen Chinese in respectable families."

If California's capital is badly ordered, that of treeless Nevada is in still worse case, being sadly afflicted with "Hoodlums," or modern Mohocks. The chief constable of Virginia lately told his men they must fill the house of correction with these white Sioux, "who, commencing with stoning Chinamen, proceeded to felonious assaults upon citizens, and culminated in murdering for the pleasure of killing; hunting their prey in packs, like wolves, equally cruel, but more cowardly than the brutes they imitate, leaving good citizens amazed and paralysed at their merciless doings, and wondering why they cannot be stamped out." Judge Lynch will probably take the Hoodlums in hand, if his legally-

appointed brethren continue to treat them with leniency. The latter can be severe enough sometimes, to judge from the punishment meted out to one Felix Montrose, a youth with long, luxuriant locks, and a dreamy orb, charged with disturbing the peace and quiet of a boarding-house, by playing a cornet at unseasonable times. The keeper of the house deposed that, in a week, she lost a dozen boarders, some of whom refused to pay, on the ground that they had not enjoyed the comforts of a home, according to bargain. One lodger swore the cornet-player's performance was sufficiently excruciating to drive an ordinary man mad; another, that it led him to believe Montrose was training a choir of pups to sing centennial melodies; but he owned a man living in the next block would have no cause for complaint, provided he stuffed plenty of cotton in his ears. Pressed as to the quantity of cotton that would be required, he replied that an ordinary bale of New Orleans xx prime, might suffice for a couple of weeks, but if his ears were as large as those of his questioner—the counsel for the defence—it might take more. A witness who lived two blocks off deposed that, on hearing the noise one night, he got up to hunt for it, supposing it came from a cow he had lost some days before. This evidence was supplemented by a petition for the suppression of the musician, signed by three hundred and fifty property-owners living in the neighbourhood. The defendant called two witnesses. The first declared the music lulled him to sleep, but admitted his ear for music was not particularly good, and when counsel whistled the Beautiful Blue Danube, pronounced it to be Yankee Doodle. The second witness, who occupied a room adjoining that of the delinquent, swore that the cornet did not disturb him in the least. Asked by the court how long he had lived there, he replied: "I have never been kept awake at all, sir." As he persisted in ignoring the question put to him, he was fined ten dollars for contempt; the fine being remitted upon it being discovered he was deaf as a post or a restaurant waiter. Failing to controvert the evidence for the prosecution, the defence produced the instrument of torture, and tried to lay the responsibility on its defects. The court pronounced that Montrose had no right to use it, and "he was sent up for ninety days." He wished to take his cornet with

him, but, with a humane eye to the comfort of the prisoners, the court ruled otherwise.

Their ears may not be attuned to music, but, like the rest of their countrymen, the Virginians of Nevada like to have them tickled with tall talk, and the managers of their centennial rejoicings were careful to provide the indispensable poem and oration. The gentleman responsible for the latter had evidently profited by old father Taylor's advice to a speaker: "Get yourself chock full of your subject, and then knock the bung out, and let the ideas flow." He opened thus: "Mr. President and countrymen. I beg you to realise the sublime grandeur of this moment of time. Centuries clasp hands in our immediate presence. Time seals at this holy moment, as an accomplished fact, the grand experiment of our fathers. We who have carried in security the ark of the covenant of our fathers' faith, above the reach of the mad waves of foreign intrigue and domestic commotion, down to the eternal shores of the irrevocable past, now press with our firmer footsteps the golden coast of a new century of time. Time now stretches forth his hand to reverse the glass and shift the sands of centuries, and at this moment our gaze rests upon the beauteous dreamland of the future, radiant with the rainbow hues of peaceful promise, and behind us stretches far away the grand highway of our national progress. It winds amidst sweet valleys, and by silvery streams, each step of its course honoured by the deeds of heroes, and sanctified by the graves of martyrs. At its commencement point still gleam the beacons of our faith, flashing from the turrets of the temple of truth. In the soft light of their glow we behold the lilies of enduring love nodding in sweet holiness by the last resting-places of the just, and hiding with their merciful shadows the graves of the erring. Fame sounds her wildest trump of joy to-day. Hope spreads her proudest banner on the sky, and Faith inscribes anew thereon the maxims of Liberty: Man is capable of self-government. All men are free and equal!" An American writer, lamenting the lack of great authors in America, finds consolation in the fact that his country can boast ten orators to England's one. In the States, "distinguished speakers" are as common as remarkable men. A member of Congress who followed Mr. Cattlin's advice, and kept his mouth shut, would have

a bad time of it if he sought re-election. If he is unequal to speech-making, he must not let his constituents know it; and, thanks to the absurd privilege he enjoys of having a speech inserted in the official report before it has been delivered in the House, it is not difficult for a silent member to deceive his friends at home. When Bill Sloan, "a twelve-hundred-dollar Treasury clerk," was asked if he knew Judge Allen, who had made such a capital speech on the public expenditure, he replied: "Know him, yes, to my sorrow. I came to Washington with him after his election. The judge had a soft place. He was assigned a place on one or two committees, but never attended, his time being spent at a second-rate tavern playing euchre, at which he is an adept. One day he called upon me, and said: 'Bill, I am getting letters from my people, demanding I shall speak on the question of the acquisition of California. You must get me out of the scrape, by writing me a speech. Do it in splendid style, and I'll give you three hundred dollars.' At the end of a week he got the speech. Did he deliver it in the House? Not a bit of it. During the rush of business one day, he obtained permission to have his speech printed. Every day brought him congratulatory letters. He came to me, chatted over old times, and then the critter said: 'Bill, do you play euchre?' 'Occasionally.' 'Well, I owe you three hundred dollars, and will play you three straight games, whether it shall be doubled or wiped out.' The speech-making debt was wiped out. Now, you were talking about that national expenditure speech of his; that, my boy, is mine. The judge owes me three hundred dollars for it. He wants to euchre me out of the money, but I have told him to pay up, or I'll let all his constituents know the history of these speeches. I fancy he'll pay."

Strange are the exhibitions sometimes provided for the delectation of the American playgoer. An actor and actress were lately "linked in matrimonial manacles," before an admiring audience at a Toledo theatre, and the first marriage ever solemnized—well, that is scarcely the word—let us say, contracted, at Dearwood, took place on the boards of the theatre there, at the conclusion of the first piece. The curtain rose and discovered the members of the company ranged on each side of the stage; the centre being occupied by Mrs. McKelvey, attired in elegant evening

costume, and Mr. Morgan, "jauntily attired," as became a bridegroom. Judge Kingkendell officiated with grace and dignity, and then, "omitting the kiss, shook the hands of the pair, and the curtain fell." People who show such little respect for the holy state have no notion of taking one another for better or worse, till death doth them part, and naturally expect to be enabled to dissolve partnership when they grow tired of each other's company. It is true the law differs in different states; but that matters little, since lawyers advertise their readiness and ability to procure divorce, quietly, anywhere—"no pay till divorced;" and their services seem to be in demand, especially among the ladies. Of six wives who obtained divorces the same day in a Nevada circuit court, one was set free on account of her husband's cruelty; one by reason of his intemperance; and four because their worse halves "failed to provide." Wives disinclined to proceed to extremities, take the milder course of securing a licence to trade on their own responsibility. One lady sets forth in her petition for that privilege that her husband, being of a speculative, venturesome disposition, has lost all his means by unfortunate speculations and extravagances; but as he treats her well, excepting as regards finding means to support her and the children, she does not desire to be parted from him, but wishes to trade on her own account, and conduct a millinery and dress-making establishment, and a dry goods and liquor business, upon a cash capital of sixteen hundred dollars. Mrs. Irene Chatterton, advertising her intention of applying for a licence, shows even less fear of having too many irons in the fire, for she announces that she purposes buying and selling real estate and mining stocks, keeping a boarding-house, a boarding-school, and a fancy store, carrying on the millinery business, and trading in hardware. Mrs. Beckstoff, of Virginia, Nevada, appears to have divorced herself without troubling the lawyers at all, for her deserted spouse advertises: "To whom it may concern. My wife, Arabella Beckstoff, having left my bed and board, I hereby give notice, that if any other man will take charge of her, away from the aforesaid b. and b., I will cheerfully bear one half of all reasonable expenses for her maintenance, and will consider that I have a very good joke on Snyder."

The last sentence is a bit of slang, of which there is plenty in the mining states. At a meeting of an anti-slang club organised by the young ladies of San Francisco, one of the members, making use of the expression "awfully nice," and gently reminded that she was talking slang, retorted: "I wouldn't say anything if I were you; you told Sallie Sproggins, just now, to pull down her basque!" "No I didn't. Sallie will say I didn't; she won't go back on me!" Here the president intervened, by enquiring what was the object of the society? "To discourage slang," cried a dozen voices. "Kerect," said the president, "go on with the funeral!" Then a member rose to say she had been fined, but hadn't the stamps with her, but would settle, in the sweet by-and-by. "All right," said the president, "pay when you have the ducats." A young lady wished to know if a member could call her beau "just old splendid?" "You bet she can't," was the decision. Whereupon the querist moved that Miranda Pew come down with the dust, for having paid her lover the said compliment. This roused Miranda to remark: "If my beau was such an old hairpin as your fellow is, I wouldn't say it." The quarrel spread, spite of the president entreating her fair friends to shoot the chimning; and the meeting broke up in disorder to a chorus of mixed phrases, such as "Dry up!" "Nice blackberry you are!" "Hire a hall!" A Californian reporter relates a story of an old man who got out of a railway-car, "to spin round on his own personal curvature;" and a Californian authoress claims favourable consideration for her book on the plea that she has never dead-headed. What she means we learn from a paragraph headed, "Dead-heading in Nevada," telling how, upon the arrival of a train at Virginia-station, an Indian left it, entered a shed, stripped off his leggings, moccasins, and other aboriginal belongings, and put on the garb of civilisation. He then took a bottle of water out of his bundle, wet a handkerchief, and wiping his face with it, became a white man who had stolen a free ride from Remo, it being customary to allow Indians a free ride, providing they sat on the platform.

Reading a centennial oration, one might, indeed, suppose that Americans were a happy band of brothers, anxious to make their land the wonder and envy of the world; but, alas, their political orators and political writers have laboured in

vain, if they have not convinced us that one half their countrymen are traitors and the other half thieves; and that, whatever may be the upshot of the fierce contest of 1876, the presidential chair will be occupied by a thorough-paced scoundrel. Abuse is the one weapon of political warfare. One of the best written of New York journals complained that there was a great deal too little honest discussion of principle, and a great deal too much disgusting personal abuse, and declared it was foolish to deny it, and unpatriotic not to try and better it; and then immediately proceeded to accuse one of the presidential candidates of taking a false oath for the purpose of defrauding the Treasury, and call him the political agent of public robbers, "neither a wise man, a humane man, or a honest man." Perhaps the accused consoled himself with the reflection that men of greater fame than himself had cheated Uncle Sam of his dues. Washington Irving's name figures on the official list of defaulters respecting public moneys, his account as minister to Spain showing an unpaid balance of three cents; while a general, still serving his country, is its debtor for a third of that sum. In the same record Great Britain, on account of some transactions prior to the war of 1812, remains indebted to the United States to the tune of three dollars—a debt that might be wiped off in consideration of the United States Treasury having one of the three millions of the Alabama indemnity still to the good, although it has been distributed so liberally that, in New Bedford alone, two hundred houses have been built by seamen with their share of the plunder. Forty years ago the Clockmaker vowed: "The English are the boys for tradin' with; they shell out their cash like a sheaf of wheat in frosty weather." And his countrymen have golden reasons for endorsing the sentiment with a "That's so!"

BURIED.

We stand upon the churchyard sod and gaze
 Into the grave of our beloved dead;
 We hear the solemn words of prayer and praise;
 We mark the yew-trees waving overhead;
 We see the sunshine flicker on the grass—
 The green grass of the graves—and daisies white;
 Adown the lane the village children pass,
 And shyly pause to watch the holy rite.
 Deep in the earth upon the coffin-lid,
 Lies the last gift despairing love could make,
 White, scented blossoms, that must soon be hid
 With all we loved, from eyes and hearts that ache.
 Love, strong as life, was powerless to save;
 We can but strew fresh flowers upon the grave.

Yet in this grave, tear-moistened and new-made,
 Where we must leave the happiness of years,
 May not a worthier sacrifice be laid

Than even our fairest flowers or wildest tears?
 If we should bury with the pure white bloom,
 A cherished folly or a secret sin,
 It might make holier the silent tomb,
 Deepen the peace the dead lies folded in.
 Oh, mute, cold grave! that doth receive our lost,
 And with our lost the offerings of our love,
 Take these things also; we do count the cost,
 And God in heaven doth, looking down, approve.
 Sleep, darling, sleep; pray God that dies with thee
 Which might have parted us eternally!

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

DAME BRITANNIA—under whose image on our coins the fair Stewart's portrait has been handed down to posterity—when she can spare time from ruling the waves and other congenial pursuits, gives much attention to the delicate scales found in the uppermost storey of that proverbial hive of industry, Somerset House. These favourite scales of Dame Britannia are so daintily made that they weigh not in ounces or drachms but in milligrammes; the balance rests on a razor-edge and will weigh a hair. Over them preside two gentlemen well-known in the scientific world, Mr. Bell and Mr. Richard Bannister, who with their assistant cherubs sit up aloft, and watch over the dark ways and vain tricks of those who seek to get the weather-gage of Dame Britannia, her revenue cutters, her offices of Excise and Customs. For Britannia, sometimes rash in spending money, is—perhaps on that very account—a mighty shrewd hand at collecting it. On the distiller, the rectifier, the tobacconist, she lays her hand by no means lightly. She pokes her helmeted head into huge distilleries, and those more modest establishments wherein the noble peasant produces his potheen. With equally impatient foot she kicks at great tobacco manufactories and petty long-shore shops, where lurk negrohead and cavendish innocent of the government label. She flashes her mighty shield in the eyes of great exporting brewers, and plunges her trident into the maltster's cistern. Beneath her ægis she has for some few years past nourished the skilful chemist who, when she has made her captures, cuts up and dissects them, boils them, distils them, burns them, puts them literally and metaphorically under the microscope, and weighs them in impartial and unconscious balances.

It is some five-and-thirty years since Britannia first called in the chemist to her

aid. At that period the dame was a sorely defrauded and injured individual. Her sons treated her as if she were a mother-in-law. They rode rough-shod over her Customs and made light of her Excise. They laughed at the penalty of "Exchequering," and smoked annually hundreds of tons of tobacco which had never paid duty to the goddess. The treacherous waves over which she imagined she ruled helped largely to cheat her of her dues. Between the great ships, English and foreign, which sailed into the Thames and the long, low shore, plied countless boats all engaged in the highly-amusing and remunerative sport of smuggling. Tobacco in bales and in barrels, in sacks and packages, was whisked ashore in swift wherries and innocent-looking lighters, and found a home everywhere. English manufacturers, that is to say, those who were not in league with Will Watch, rebelled against this state of things. Their patriotism was outraged, their pockets were emptied, and they rose in defence of their rights as Britons. They pointed out that they were undersold and ruined by cheap smuggled goods, and demanded that the stringent rule of the Excise should be relaxed in their favour. Their prayer was heard, and they were allowed to use materials to aid the manufacture of tobacco other than the leaves of trees and plants. Dock, burdock, lettuce, cabbage, and—the latest improvement of all—rhubarb, were still forbidden; but for a while other ancillary substances were allowed. Minds sharpened by keen commercial competition were quick to perceive that while tobacco cost as much as three shillings and fourpence or fivepence duty paid, Will Watch might be successfully competed with by increasing the weight of the legitimate articles by the addition of molasses, liquorice, and other cheap articles. It is a well-known fact that the original weight of silk can be, and is, enormously increased by the addition of black dye—that it can be made by the dyer to turn any required weight. By parity of reasoning tobacco manufacturers arrived at the conclusion that sixty per cent. of liquorice or molasses, worked up with their tobacco, would give them a chance of fighting against the smuggler and making a profit. It happened as they expected, but Britannia's watchful eye soon perceived that the loss to her revenue by smuggling—though severe enough—was a small matter compared with that caused by the loss to the Excise by aug-

mentation or adulteration—whichever the reader pleases. On looking over her accounts Britannia saw that the importation of tobacco was falling off by millions of pounds per annum; the previous Act of Parliament was repealed and a new one passed, and the use of all substances prohibited except those essential to the manufacture of tobacco—to wit, oil and water. It is quite obvious that, so long as this Act was faithfully observed, the customer could protect himself against adulteration by the evidence of his senses, but it was soon found that extreme vigilance was necessary to protect the public against liquorice and molasses, without counting the leaves of the shrubs and plants before-mentioned. Hence the chemical department of the Internal Revenue, which speedily disclosed that the list of adulterants for cut tobacco was of hideous length. Sugar and molasses were largely used, and occasionally gum, starch, liquorice, catechu, common salt, nitrate of potash, alum, Epsom salts, yellow ochre, green copperas, peat moss, oatmeal, malt commings, chicory, and the leaves of coltsfoot, endive, rhubarb, oak, elm, plane; and in some fancy tobaccos of lavender and mugwort. This ghastly list of adulterants was published in the official reports, but exercised not the slightest influence as a deterrent. The British smoker was just then developing that love for the weed which, among the classes pretending to some degree of culture, has partly taken the place of the worship of Bacchus. I cannot guess what the spirit of the author of the "Counterblast to Tobacco" would say to the astounding and continued increase of its consumption. No doubt the stupendous smuggling of thirty or forty years ago caused the "weight of tobacco cleared for consumption in the United Kingdom" to be very much less than the weight actually consumed; but admitting that smuggling has been somewhat reduced since 1841, the figures of to-day are astonishing enough. The registered consumption in 1841 was twenty-three millions, ninety-six thousand, two hundred and eighty-one pounds, or thirteen ounces and three-quarters per head of population, including every age and sex; while the last accounts made up record the amazing total of forty-nine millions, fifty-one thousand, eight hundred and thirty pounds; or one pound seven ounces and a half per head; the increase since 1869 being no less than one ounce and three-quarters per head. Women, children, and non-smokers being

deducted, these figures would swell to a very high average.

Britannia's balances then were first set to Britain in order to protect her pocket rather than the health of her children, for it is only of late that she has exhibited any solicitude as to the coats of their stomachs. Tobacco was, and is, a great difficulty; the high duty on an article of small intrinsic value offering an invincible temptation to Will Watch the land lubber, as well as to the seagoing representative of the Watch family. It would be difficult to pay a visit to the laboratory at Somerset House without finding there various samples of tobacco more or less—generally more—saturated with sugar, molasses, or liquorice. English makers grumbled so persistently about the competition of foreign-made and smuggled cavendish and negrohead, that Britannia again took pity upon them, and now allows them to manufacture these confessedly sweetened tobaccos "in bond," that is to say, in a workshop under her own shield; that the increase of weight from the added sweetness may be well and duly calculated, and the clever-housewife paid her proper percentage thereon; but awkward cases are perpetually turning up of tobacco, not labelled as it should be with her image and superscription, but quite in the rough, and saturated with liquorice—and—and other things. Britannia has little mercy on delinquents, and fines them severely, but not more than they can afford to pay, if they have carried on the trade undiscovered for a little while.

Beer, according to the Italian librettist, the source of the Englishman's haughtiness, gives much employment to Britannia's chemists. The malt-tax requires for its collection an army of supervisors and assistants, who lead the by no means free and independent maltster a terrible life. When barley is "malted" it increases in bulk, and almost endless measurements must be gone through before the duty, which amounts altogether to about two shillings and eightpence halfpenny per bushel, can be properly levied. This is rather a matter for the exciseman than the chemist and botanist, but there are complications which demand the assistance of the expert. A maltster occasionally malts a batch of bad barley—unsaleable in its finished condition—and then asks Britannia for a "drawback;" that is to say, he wants to be recouped in the amount of his duty. Now, as two shillings

and eightpence halfpenny per bushel represent a considerable profit on barley, it is, of course, worth while for a fraudulent maltster to "ring in" a quantity of unmalted grain, and claim his drawback thereon. Wherefore, his so-called malt is cautiously sampled and investigated before he is allowed his deduction, and the condemned malt must be mixed and ground up with linseed, to make sure that it cannot be used in any way for the manufacture of beer, but can serve only as food for cattle. A similar rule prevails as regards tobacco in the Customs Department. Leaf tobacco includes in its weight a considerable proportion of the "mid-rib" or backbone of the leaf; the removal of which leaves it in the condition of "strip." Now, except in the case of "bird's-eye," the eyes in which are composed of transverse sections of midrib, this rib is entirely useless. Tobacco manufacturers demand a drawback on the useless midrib, and their claim is allowed, but the said ribs must be ground to powder and sent out of the country before the drawback is allowed. Britannia will not permit midribs, like damaged tobacco, to be burnt in the Queen's Tobacco-pipe, but insists on their export—hence the enormous amount of "other snuffs" in distinction to the fancy sorts exported annually. I don't know what is done with this "other snuff," at which the poorest civilised snuff-taker would turn up his nose. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of it are exported annually, but whither does it go? To Africa, to the Islands of the Southern Sea, or to the bottom of the British Channel? Or is it, mayhap, "run in" again by W. W. or some of his friends, to the end that another drawback may be got out of it? Verily I know not; but this much is certain, that Britannia's chemists look very sharply indeed at the samples of drawback snuff submitted to them, lest it should have been augmented by foreign substances which would be cheap at three shillings and twopence per pound—the duty on unmanufactured tobacco.

Beer for export—or rather the drawback claimed on the malt employed in its manufacture—requires much nicety in its adjustment, and gave the late Mr. George Phillips and his successors no little trouble before they arrived at their present method. Under the ancient plan, beers for export were divided into two classes—strong and

mild; the higher drawback being, of course, allowed on the former. The sole test was the palate of the examining officer, who, after tasting the beer, decided whether it was strong or mild, and in accordance with the declaration. An idea may be formed of the value of this test from the melancholy fact that, whereas the active, intelligent, and expert officers employed in testing beers for export only detected, in the last year of the old system, one per cent. of incorrect declarations, the analyst discovered seventy per cent. in the following year. Under the new plan, the brewer declares the specific gravity and other particulars concerning his batch of beer for export, and all these points are carefully checked by an ingenious process of analysis, by which the quantity of malt extract remaining in the beer, and the amount which has been converted into alcohol and acetic acid, are ascertained, and the bulk of malt originally employed is accurately arrived at.

There are no difficulties with the export brewers now. Such discrepancies as occur between the government chemists and those employed by the brewers are very trifling, and point the moral, that human nature is very honest when kept so. The last remark may appear cynical, but a visit to the laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department is not calculated to inspire faith in the honour and disinterestedness of mankind. One thing appears certain, that indirect taxation by means of Customs or Excise is productive of an enormous amount of rascality. While pepper was subject to a heavy duty, adulteration was practised on a gigantic scale. Out of one hundred and forty-six samples examined in 1844, no fewer than one hundred and twenty-two were adulterated with rice, linseed-meal, chillies, the husks of red and white mustard, and a mixture "known in the trade" as P.D., and containing most of the articles mentioned. It will be understood at once that powdered rice and linseed-meal would lower the panguency of the pepper, which was restored by the addition of powdered chillies.

The almost complete suppression of illicit distillation has turned ingenious minds towards other methods of getting the better of Britannia's lawful dues. The article known familiarly as spirits of wine is largely used in various arts and manufactures, and was formerly manufactured mainly in private stills. When it was employed as a solvent for certain gums in the

manufacture of varnish and other materials, the duty represented an immense proportion of the entire cost. Ten shillings duty on an article which costs about one shilling and ninepence to produce is a tempting bait, and it was hardly denied that very little of the spirits of wine used in commerce paid excise. To get rid of this scandal and loss to the revenue, distillers were allowed drawback on spirits vitiated in bond to such extent that they became impossible for drinking purposes. After some experiments, it was decided that the debasement should be accomplished by means of wood naphtha—that the spirit should be "methylated." In the language of chemists, spirits of wine is "ethylic" alcohol, depending for its character on the presence of "ethyl"; while wood naphtha—the spirit produced by the perfect combustion of wood—is called "methylic" alcohol, from the presence of "methyl." The peculiar nauseousness of this form of alcohol suggested its employment for debasing spirits of wine, and it was agreed that the addition of one part of it to nine of the latter would be sufficient for the protection of the revenue. This operation has ever since been performed in bond, and the cheapness of methylated spirit has proved a sore blow to the illicit distiller. Finding his own trade knocked on the head, this ingenious individual has since tried his hand on methylated spirit, and has been within an ace of getting rid of the methyl, and producing a drinkable fluid. One thing is certain, that among a certain community in the East-end of London, large quantities of methylated spirit—more or less successfully cleansed—have been and are, drunk daily. It is also well-known that sweet spirit of nitre, and other pharmacopoeial preparations, can be made from the debased alcohol now so largely sold.

The protection of Britannia's pocket, as practised by Messrs. Bell and Bannister, is not entirely confined to exciseable articles. Samples of medical and other stores supplied to various departments, such as the Admiralty, the Board of Trade and the India Office, are duly tested and weighed in the balances at Somerset House. One of the most important of these articles is the lime and lemon-juice which, according to the Merchant Shipping Act, all vessels voyaging in certain latitudes are obliged to carry with them for the use of poor Jack. It was at first sorely against the grain that Jack took his ration

of lime-juice on board Britannia's war-ships, but the success of the "physic" was so complete that its use has been made compulsory in the Mercantile Marine. Not only must lime or lemon juice be carried aboard ship, but juice up to a certain standard of strength—i.e., containing the proper percentage of citric acid—and free from adulterants of all kinds. In some years there is great scarcity of lemon-juice sufficiently good for ships' stores. In 1874, for instance, large quantities of foreign-squeezed lemon-juice were presented for examination, but a considerable proportion had to be rejected, on account of its having been below the standard. English lemon-squeezers—the persons, not the wooden instruments known by that name—are now so well aware that only good juice will be accepted, that they seldom present inferior or diluted juice for examination, but the foreign "squeezer" has not yet seen the error of his ways. Foreign-squeezed juice is prepared with too much or too little care, as it frequently contains common salt, and is sometimes diluted with water. In the year just cited, foreign juices as compared with home-squeezed were rejected in the proportion of nearly two to one; yet, although more than twenty-three thousand gallons were rejected, no member of the trade questioned the accuracy of Britannia's balances—a feat that members of other trades are by no means unapt to perform. When the juice has passed through its trial successfully, it is, in the bonded warehouses, fortified with fifteen per cent. of proof spirit in order that it may "keep," and is then bottled, sealed, labelled, and sent on board to insure poor Jack against scurvy. To the end that he may have his lime-juice fresh and fresh, it is enacted that in no case shall it be in bottles containing more than two gallons, and in ships carrying twenty persons or fewer, quart bottles only are permitted. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1867 expressly commands that the master of the ship "shall serve it out himself, or cause it to be served out, at the rate of an ounce per day for each member of the crew so soon as they have been at sea for ten days"; and the medical officers "recommmend" that, when the juice is served out, it should be "mixed in the proportion of one fluid ounce of lime-juice and one ounce of sugar to not less than half-a-pint, and not more than a pint, of water, and that the mixture should be served out in sufficient quantity

to each mess or watch at the dinner-hour, so that it may be obtained by the crew in time to drink during their meal." To these properly stringent commands and recommendations is added a humorous aspiration of the medical officers that "Lime and lemon juice should be regarded, not as a medicine, but as a necessary article of ordinary diet." Perhaps, if the "fortification" were applied with a more liberal hand, Jack might in time be brought to consider the dose "ordinary diet," but fifteen per cent. of rum to an ounce of lemon-juice and half-a-pint of water makes a mixture, wholesome, no doubt, but "nothing like grog."

About four years ago a permanent arrangement was made with the India Office respecting the examination, at the Inland Revenue Laboratory, of samples for that department. This additional work has enormously increased the variety of the substances examined. Many hundreds of samples are sent yearly from the India Office, consisting of food—canned meats and soups, pickles, and preserves; disinfectants, clothing, numerous oils, lubricants, soaps, wax, varnishes, pigments, salts; metals, such as copper, and other articles, among which medicines occupy a prominent place. Since the practice of analysing these articles has been adopted there has been a marked improvement in their quality—a matter, in some cases, of literally vital importance. The medicines largely used in tropical climates should, on account of the difficulty of procuring them abroad, be of the best possible description and highest degree of purity. It was, however, soon discovered that cinchona bark was supplied of very inferior quality, being almost useless as a medicine; and, in one or two instances, the bark examined was not cinchona bark at all. Of the cinchona alkaloids—quinine and its congeners—some of the most expensive were adulterated with those of little commercial or medicinal value; and, in several cases, one kind was substituted for another, the "substituted article being invariably of less value than the one it was made to represent." Paint, too, is very liable to sophistication, the favourite adulterants being chalk and sulphate of baryta—substances which seriously affect the durability and the value of the paints. Beeswax, again, was found to be adulterated with tallow. A large quantity of wine was far below the quality of the sample submitted for tender, and one

sample of beer examined for the Admiralty was thirty per cent. lower in commercial value than it purported to be. These experiences naturally induced Britannia to inquire into the quality of other articles supplied for the use of her soldiers, sailors, and scribes. Ink and sealing-wax were examined; and in one parcel of the latter was discovered forty-one per cent. of earthy matter over the contract sample. Even paper has been analysed at the Government laboratory; and in one case supplied a vivid illustration of the great advantage of chemical analysis, in determining the commercial value of different commodities, as compared with the opinion of ordinary experts. The Post Office authorities having called attention to the insufficient strength of the stamped newspaper wrappers supplied by the Board of Inland Revenue, the contractor was requested to submit a sample of paper of equal weight, but of greater strength than the old. The extra price of the new paper, when calculated on the year's supply, amounted to a considerable sum, and, as it appeared excessive, the paper was submitted to practised paper examiners, who pronounced it not worth the additional cost. At the suggestion of the Secretary the papers were weighed in Britannia's balances. The result showed that the paper in use contained fifteen per cent. of earthy matter, which added to its weight but not to its strength. In the new paper this was replaced by fifteen per cent. of fibre. A microscopical examination of the two papers further showed, that the fibrous material of the new was longer and stronger than that of the old paper. This chemical and microscopical examination of the paper thus brought the practical expert to naught, and proved that the demand for extra price was amply justified by improved quality.

Britannia's own scales are not infrequently employed in deciding—according to the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875—when learned doctors disagree. It must not by this be imagined that the Government Laboratory is exactly a chemical Court of Appeal or Analytical House of Lords. Its opinions will not override those of other analysts, except in some cases of conflicting evidence. For instance, the analyst employed by the prosecution against a baker who has, or has not, put alum in his bread—a very delicate point to settle—against the milkman whose sky-blue is alleged to be watered, and the cheesemonger whose butter is of suspicious origin, may hold that the baker has un-

doubtedly employed alum, that the milkman has sold stuff containing not nearly the invariable proportion of solid matter; that the cheesemonger has largely intermingled not only water, but cart-grease and other horrors, with his best Dorset; while the rival analyst employed for the defence may hold that the bread contains no more than the proportion of phosphate of alumina natural to wheaten flour; that there is not much really known about milk and its solids; that the presence of foreign fats in butter cannot be detected by any analytical process known. Under these circumstances it is competent to either plaintiff or defendant to demand that samples shall be sent to Somerset House and analysed there, in order to assist the magistrate in arriving at a conclusion. It is not to be wondered at that difficult problems should now and then crop up under the Act just referred to. The possible quantity of alum existing in bread must be proved from the residue of alumina after the bread is burnt, and the slightest error in estimating this substance will cause a stupendous blunder in calculating the alum. Just now, opinions are divided as to the effect on the human frame of the exceedingly minute quantity of copper found in certain kinds of pickles, as well as on the butter and milk questions; on both of which the opinion of Britannia's own analysts is confronted by the great authority of Professor Wanklyn.

Leaving these scientific luminaries to settle disputed points among themselves, I depart from the Strand Laboratory not a little impressed by the nature of the work done there, and the practical teaching afforded to the students from the Surveying Department. During the last year more than fourteen thousand samples were examined by the skilful and industrious gentlemen whose mission it is to see that Britannia's grog is not watered, her pickles not poisoned, and her pocket not picked; in very plain English, to keep her children, at least in their dealings with her, up to a certain standard of honesty.

STANDING ARMIES.

THE enormous armaments under which every considerable state in continental Europe groans, and which press, like a nightmare, on the labouring breast of commerce, are quite of modern growth. It is quite true that the kings of an earlier day

hankered after standing armies; but it is equally true that those costly luxuries were beyond their reach. The great Asiatic monarchies—Assyria, Babylon, Persia—had not a single professional soldier on the muster-roll. Nor had highly-organised Egypt so much as a brigade or a battalion of men whose trade was war. The strength of these oriental empires lay in a martial nobility, ever ready to fight on horseback or in chariots, after the fashion of Homeric heroes, and in a submissive population, prompt to exchange hoe and sickle for spear and sling.

The gigantic force which Xerxes led forth from Asia for the conquest of Greece, and of that Europe, of which Greece was then the unconscious bulwark, might have been fitly described in the words of Prince Bismarck's caustic retort. It was no army, but a multitude of armed persons, alien to one another in speech, and garb, and colour, undrilled and undisciplined, and driven, like a mob of oxen, under the advancing standards of the Great King. Nor were their Grecian foes, then or long after, anything higher than a militia, in which archer, and slinger, and horseman, and heavy-armed hoplite, did temporary duty at the call, less of national, than of municipal danger.

Philip and his mighty son brought together the first real army that the world had ever seen. The Macedonian conquerors were the first to evoke the soldier-spirit, which has never since quite died out, and to teach the lesson by which Napoleon largely profited, that the recruits of vanquished or tributary countries, well officered and welded into a mass, will fight the battles of the victor. The Silver Spears of Alexander appear as the legitimate prototypes of the Old Guard, and the motley host which sacked Persepolis of that which forced its road to Moscow. Professional soldiery did not, however, always assert its superiority. It was a civilian army of Romans, fresh from the plough and from the workshop, which overthrew the Epirotes and chased Pyrrhus to his ships.

The wonderful campaigns of Hannibal, his rapid marches, the quick blows which he struck, and the peril of Rome, first suggested to the countrymen of Fabius and Scipio that the soldier, paid and trained to fight, was after all a defter instrument of strife than the wild warrior or even the armed citizen. The Carthaginian invader had won his triumphs at the head of foreign hirelings. Rome could

raise, for long terms of service, cohorts more manageable than those of which the ranks were filled by recruits of Roman blood. What was true of the Western, was still more true of the Eastern empire. Strange, in an ethnological point of view, was the medley of races drawn together under the Labarum of the rich emperor of Constantinople; Turk, and Hun, and Avar, German and Dacian, fighting side by side for a day's pay.

The great difficulty of the mediæval kings of Europe was to be kings in deed as well as in name. The feudal system, with all its bad points, had its good ones. The spears that a monarch summoned to war could be pointed against him in peace, when the flatterers that ever beset a royal ear suggested some illegal subsidy or benevolence. Had the Parliament of England relaxed its hold upon the national purse-strings—had the States General of France, or the Cortes of Spain, been earlier coaxed or cudgelled into compliance with the costly whims of a greedy and luxurious court—the fairest and most enlightened lands of Europe might have become what Persia is now, mere milch kine to a hard master.

Our own Richard of the Lion Heart, the French-speaking, crusading, poet-king—who never came to England but to get money by the sale of a score of charters, by ransom, capitulation, anything—valued his hired soldiers, Brabanters for the most part, far above his English six-weeks' army, good for a march and a battle, but hard to keep together at the end of its forty days. Magnificent Edward the Third ruined himself—and drained every friendly purse from Chester and London to Bruges and Florence—for the sake of the Dugald Dalgetties of every nationality, drawn together beneath the pennon of St. George, to reap the golden grain of the harvest that the island bowmen had sown at Poitiers and Cressy.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, soldiery was decidedly a very comfortable and lucrative trade, a business that brought in large profits and quick returns, which procured personal consideration for those engaged in it, and which, strangest of all, was attended with little risk. Any "tall fellow" of strong limbs, shapely presence, and bold brow, might, if he were but "a proper man of his hands," and adroit in military exercise, earn eight times the wages of a skilled mechanic. If he could buy, beg, or steal a horse, and

ride it when he had got it, his fortune was, indeed, made. At one time the hire of a cavalry soldier, armed and mounted at his own cost, ranged, in France at least, so extravagantly high, that, with regard to the actual value of money, it may be roughly calculated as within a few francs of what a commandant or major, with a battalion under his orders, now receives.

There was not much danger in the warfare of that period, to which belongs that wonderful Lombard battle, in which but two lives were lost, and those by the suffocation of unhorsed champions, smothered by the weight of their armour before the victors had time to unlace and unbrace them, and restore them to fresh air and daylight. The aim of the mercenaries was to capture, not to kill. They fought to screw the ransom out of beaten opponents, and had a fellow-feeling for one another, just as professional cricketers have now. They might, as a matter of business, cut a throat now and then, when wrong-headed prisoners proved too obstinate; and of course the wretched peasantry, among whom they lived at free quarters, met with scanty consideration from these well-salaried warriors.

The great source of profit to the soldier of the later middle ages was that he had a monopoly of his craft. Noble, gentle, or ungentle, he was at least a freeman, at a time when five-sixths of the population of Europe were slaves chained to the soil. He could hold up his head, speak his mind, and handle his weapon, when the half-starved tiller of the soil was afraid to call his crops or his cottage, his wife and his children, his own. And as, very gradually, the old feudal tyranny grew stiff and palsied, and lost its vigorous aggressiveness, the army of a nation became more and more national. The Thirty Years' War was indeed waged almost altogether by mercenary troops, beneath the Imperial or the Swedish standard; but Cromwell's unequalled army, highly paid, strictly disciplined, and regarded with envious admiration by every court and prince on both sides of the Alps, was thoroughly English.

In the Merry Monarch's days, English discipline, English efficiency, had ceased to be a proverb on the Continent. Incomparably the best-drilled army in Europe was that of the Grand Turk. No infantry were such practised children of the camp as were the sultan's famous Janissaries; no artillery was so formidable as his. The hugest army was that of the Most Catholic

sovereign of Spain and of the Indies, but it was already in a sorry condition, ill fed and ill led. The finest was that which Richelieu and Mazarin had begun to raise, and to which Louvois put the finishing touches, for the absolute king of France—an army that caused many an uneasy moment to the great grandfathers of our own great grandsires here in England.

The principle on which Louvois went to work was a straightforward and a simple one. He proposed to himself to keep on foot a great army that should be cheap, manageable, and yet capable of bearing down by weight of numbers any ordinary foe. The common soldier, the mere pawn on the chessboard, was to be nourished, clad, and lodged at as low a rate as might be. Let him eat his fill, and replenish his mug with wine, when he got into an enemy's country, and could live at the cost of the king's enemies—in the Palatinate, say, or in Holland or Spain—but in France itself the lean grenadier was tightly held in hand, whatever indulgence might be shown to officers of noble birth. A few privileged corps—the Guards, the Musketeers Black and Gray, the hired Swiss, were ready to do the cream of the fighting. And, as for the mere commonalty, their feudal seigneurs might be trusted to force or cajole a sufficiency of recruits to join the ranks.

Frederick the Great, if he followed in the footsteps of Louvois as a military organiser, far surpassed his master in the art of extracting from a reluctant soldiery the maximum of obedience at the minimum of cost. With cane and scourge, with blackball and pipeclay, with bullet and black-hole for the more refractory, he succeeded in making regiments and brigades that hated him, and that were largely composed of bought or kidnapped men, as steady as so many automatons under fire. It was better, the poor wretches felt, to front the shot, than to wince beneath the rattan of the adjutant and the sergeant's strap; and so they fought, and bled, and were driven off like hounds, after the quarry was dead, to kennel again.

Our own military system, as was natural under a German dynasty, and under such captains-general as H.R.H. Calloden Cumberland, and the martial bishop of Osnaburg, was laid down on German lines. The soldier's gleaming little tin of soup, the soldier's lump of boiled beef, are legacies of the two earliest Georges. Because the Hanoverian private dined

thus, the British private, albeit not of a soup-eating nation, and growling ever at the outlandish fashion of his food, conformed to the Hanoverian pattern. Wolfe's recently published letters have told us, that his opinion of the stocked and powdered soldiers of his own time was very much that enounced by Dr. Johnson in *The Rambler*. Sergeant Kite and Ensign Plume had purveyed the men from the fregs of the population. They had been washed and hustled into a creditable appearance on parade. Some of them, like the Foot Guards at Lincelles, could fight like heroes, and good-humoured, merciful heroes withal. But of the rest competent judges wrote down that their valour was 'precarious,' their honesty hazy, and their morality imperfect.

In one respect the British army beat all others, and that was the important question of its daily meals. It was very much more regularly paid, and much more sedulously fed—thanks to the liberal votes of a lavish Parliament!—than were the white-coats of France, or the yellow-coats of Spain. Army contractors at Blenheim or Fontenoy were not impeccable men, nor were Paymasters to the Forces quite clean-handed; but, compared with foreign attendants and commissaries, they were as mirrors of integrity. There was much desertion, much drunkenness, and, in spite of the cruel floggings then in vogue, an extraordinary amount of petty theft among the men. At the sight of a red-coat, prudent cottagers snatched away the linen from the garden hedge, and gathered in the scared poultry, as though grenadiers had been gipsies. The soldier, off duty, was reckoned as a scamp, light-fingered and light-heeled.

A good deal of undeserved, or, at least, exaggerated praise, has been heaped upon the ragged levies of the French Revolutionary Government, the men of *Jemmapes*. The Austrians in Flanders, led by crabbed formalists, whose one tactical idea was to turn an enemy's flank, certainly were worsted by the shoeless, active boys who paid no regard to tradition. But when English and Russian brigades came crowding into Flanders, the contest was one between striplings and grown men. The real Grand Army—the victors of Lodi, of the Pyramids, of Austerlitz—was so largely leavened by the tough old soldiers of the ancient régime, that even the untiring brain and iron will of Napoleon could never bring together its equal. The

conquerors of Wagram and Jena did not trample down resistance as the builders of the Boulogne imperial column had done. The mixed host that left its bones in Russian snow was far inferior to that which had menaced England, and those which bore the brunt from Leipzig to Montmartre were mainly made up of boys.

The "tax of blood," so called—the grinding conscription which weighs upon all continental Europe, and which only the friendly seven-league sea enables us to avoid—produces, everywhere, imposing numerical results, and, in Germany, Russia, Spain, and Turkey, an abundance of broad-chested and hardy young men. In France and Belgium the age of twenty is maintained by the recruiting department at the sacrifice of a heavy percentage of those nominally liable to serve; while the sons of well-to-do families slip or wriggle, eel-like, through the complaisant meshes of the net, and leave behind a residuum over which experienced officers shake their heads.

Nothing, on paper, or in a country where, as in Prussia, rule and fact go hand-in-hand, can work more smoothly than a conscription. Nothing, in practice, and where interest and wealth throw their weight into the scales, is more easy to evade. The strapping younger son of *M. le Marquis* is exempted, on the plea of weak eyes or diseased lungs, of which nobody ever heard before, from the actual handling of a coarse musket, and goes into the reserved list of infirmiry attendants. The young viscount is made honorary clerk to the Hay and Straw Office. *M. Chose*, the manufacturer of Lyons, has influence enough to pitchfork his son and heir into the staff of a territorial general yet to be appointed. Scores of rich young fellows make believe to do duty as cavalry volunteers, and clink and swagger along the asphalt of the boulevards, while some plebeian comrade, stimulated by five-franc pieces and eleemosynary sips of brandy, grooms their horses and burnishes their accoutrements. So little have eighty years of experience reconciled the South of France peasantry to the conscription, that to lurk for months in hiding-holes among the rocks, or to lodge for half a year in a Spanish farm, is the alternative of thousands of "refractories."

A standing army is, in truth, a monster hard to construct, difficult to keep in working order, and all but impossible to

renew, when war has drained it of its strength, and taken the bloom from its brave appearance. A generation has elapsed since 1854, and yet our own Foot Guards do not loom as large as the scarlet-coated giants who went out to the Crimea; Austrian colonels of crack regiments mourn the stately front-rank men laid low at Sadowa; and the wide-chested "substitutes" no longer lend an imposing aspect to the head of a French column. Such as they are, however, the vast aggregate of European armies represents a colossal pecuniary sacrifice, and a waste of time and a tax upon the bone and sinew of a nation, not over pleasant to contemplate.

Very large armies gravitate towards war, as if to justify the fact of their existence. It is felt sometimes, even by peaceable persons, as if it were better to employ the great destroying engine, once for all, than continually to oil, and polish, and regild the costly piece of murderous mechanism. To despotic monarchs a fine army is only too apt to appear in the light of a toy, or rather, perhaps, of a keen-edged tool, wherewith to cut and carve the dominions of a feebler neighbour. And there have been occasions when the dangerous machine, like a sorcerer's fiend, clamouring to be employed, has become self-acting, as did the Sikh Khalsa and the plundering army of the Constable de Bourbon, and has forced its unwilling rulers into war.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MANSINGBERG," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. THE COMMISSARY GROWS CONFIDENTIAL.

THE colonel's remark had a certain "lilt" with it, and as Ella looked through the window and saw "the gallant commissary coming through the square," she could not but acknowledge there was a romantic air about him, that suggested melody; it was not the poetry of motion, for his walk was strictly, not to say stiffly, military; but his bearing was triumphant, his colour high—even to his cheek-bones—and he swung his cane in quite a light and airy manner. In his button-hole was a bouquet, as large as ladies are wont to carry, and on his enormous hands were stretched a pair of lavender gloves. It was unusual to see the commissary out of uniform, he avoided mufti "upon principle," he said, and be-

cause "in his time officers were not ashamed of their profession," though his enemies affirmed that motives of economy, and a well-grounded apprehension of being taken for a colour-sergeant out on a holiday had something to do with it; but to behold him thus attired was a portent.

"Does he not look every inch like an expectant bridegroom?" observed the colonel grinning.

"He looks more dreadful than ever, I think," said Ella with a little shiver.

Then her host came in, and welcomed her to his "humble roof" with what was for him "effusion;" and Gracie came down, and was embraced with every demonstration of paternal affection. The colonel, from motives of delicacy, and also because he was upon the brink of a burst of laughter, stood apart at the window whistling softly to himself, "Froggy would a-wooing go."

"I hope you found what has been done in your old home a pleasant surprise, Gracie?" said her father.

"Everything looks very nice and pretty, papa; and it was very thoughtful and kind of you to put those charming flowers in our rooms."

"Eh, flowers, what flowers? Oh, I daresay that was Gertrude's doings—I mean Miss de Horsingham's. That lady has been most kind, my dear. I consulted her in your absence about the little arrangements in preparation for your return, and for the reception of our honoured guest here, Mrs. Landon; and I think she has acquitted herself to admiration."

"Everything is very nice, I am sure," said Ella, seeing that her friend was at a loss for words. "I am very sorry, however, to have been the cause of having kept Gracie from home so long, and from executing her own proper functions as the mistress of your house."

"Oh, don't mention it," returned the commissary coolly; "Miss de Horsingham has a great taste for embellishment."

"I hope that does not extend to her conversation," said Ella quietly.

The colonel, at the window, exploded into a roar.

"There's a boy's hat just fallen in the mud," he said in explanation, as the commissary drew himself up with an offended air.

"Miss de Horsingham is the soul of truth, Mrs. Landon," observed her host.

"Then I should very much like to see her," returned Ella blandly.

"Your wish shall be gratified to-morrow. Gracie shall ask her to dinner."

"But, papa, it is so soon," faltered Gracie. She knew Miss de Horsingham, and rather liked her; but she had been by no means an intimate friend of the family; indeed they had had none such but Ella. At the same time, if this lady had been kind to her father, she felt it was her duty to acknowledge it; and as to his having any matrimonial views, they never entered into her head; mainly, perhaps, because she concluded that Miss de Horsingham must needs be without dowry.

"Your objection would hold good, with respect to any stranger," said the commissary loftily. "Indeed, Gracie, I think you might give me credit for understanding that much. But Miss de Horsingham has shown an interest in me and mine which merits a peculiar acknowledgment. The colonel here is, of course, in an exceptional position. He will make one, I hope, of our little party."

"I'll come like a shot," said the colonel cheerily.

"But that does not prevent Ella's uncle from dining here to-day also, papa," said Gracie. The commissary was not generally lavish of his hospitality, and it was a stroke of policy for straightforward Gracie quite Machiavellian, which thus reminded her father of the relationship between the colonel and their guest.

"Of course not; of course he'll dine to-day—if he'll take us in the rough, and trust to pot-luck."

This observation must have been dictated by something of the pride that apes humility; for in fact, very extraordinary preparations had been made on Ella's behalf; and the *avant-courier* of them had already stolen into the room from the kitchen.

"I have an old campaigner's nose, commissary," said the colonel, alluding to this grateful odour, "and I will risk the pot-luck."

The dinner, in fact, was as great a success as circumstances permitted it to be; the two gentlemen were in high good-humour; and Ella, as usual, endeavoured to forget her own sad thoughts in lively conversation with her uncle. Gracie could not banish from her mind that memory which seemed to have died out so soon from her father's, and his mirth jarred upon her ears. She knew that her mother had expected to be forgotten by him; that she had felt her own death not only as the

laying down of a heavy burthen, but as releasing others from their share of it; yet the thought: "Does she see, does she hear, is she sensible of this too swift erasure of the past?" would intrude on her. Nevertheless, she did her best to play the hostess.

"Now, I call this very nice and comfortable," said the commissary, when the ladies had withdrawn, and the whisky and hot water made their appearance. "Here's to your niece's health, colonel!"

"You are very good," said the colonel, a little stiffly. He did not dislike the other's companionship for himself, but he resented the idea of any familiarity upon his part with Ella. He had said no more than the truth, when he had expressed his wish that she had come to his own roof, rather than to that of the commissary; and he thought it rather a liberty in him to have invited her.

"We will have a good bout of it this evening," observed his host, "since to-morrow we shall be rather on our p's and q's I suppose."

"Why?" inquired the colonel.

"Well, Miss de Horsingham will be here, you know."

"I don't see why we should be more on our p's and q's, as you call it, because of the commandant's governess, than now, with my niece and your daughter in the house."

"I only meant that she would be more of a stranger," said the commissary hastily.

"Well, I suppose that won't be the case very long, will it?" observed the other.

He spoke indifferently, almost contemptuously, and looked up so impudently at his companion, that some men, having a glass of steaming grog in their hand, might have been induced to throw the contents in his face. But the commissary, who was drinking, merely winked significantly over the top of his tumbler, and when he had set it down replied:

"You have hit it, colonel."

"It was impossible to miss it," returned the other. "One can't miss a barn-door flying. I am not speaking of the lady of course"—for the commissary's face had suddenly turned to that yellow-red which, in his signal-book, betokened fury—"but of your intentions regarding her. They are honourable, I have no doubt, but they are deuced open."

"I mean them to be so."

"Wanted to compromise the lady, eh?"

Quite right," said the colonel, stirring his glass, and looking at his boots.

The glance that his companion bestowed on him, was a concentration of malignity and passion; but it was unseen, or, at all events, unheeded. He went on in a philosophic tone:

"All is fair in love and war, they say, and to secure a woman there is nothing like the plan you have adopted; but it has this disadvantage, that it cuts both ways. You are as much bound to her, as she is to you, and though there is no brother in the case, the commandant himself would think it his duty, remember, to see the lady righted."

"Of course he would, should there be occasion; but I have quite made up my mind upon the matter."

"You really mean to marry this woman, then?"

"I really mean to marry this lady," said the commissary with a significant stress.

"Well, you know your own business best, no doubt; but I should have thought that a man like you—a warm man, a man with a good bit of savings, I suppose——"

The commissary shook his head; but smiled, nevertheless. It was a very gentle denial of the impeachment.

"I say, I should have thought, Ray, that you would have chosen a younger woman—a companion for your dear girl," as widowers with a grown-up daughter always say, to justify their choice of a chicken."

"I should not have thought myself justified, as regards Gracie, in making choice of any young woman," said the commissary loftily, "unless she had an independence of her own."

"Which Miss de Horsingham has not, I conclude?"

"I never asked her any such question."

"Nor ever made any inquiries, I suppose?"

The commissary smiled, not so much, it seemed, in answer to the colonel's roguish look, as at something that was passing in his own mind.

"Come, tell me the truth, general."

The "general," coming as it did unexpectedly, and at the end of so many observations by no means of the conciliatory sort, was too much for even the commissary's reticence. His smile expanded to a grin, and his large face glowed with conscious pride.

"Well, I know I can trust you, colonel."

"I will be close as wax."

"And you won't—you won't take advantage of what I am about to confide in you by endeavouring to cut me out?"

"To cut you out? Gracious heavens! with the De Horsingham? Certainly not."

"Very good, that lady has ten thousand pounds, sir, in her own right."

"I don't believe it," said the colonel bluntly. "It's no good you're being put out; this is really one of those statements which a man ought to preface with: 'I would not have believed it if I had not seen it myself'—and so give his friend a loophole."

"Well, I have seen it myself," said the commissary.

"What, the money? The ten thousand pounds? Does she carry it about with her in notes? And if she does, are you sure they are not flash notes? Have you looked at the water-mark?"

The commissary held up his finger for silence, looked cautiously at the door, and then whispered in his companion's ear:

"I have been to Doctors' Commons and read her father's will: 'I give and bequeath to my only daughter Rosanna, the sum of ten thousand pounds.'"

"Perhaps she has spent it since," suggested the colonel.

It was a random shot, fired after the engagement was well-nigh over, for the speaker felt that he was beaten; but it went home.

The commissary turned a dreadful colour—his own particular, with something added—as though he were crossing the Channel on a rough day.

"How on earth should she spend it?" faltered he with sickening apprehension.

"I don't know, because I don't know her tastes," said the colonel. "But some women's are devilish expensive."

"She is economy itself," said the commissary.

"Ah, that's a bad sign; one never knows the value of money till one has lost it."

"I don't think she'd dare," muttered the commissary through his shut teeth, and looking very unlike a bridegroom. "She has never boasted of her money, it is true; but she has led me to conclude—I mean before I found it out for myself—that she has got something."

"Like somebody else," said the colonel, "eh? You will be a pair of cunning ones, you two."

To this disparaging observation, the commissary answered nothing. His com-

panion's chance suggestion had fallen on very fruitful soil, prepared for its reception by base suspicions of all human kind. He wiped his damp forehead with a huge red bandanna, and laid his bony hand upon his companion's arm.

"Look here, Juxon, we have been old friends for many a year, and know all about one another—or nearly so. You must give me a helping hand—I am not the rich man you suppose me to be. I don't want your money," he added hastily—for the colonel had drawn himself up a little, and was mechanically buttoning up his pockets—"but only your advice. You have a deuced long head of your own, and you understand womankind. It is necessary for me—absolutely necessary—that I should marry money. Now, if Miss de Horsingham hasn't got it"—the commissary looked so miserably embarrassed, and at a loss for words, that his friend took pity on him, and finished the sentence: "You would let her remain Miss de Horsingham, in short, to the end of the chapter."

"I would see her—at York," said the commissary, mentioning, however, a much more southerly spot. "It is necessary to be quite sure, my good friend, and I want your advice, as to how to make sure."

"Ask her," said the colonel bluntly. "You need not say anything about the money that has been left her, since you have made certain of that; but let the conversation turn upon extravagance, and then put the question point blank. 'Dearest Rosanna, I am afraid with your generous instincts, and your scorn of petty details, that you are one neither to look after the pence, nor take care of the pounds.' Then she will say, 'Yes, she is, because she has had a lesson;' or she will say, 'No, she isn't;' and then you will know that the money—or some of it—is gone. I don't think a woman would evade a home-thrust like that. It would afford her such a capital opportunity of confessing to a little extravagance, if she has really committed a great one, and of course you must not let her suspect that, if she has, you are off your bargain."

"I'll just write that down," said the commissary, producing his note-book; "I mean the question I am to put to her about her 'generous instincts.' Nothing

like having a proper understanding about these matters. 'I have ten thousand pounds, you may take me or leave me,' is what I should like her to say; but there's no getting a woman to be business-like. However, to-morrow evening, I will try and bring her to book."

I am afraid the colonel was not altogether sorry for having given his friend so much disquiet. He was annoyed with him with respect to Ella, partly on her account, and partly on his own; he considered her in every way the commissary's superior, but especially so in a social point of view, as being his, the colonel's niece; and he was proportionately sensitive—after the manner of his kind—about his own female belongings, as he was callous with respect to those of other men. He had the sagacity to make a good guess as to why the commissary had invited Ella to Woolwich; namely, that she might throw the ægis of her own "position" over Miss de Horsingham; though as for there being any reciprocity in the matter, such as his friend had hinted to Gracie, it had never entered into his mind. On the contrary, although he was by no means ignorant that Ella's reputation had suffered in local circles from the stories afloat concerning the deception used at her marriage, the commissary's roof was, in his opinion, by no means one adapted for the relacquering process. If she had been invited to the commandant's, instead of to patronise the commandant's governess, perhaps to be mixed up in some future scandal concerning her, that would have been quite another matter; but as it was, Ella's coming to Woolwich—especially, too, without her husband—was a mistake, and he was by no means pleased with the man who had counselled it. The colonel, notwithstanding that he resented the contempt of others for the commissary, did in fact himself secretly despise him; their companionship was, upon his side, one of convenience only; and when this is the case, a quarrel is very easily picked with the inferior party. It was well, therefore, for the host, albeit unconscious of his danger, that he now moved an adjournment to the ladies, whom they found deep in a confidential talk, on the sofa with a background of mother-of-pearl.

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER V. MONSIEUR RIEL.

HAD I been indiscreet? Could I have done otherwise than I did?

I might, of course, have withheld my name. So far, I had been needlessly unreserved, perhaps. But surely something was due to his frankness, not less than to his kindness. And I confess that I had been won by what seemed to me the simplicity and the sincerity of his manner.

No doubt, he was not entitled to address me, and consequently he should have been rebuked by the surprise and severity of my bearing towards him. But how could I repel services that were so agreeably proffered? The circumstances of the case were unusual. It was not to be judged by ordinary or general rules. M. Riel was a foreigner, and an artist. He perhaps judged that his profession entitled him to dispense with ceremony in relation to a young art-student, as he might reasonably deem me. And he might not be well versed in our English etiquettes and conventionalities. And, above all, he had really assisted me. I could not judge him severely, nor could I blame myself. Indeed, I looked back with pleasure upon my meeting with M. Riel. It was something in the nature of an adventure, and my life for a long time past had been very unadventurous, uninteresting, monotonous. It had been as a dull, shadowed, sluggish stream. A pebble in the way, the pettiest of incidents, had now stirred and rippled it, and

sent it flowing on with a sparkle about its wavelets—the brighter, and the better, for the interruption.

But I spoke to no one of M. Riel. It was my secret—almost the first secret I had ever possessed. I feared lest it should be judged expedient to terminate my studies at the National Gallery.

Mr. Leveridge inspected my copy of the *Gevartius*.

"There is real improvement, Doris," he said, complimenting me. "My child, we shall make a painter of you. There are the touches of an artist in this drawing."

I did not—I could not—tell him that this improvement was due to the interposition of M. Riel. Yet I felt ashamed of my silence. If Mr. Leveridge had looked at me, he would have seen that my cheeks were very red. But he was busily contemplating the drawing.

I was glad to be able to return my *Gevartius* to its place in my portfolio. I did not touch it again. I feared to lose the benefit of M. Riel's handiwork. And I felt a wish to keep it as he had left it, for his sake—as a sort of memento of my converse with him in the gallery. Yet doing this, I was very sensible of its folly, and I reproached myself for investing a commonplace and trivial occurrence with an air of romance and sentiment. I knew that I should have been the first to ridicule and condemn any other girl, who had done as I was doing.

For what was M. Riel to me? Nothing, or only a handsome foreigner who had been civil and obliging to me, but whom I might never meet again. For I have omitted to state that he was handsome—very handsome—and, in a woman's eyes, that is perhaps a matter of some import-

ance. His profile possessed a certain Greek symmetry and sharpness of outline. Viewed in front, his face lacked breadth and solidity; he was thin, very pale, and his cheeks were rather hollow. There was a certain dreamy look about his dark gray eyes, which were rarely opened wide, but which gained shadow and shelter, and depth of colour, from his long thick lashes. He had well-defined brows and a delicately-shaped mouth. His hair grew in small silky curls, fitting closely to the shape of his head, and thus, with his regular profile, his aspect was suggestive of a portrait upon a coin or a cameo. No doubt his slight figure and refined expression, his pallor, his small white hands, and his rather bending gait, were chargeable with effeminacy; he had nothing of the almost aggressive robustness upon which men are wont to set so much store. But it was hard to find fault with his intellectual look, even though it might possess a certain sentimental tinge. And certainly he was not as one posing for effect. He was not conscious of the appeal his presence made to sympathy. He was not sad or pensive with premeditation; he did not parade his melancholy. That he had suffered I did not doubt; and it seemed to me that his subdued and self-contained manner was attributable to the fact that he had lived much alone, and had taught himself to be independent of his fellows. He was poor, too—that seemed beyond question; his coat was white about the seams and the buttons were frayed. He wore a slight monstache, and his neckerchief was loosely knotted in what was then derided as a Byronic affectation. In those days, most men delighted to tie their cravats tightly, stiffening them with buckram; the neckcloth was as the avant-courier of apoplexy. A monstache was esteemed the peculiar possession of dragons, foreigners, and swindlers: the two last being held to be synonymous.

I continued to attend the National Gallery upon the days devoted to students; but for some time I saw no more of M. Riel.

I confess my disappointment. I had occupied myself with sketching the fine head in Vandyck's portrait of Rubens. I bungled over it sadly. My outline was incorrect; my colouring was wretchedly raw and coarse. In truth I was not interested in my work. I could not devote my mind to it, and I was constantly turning from it to look for M. Riel. But he

did not come to the gallery for some weeks, and when at last he appeared, he failed to notice my presence: he did not immediately recognise me.

He was paler than before, and there were lines upon his face, the traces of illness. He carried a small portfolio and a paint-box under his arm, but he did not set to work seriously. He inspected several of the pictures in turn, and then he glanced at the labours of the students, grouped thickly about the more popular examples. His manner was listless and languid; he seemed in feeble health.

I grew hot and cold by turns. I feared lest he should see me, and speak to me. I feared lest he should not see me, and not speak to me. I did not like to be watching him; and yet I could not bear to avert my eyes from him. At last by a violent effort I busied myself with my portrait of Rubens, and almost succeeded in interesting myself in its progress. Presently, I felt rather than perceived that he had approached me—that he was standing very near to my chair. I turned abruptly, and my eyes met his. I was startled by the look of his wan, worn face.

"Pardon me, mademoiselle; I disturb you. I was rude to be regarding your labours without permission."

I said something—I know not what—to reassure him, in deprecation of the charges he brought against himself.

"Mademoiselle is too kind." Just then a sudden faintness seized him. He would have fallen, I think, but that he grasped in time the wooden barrier in front of the pictures.

"You are ill, M. Riel." I looked for my little flask of smelling salts, which I usually carried with me—the gift of one of my Bath aunts—and proffered it. He waved his hand.

"It is nothing, mademoiselle. In one moment I shall be better."

"But it is serious."

"No, a little giddiness, that is all. It is true that I have not been well of late. I find your English climate too severe for me sometimes. The cold and the damp strike through me, and I was, perhaps, wrong to venture out this morning. I should have waited a day or two longer. But then my home, if I may call it a home, is so dull; and my solitude oppressed me so. Moreover, I have work to do, if only I can do it; a copy of Guido's *Andromeda* is required of me. I was, I told you, a copyist only, a copyist always. Well, but

I must live. I do not ask so very much of the world. An exile and poor! Yes, that is true. Still I am content, or let me say, I am resigned. I do not repine. I will not struggle with the inevitable. But I oppress mademoiselle with the details of a life that can be of little interest to her."

"Nay, monsieur, but I am sincerely interested." He bowed; then he said with a sort of melancholy smile:

"Mademoiselle extends to me her pity; I repay her with a wearisome narrative of my discomforts, my distresses. She yields me compassion; I return her ennui. Mademoiselle has much to pardon. I was rude to address her in the first instance, to compel her to reply to me, to thrust upon her knowledge of my name. I, an obscure student, a poor foreigner, resident in the Soho quarter, living precariously by making copies of the pictures here for the dealers to sell again! It was monstrous, it was barbarous. Mademoiselle forgives me. She is so gracious and magnanimous. But can I forgive myself?"

"But, M. Riel, you helped me with my picture."

"Do not speak of it, mademoiselle, I pray you. Merely a touch or two; it was mere trifling. Mademoiselle is still faithful to Vandycok I see. The portrait of his master Rubens, gallant, debonair, a grand gentleman, with rather an air of the mousquetaire, however, than of the painter. May I borrow the pencil for a moment?"

Again he touched upon my drawing greatly to its advantage.

Could I help being interested in M. Riel?

Let me repeat that there was nothing more than politeness in his manner. If his choice of words seemed prompted by a sort of foreign fervour, he yet spoke with perfect calmness and composure. There was nothing personal in his address to me; as I believed, he would have said and done as much in regard to any other student he had chanced to encounter, to whom work had brought perplexity. I could arrogate to myself no special compliment from the fact that he had conversed with and assisted me. It did not stir my sense of vanity or self-esteem. What women usually called "flattering attentions," were to me rather odious than otherwise. Young as I was, I could boast some experience of those vapid courtesies, affectations of deference and admiration, which so many men think it advisable to exhibit towards women. At Bath I had

noted the extravagant salutations and adulations with which antiquated beaux regaled venerable coquettes; and I had seen imitations of these urbanities at the hands of philandering schoolboys, for the benefit of smirking sentimental misses, but just released from the nursery. The services M. Riel had rendered me were assuredly not to be classed among "flattering attentions," as they are usually understood by the men and women of society.

I deeply pitied M. Riel, in that he was an exile, poor, in ailing health. Moreover, I accounted him, for all he spoke so lightly of himself, an artist of real ability. I longed to be able to assist him.

I met him again and again at the Gallery; something of a friendship seemed thus to be established between us. I prided myself upon the fact that there was nothing foolish or sentimental about it, while secretly confessing that my interest in the young Frenchman, my sympathy with his position and his sufferings, might be chargeable with a certain precipitancy. Yet I was well satisfied upon one head: I was no more in love with M. Riel than he was in love with me. About that there could be no question.

"But you will return to your native France, M. Riel," I said to him upon one occasion, when our conversation had, somehow, turned more upon himself than was usual.

"Not so," he said, "return is scarcely possible to me. My opinions proscribe me. My France is not the France of to-day. I belong to the republicans of a former generation. My family has always cherished the most absolute principles of the Revolution. For years our occupation has been to conspire, and to suffer punishment, for what are judged to be our offences against the powers that exist and prevail. But the damps and chills of our prisons have not quenched our ardour; they have exercised rather a petrifying influence upon our creed, endowing it with the strength, the solidity, the cold unyielding qualities of marble. The time may come for my return to France, but it is not yet. For the France of the present, it is a snare and a scandal. The nation has been betrayed by an empiric. The charter to which it trusted has been torn to pieces. The citizen-king has thrust his umbrella through it. A citizen-king! But the term is a mockery in itself. What a combination of falsities! A king who is a charlatan—a citizen who is a trickster!

No, I have no faith in our King of the French, as he is called."

"But he has many admirers in England."

"Yes; they think because he is bourgeois that he is honest. Pardon me if I say there is sympathy here with the king in his character of *épicier*—of shopkeeper. And then England has obtained advantages over him. He rules France almost as an English viceroy. It is a degradation for us. True, he has given France some years of peace; but the terms have been too humiliating. He has respected the treaties of 1815—a fatal error in a Frenchman. He has prohibited the rise, the resuscitation, the aggrandisement of France. He has reduced her to the rank of an inferior power. He has sacrificed her glory and her prestige. He has betrayed the Revolution. He would restore the ancient monarchy with all its crimes; the divine right of kings and the absolute submission of the people to the sovereign will. He would corrupt France, the better to oppress her and prey upon her. The father of his people? He is the father only of his sons. He aims only at the profit of his family. He is sacrificing the nation to the establishment of a dynasty. He would degrade us to serfs, so that in turn he, and his children, and his grandchildren may safely stamp their feet upon our necks."

He perceived my surprise at the sudden passion of his speech.

"Pardon me that I have spoken at such length, and so warmly," he said, presently, in a more subdued tone, and with something of a laugh at his own excitement of manner. "We are artists above all. Let us judge it to be the king's great fault that he is so eminently unpicturesque of appearance! A king, even a citizen-king, should not have a head shaped like a pear. It appeals too strongly to one's sense of the ridiculous; it provokes caricature and derision—chalk drawing upon the walls, even the throwing of stones. And then his *toupée*; his broken umbrella; his curled whiskers; his eye-glass, with its broad ribbon; his short white trousers: it is a figure from a *harlequinade*! He is not even a citizen—he is only a *commis-voyageur*. Is it not sad to think of such a creature occupying the throne of a great nation? Yes, it is sad, and something more. It is lamentable, and it is criminal. He has sought to render monarchy popular in France; he has only vulgarised it. He thinks to please by shaking hands with the *canaille*. The time has gone by for that.

He but soils his fingers in vain. True, it was well in the days of July to bow, and grin, and grimace; to kiss the cheeks of Lafayette and Lafitte; to hug the National Guard to his heart, and to beat time with both hands while a ragged mob yelled *La Parisienne*. There is another Paris now. He is seen to be a tyrant for all his dress of Paillasse. He may take shelter behind his fortresses: he may surround himself with his soldiers and his mouchards; but he has been weighed in the balance and the sentence has been pronounced against him. France is ashamed of him; he makes her ludicrous—a laughing-stock among the nations. France wearies of him; he maltreats her whom he has betrayed. Soon we shall pluck this pear," he said, with bitter emphasis; "it is over-ripe; it rots upon the tree. When the time comes—and it must be drawing very near—I shall be back again in France."

"A conspirator!" I said, involuntarily.

"Ah, *mademoiselle*," he said, pressing my hand. "Is it so strange? The exile is always a conspirator. It is but natural that he should wish to be at home again. And if his way lies over the ruin of a throne—it is still his way!"

CHAPTER VI. SOHO.

M. RIEL's political opinions did not render him less interesting in my eyes. It is true that I had been instructed in the conventional English way to regard the French Revolution as a series of monstrous crimes; to reprobate Republican sentiments; and to hold in horror all conspiracy against appointed authority. My Bath aunts were intense Tories, and for my benefit had been wont to indulge in frequent repetitions of their articles of faith. They worshipped all crowned heads, extending considerable devotion to the members of the peerage; they loathed those they described as "the common people," including among these all untitled foreigners and radicals. They made a point of attending church every 30th of January, for the sake of the Form of Prayer concerning the execution of King Charles the First. In their early youth, I gathered that they had both been passionately in love with the Prince of Wales, afterwards known as the Regent, and as King George the Fourth. Tears dimmed their old eyes when they spoke of the fate of Louis the Sixteenth, and of "poor dear" Marie Antoinette. Generally they viewed the French nation as a "set of wretches,"

and accounted King Louis Philippe "a great deal too good for them." That France possessed a sovereign at all, they held to be a piece of good fortune of a very undeserved and even unreasonable sort.

I accepted their judgments—I could scarcely do otherwise—but only after a mechanical fashion. In the presence of M. Riel, I found that I had really no convictions of my own, touching subjects which to him were of vital importance. His excitement had surprised me; but I was not shocked by the violence of his doctrines. That they were violent, I perceived at once; and they were new to me, without doubt. I was tempted to regret that he should judge the French king so unfavourably. Still, I reflected that he possessed a right to his opinions, and that he had assuredly enjoyed opportunities of forming them. It was strange to hear him avow himself a conspirator. But a conspirator who is handsome, who paints pictures, and with whom one shakes hands, is very different to the conspirator to be read of in books or in the newspapers.

I longed to be of service to M. Riel. Could I serve him in any way?

Surely, I could speak of him to Mr. Leveridge. As I well knew, Mr. Leveridge frequently employed assistants in his studio. These were often his pupils, but not always. He trusted to them to prepare his canvasses for him, and to accomplish the mechanical portions of his pictures; occasionally they executed replicas of his more popular works. Without doubt he could, if he listed, engage the services of M. Riel.

But it was very hard to speak to him upon the subject. He might question—suspect. And I did not wish every one to know that I knew M. Riel. Moreover, I felt my heart beat too quickly when, Mr. Leveridge being beside me, I even thought of M. Riel.

At last I summoned up courage, and spoke. I turned away my head, for I knew that my cheeks were burning. To my annoyance, I found that Miss Leveridge had quietly entered the room in the midst of my statement, and was standing gazing at me with wide-opened eyes and pricked-up ears, striving to comprehend me.

"No doubt I could do something for him," Mr. Leveridge said quietly, musingly, rubbing his chin as he spoke. "Really clever, you say? No question at all about that? You've seen him at work in the National Gallery. He's copied the Bacchus

and Ariadne, and copied it well. He must be quite clever enough then to do anything I can set him about. It's not so very easy to copy a Titian. A Frenchman, is he? Well, he can't help that. And I'm sure I've no objection, if he hasn't. I suppose I ought to give the preference to an Englishman. And yet a foreigner, after all, has a greater claim to one's sympathy—because he is a foreigner—which means that he is an exile from his native country, thrown among strangers who don't speak his language, and know nothing of his ways, and perhaps despise him because of their own ignorance. Yes, I should be glad to help him, Miss Doris. You can tell him so when you see him. Indeed I should be glad—very glad—to help anyone in whom you take an interest. And as it chances, I've work in hand upon which he might begin at once. You remember my large companion pictures of Susannah and Europa? But I don't know that you could ever have seen them. They ought not to have been companion pictures, perhaps, but the canvasses happened to be exactly the same size, and they fitted accurately the recesses on each side of Lord Southernwood's sideboard. Well, I've a commission now to paint replicas of those pictures; they are now in my studio, kindly lent by his lordship. Your friend—what is his name?"

"M. Riel."

"M. Riel. He is your friend?" I scarcely knew what answer to make.

"He is a clever artist—a foreigner, young, poor, friendless—I cannot help taking interest in his welfare. I am very anxious to assist him."

Miss Leveridge coughed artificially; and if irony can be imparted to a cough, then was her cough ironical.

"He is a very fortunate young man, this M. Riel," Mr. Leveridge said, with a smile. Then noting, perhaps, a confused look upon my face, he went on: "Pray don't be offended, my dear young lady—I was only jesting. I quite understand that you desire to help this unfortunate French gentleman, out of pure charity and kindness of heart."

Miss Leveridge coughed again.

"You see him often, this M. Riel?" Mr. Leveridge asked.

"He is occasionally at the Gallery. He is not there constantly. I cannot count upon seeing him there."

"But you know where he is to be found?"

"In Soho somewhere."

"That is a wide address—I don't think I can undertake to search for him in Soho. But when you see him, let him know that I can give him work, if he really wants work. He does not expect an extravagant price for his labour, I suppose?"

"I think he would be content with a very moderate price."

"He is not too proud to copy? He is not too grand a painter for such inferior work as I can give him?"

"He is poor, and he is not at all proud. Not in the way you mean."

"Send him to me then—the sooner the better. And, if I can, I will help him; for your sake, Miss Doris, if not for his own."

So far I had been successful, and my task had been easy enough. Mr. Leveridge perceived nothing strange in my application. It had seemed to him a very simple and natural thing that I should wish to aid an unfortunate artist; that I should become acquainted with him in the course of my studies at the National Gallery. Miss Leveridge, however, seemed less satisfied. I found her often peering at me, watching me after a rather bold and persistent manner, for one so timid and retiring naturally.

But I looked in vain for M. Riel at the Gallery. A week passed—I had seen nothing of him.

Now, I knew his address. I had treasured in my portfolio a scrap of drawing-paper, upon which, with a few pencil strokes, he had given me valuable instruction in perspective. Apparently he had not known that on the back of this paper was written, "Paul Riel, 26, Dean-street, Soho."

I was very anxious to communicate my news to him. Should I write to him? I felt that I could explain the matter so much more clearly if I were to see him. I determined that I would call upon him at his lodgings in Dean-street. I was aware that this proceeding was open to many objections. I overruled them. I was persuaded that he would not misunderstand me, and I knew that my motive was in truth irreproachable. Besides, no one need be informed of my visit to Soho. It was a matter that concerned myself only. I was not bound to consider the wishes or the opinions of others upon the subject. I had never spoken of M. Riel to either Nick or Basil.

"I am going out," I said to Miss Leveridge.

"I think you go out too often," she observed, in a tremulous voice; "and you stop out too long. You are too much alone, and you have your own way too much."

"But you know, Miss Leveridge, you are not able to go out with me."

"That is true."

"You have not even the wish to go with me."

"Perhaps not." She was silent for a minute. Then she resumed, in a tone that sounded half peevish, half piteous: "Don't be self-willed, my dear. Don't think only of yourself. Something is surely due to others. Don't shrink from your duty because it seems a little distasteful to you. We are not sent into the world merely to pursue our own pleasures, nor to indulge our every whim and fancy. Be careful what you do, my dear."

I did not stop to discuss the significance of these counsels.

Soho was almost a new country to me. Of late I had much increased my knowledge of London. My journeys to and from the National Gallery had introduced me to various new streets and strange neighbourhoods. That these were sometimes dingy, dreary, poverty-stricken, overcrowded, squalid, did not alarm or vex me in any way. I had memories of my own early life in Somers-town.

At the time of which I am writing, Soho was scarcely so foreign a district as it has become in later years; but already it had afforded asylum to many an exile, and its characteristics were sufficiently pronounced. The poor Poles had in great numbers found shelter there; and, indeed, a welcome had been extended to the refugees of every nationality. It was a quaint district of English streets and continental shops. There were many cheap cafés and restaurants, with foreign inscriptions upon the window-panes; food could be obtained of foreign quality, and cooked after foreign fashions; newspapers in strange tongues were to be purchased at moderate cost; books in paper covers, caricatures relating to alien topics, lithographic portraits and engravings were for sale on every side. Billiard-rooms were very frequent; and tobacco-shops were innumerable. Groups of foreigners, bearded, wrapped in ample cloaks, wearing hats of foreign device, boots of feminine quality—of drab prunella, with little mother-of-pearl buttons, only tipped with leather in the region of the toes—and with an excess

of braiding and embroidery about their coats, held fierce gesticulatory converse at street corners or round the lamp-posts. They stamped, and swore, and spat; they raved and ranted till their olive cheeks flushed into crimson with their excitement; and meantime they smoked the tiniest of cigarettes, held daintily and adroitly between thumb and forefinger, brown with tobacco-juice and the scorching of the smouldering tobacco.

M. Riel lived, it seemed, on the third floor of a very dingy house. The staircase was reached through a small and confined cigar shop. I asked for M. Riel. Yes, he lived there. I wished to see him? I was bidden to mount the stairs. When I could go no higher I should probably meet M. Riel.

My heart sank a little. I began to have misgivings as to the perfect prudence of my enterprise. I could not question, indeed, that I had been very rash. How very dark, and rickety, and tortuous was the staircase; how heavy, and opaque, and smoke-laden was the atmosphere! I breathed with difficulty.

Presently, groping my way, I tapped lightly at a door that seemed to bar my further progress.

"Come in," said a voice.

PORTRAITS WORKED IN TAPESTRY.

I. A PRINCESS OF THE FIRST EMPIRE.

THE scene is India. The India, neither of Akbar nor of Empress-Queen, but the India which witnessed the sudden leap into imperial power of the strangest government the world has yet seen—that marvellous imperium in imperio, which, till within our own time, ruled the empire of Tamerlane from a counting-house in Leadenhall-street. "John Company" is yet young—Johnny, having been, as it were, short-coated, and taught to run alone by Clive—is now growing quickly through stormy adolescence towards triumphant manhood. John is in difficulties just at present, for his new tutor has hardly yet had time to try his system of territorial development. Nor is the tutor allowed to have it all his own way, for India holds, not only Warren Hastings, Impey, and Barwell, but Clavering, Monson, and Philip Francis; and there is stern debate in Council as to the very slender measure of justice to be meted out to the nawabs and begums, who are supposed to own groves of that

celebrated but long-since-extinct plant, the pagoda tree. Warren Hastings, when he can find a specimen of this rare plant, shakes it vigorously, and his fellow-members of Council complain that the first fruits are destined for the governor himself.

While Johnny is thus getting through the troubles of youth, there comes to Calcutta a pretty young Frenchwoman, with sweetly-rounded features and large, lustrous eyes, a wealth of blonde hair, and the full scarlet lips indicating a disposition rather joyous than studious; her beauty being altogether of that transient kind which depends much on the bloom of early youth. This bride of fifteen Indian summers is the daughter of a sort of personage in these parts—no less than the harbour-master of the port of Pondicherry, and a Chevalier of St. Louis to boot. Mademoiselle Werlée has recently become the wife of a Monsieur Grand or Grant—his name varies in the spelling—who has brought his wife to his home in Calcutta. They are happy, these young people; the husband being, after the manner of French husbands, about twice the age of his wife—a small difference when the age of the bride is but bashful fifteen. For nearly the space of a year they lead a pleasant life, but, at the end of this time, a third figure appears on the tapestry.

At first, hovering around youthful Madame Grand—pretty and piquant enough in her Pompadour costume, fashions being a few years after date in India, her beautiful fair hair smeared with powder and her plump young cheeks deformed with patches—is descried the figure of an Englishman, the destined opponent in council and the field of Warren Hastings, and doomed to be vanquished in both. Philip Francis is a gay cavalier, brilliant and accomplished, a dandy of the school of Chesterfield, but concealing, beneath his fair exterior, passions of the most furious kind—a vehement but fickle lover, a savage and relentless enemy.

This dangerous man, strenuous in business and in pleasure, is ever by the side of Madame Grand, for her husband, a young merchant, is engrossed in his business, and cares little for the dissipations of the gay world of Calcutta. The young Frenchwoman, ignorant and untrained, is dazzled by the brilliant Englishman, who has no peer in Calcutta save Hastings himself. He has seen the cities

and courts of far-off Europe. He can tell piquant stories of the peerless Pompadour and the unblushing Dubarry. He has great store of the gossip of the *Cil de Bœuf*, and is not slow to instil the subtly poisonous doctrine, that, for a pretty woman, the royal road to fortune and power is a splendid indiscretion. And for the moment, Francis—or Junius—is almost the first man in India; a middle-aged Adonis one may say, but a few years more or less make little difference in an age of shaven chins and powdered locks.

M. Grand, although professing himself the most devoted of husbands, has a knack of going out to supper with his patron Mr. Barwell, the ally of the governor. His young wife has not the gift of conversation, and he is concerting measures with Mr. Barwell for the defeat of Philip Francis and his schemes. He goes out, one fatal December evening, after bidding his wife a tender farewell, after the manner of husbands who love to sup away from home, and joins the party assembled at his patron's house, in high good-humour. It is one of the fortnightly suppers of the powerful member of Council, and promises to be a convivial meeting, for his adherents have gathered in great force. But care attends upon one of the guests. As luckless M. Grand takes his seat at the supper-table, one of his native servants, breathless with affright, whispers his master that Mr. Francis has been caught in his house and is now a prisoner, having been secured by his faithful jemadar. The shock is too great for endurance, and the wretched man rushes from the table to the terrace outside and bursts into a flood of tears. Instantly he sends, after the manner of the time, for that "friend" whose services in cases of this kind are indispensable; but is met by an unexpected refusal. The "friend" fears the consequences of being involved in a quarrel with a man of Francis' rank and power, and prays that he may be excused. In despair, the unhappy M. Grand sends on the servant to acquaint his jemadar of his coming, and sets out alone for his ruined home.

On his way he bethinks him of another friend, a Major Palmer, and resolves to call upon him and request the use of his sword; his purpose being to release Mr. Francis, to conduct him, after the elegant traditions of the old school, beyond the limits of his domain, and then and there to call upon the offender to approve himself as gallant in the field as in the boudoir.

Major Palmer is made of sterner stuff than the first "friend" applied to, and highly approves of this thoroughly gentlemanlike and orthodox way of doing things; but, on arriving at M. Grand's house, their programme is overthrown by an unlooked-for incident. The porter opens the door at the call of his master, who rushes into his house, and there finds, to his amazement, not Philip Francis, but George Shee, bound to a chair, and endeavouring to obtain his release from the servants, Mr. Shore—afterwards Lord Teignmouth—and a Mr. Arcedeckne joining in the same entreaty. The gentlemen in this ignominious position complain bitterly of having been cruelly ill-treated by M. Grand's jemadar; but that faithful servant has also a story to tell—how he found Mr. Francis and secured him, when, at the summons of a loud whistle, the three gentlemen in custody scaled the walls of the compound, and, rushing upon him, rescued their friend, who made his escape, while they were captured by the servants of the household. In reply to M. Grand's interrogatories, the friends of Francis have but a lame story to tell—how they, sleeping at Mr. Ducarel's house over the way, were aroused by the cries of Mr. Francis, and, coming over to prevent his being murdered, were captured by the relentless jemadar and his myrmidons. These small deer are not the game at which the outraged husband is flying, so he orders them to be released, leaves his home in the care of his jemadar, and retires to the house of Major Palmer. Pending the dawn, he writes a letter couched in the usual terms, demanding of Francis the reparation usual in such cases, and has not long to await an answer—astounding to those acquainted with the courage of the man who fell under the pistol of Hastings, desperately but not mortally wounded. Mr. Francis coolly informs M. Grand "that conscious of having done him no injury, and that his challenge is made under a complete mistake, he begs leave to decline the proposed invitation, and that he has the honour to remain," &c.

M. Grand now returns home, sends for his wife's sister and brother-in-law from Chandernagore—in fact, holds a conseil de famille, at which it is arranged that Madame Grand shall return to her family; receiving an allowance from her husband. Then the wife entertains an interview which lasts three hours, makes a full confession, and the unhappy pair part for ever.

For a few years Madame Grand vanishes from the tapestry on which time has already foreshadowed grim figures of Carmagnole dances, guillotines, noyades, and the like, to be presently worked in, with a vengeance, as the grim tricotouse supplants the dainty brodeuse of the olden time. There are stiff, awkward threads in this new piece of work, in which red takes the place of the prettily-assorted colours of the gay old period. As the ghastly figures are being sketched in, we catch a glimpse of Madame Grand—this time at Paris—looking not a whit older; but the glimpse is but fleeting, and we hear little of her until the storm of revolution has swept over France—the pretty figure on the canvas being for awhile eclipsed by more potent entities. But humble organisations are singularly tenacious of life, and Madame Grand turns up in London in 1792, having fled Paris after the massacre of August. She is a royalist, and employs English sailors to favour the escape of Madame Villemain d'Abbeville, whose evil fortune takes her once more to her country—and the guillotine. Then Madame Grand vanishes again till she reappears on the arm of an aristocrat to the backbone, a man who served king, republic, directory, consulate, empire, royalty, and constitutional monarchy by turns, but always took especial care to serve Charles Maurice de Talleyrand—sometime Abbé de Périgord, then Bishop of Autun, and afterwards Prince of Benevento—before all nations, governments, and potentates whatsoever. For almost the first time in his life, Talleyrand has been under a cloud. As Abbé de Périgord, he had been the delight of the edifying society which surrounded the Dubarry. As Bishop of Autun, he had celebrated the famous mass in the Champ de Mars. In the most ticklish crisis of the Republic, when men's heads sat loosely on their shoulders, he was, although nominally second in command to Chauvelin, the ambassador of the French Republic at the English Court. Dismissed by Robespierre, he crossed and recrossed the Atlantic; but with the fall of Robespierre began negotiating for his return to France, finally achieved for him by Chénier. He reappears in France, and immediately becomes a man of power; and this time the still beautiful Madame Grand figures as Madame de Talleyrand at his pretty house at Montmorency. Under the Directory, people are not particularly strict as to the marriage tie. It is a period of transition. The old has been swept

away, and the new has not had time to crystallise. There have, in the general chaos, been "mariages au tambour," and others even more irregular. General Bonaparte marries Josephine Beauharnais to get the command of the Army of Italy. Terezia Cabarrus marries Citizen Tallien, and registers her children in her own name with a view to finally shaking off Citizen Tallien. Citizen Talleyrand is a bishop, but Madame Grand becomes Citizeness Talleyrand all the same. The condition of France is desperate enough, but there is rare piping and dancing in Paris, where actually during the Reign of Terror dwelt people who did not notice that "anything particular" was going on. The old iniquities have been swept away, and brand-new wickednesses mark the new era—of liberty, equality, and fraternity, carried out by "les gros bataillons." The ancient seigneurs, with their preposterous pretensions and immunities, have disappeared—some plotting beyond the Rhine; others, more patriotic, fighting in the ranks of the republican army; but the place of the *petit-maitre* has been taken by the "incroyables," the ancient *fermiers-généraux* are succeeded by the army contractors, and the grande dame has been supplanted by the "merveilleuse." It is the period of classic simplicity—the *merveilleuses* lean the head on one side in an affected attitude called the "Grecian lounge," and they have also taken advantage of classical taste to wear as little clothing as possible. Among these shine conspicuously Madame Tallien; Josephine Bonaparte, wife of the commander of the Army of Italy, by the grace of Citizen Barras; Madame Récamier and Madame Grand, otherwise Talleyrand, a handsome woman still, but well over thirty years.

Verily a delightful society, at once classic and picturesque. These beautiful ladies—not being encumbered by prejudice—are arrayed like unto the lilies of the field. By day they appear on the fashionable promenade in the Palais-Royal in wonderful attire; their curly heads covered with enormous hats; their elegant figures buttoned up in coats like those worn by the *incroyables*; their taper waists clasped by broad and massive belts. With evening they revert to the antique, even to the extent of wearing sandals over their naked feet. Their Coan robes rather reveal than conceal the small percentage of the figure that they cover. Red, white, and blue are, of course, the popular colours; but white,

relieved by a slight red ball-robe, as it were, round the high waist is the dress of those who aspire to true classicality. Over the bare arms are immense armlets, above the elbow—a style much affected by Madame Grand, as displaying her handsome limbs to advantage. To-day she has attired herself with more than usual care, for Talleyrand has invited to dinner a celebrated guest—no other than Denon—recently returned from Egypt, whither he had travelled with the rest of the savants who followed General Bonaparte. M. Denon is an artistic lion of the highest breed, and has come from Upper Egypt saturated with the works of the Pharaohs. Before leaving home in the morning M. Talleyrand—whose scorn of ignorant women and learned men appears pointedly in this circumstance—tells Madame Grand that Denon is coming. “He is,” says that wicked wit, “a very amiable man, although an author. Now authors love nothing so much as to be questioned about their own works. I will send you his travels to read, so that you may talk to him about them.”

Talleyrand sends a volume from his library, and Madame is delighted with the contents; reads it from end to end, and awaits the interesting guest with extraordinary curiosity. No sooner is the company seated, than Talleyrand, who has posted himself opposite to Madame and Denon, hears his wife begin at once.

“I cannot express to you the pleasure I have derived from reading your adventures.”

“Madame, you are too good.”

“Not at all, I assure you. Dear me, how horridly dull it must have been for you all alone on a desert island. I was exceedingly interested in it, but”—and here she laughs heartily—“what a droll figure you must have cut with your large sugar-loaf cap and your umbrella. Ah! how droll!”

The savant opens his eyes in amazement.

“Really, madame, I don’t understand—”

But Madame is under way and not to be stopped.

“Ah! yes. I felt for all your troubles. How you must have suffered after your shipwreck!”

“But, madame, I don’t know—”

“But than your consolation! How happy you must have been the day you found that dear Friday!”

Denon sits aghast, as well he may, for

the book Talleyrand had given Madame to read was Robinson Crusoe!

When Bonaparte hears this story, he—always so unceremonious in his language as to lead Talleyrand to say, “What a pity it is so great a man has such bad manners”—fastens upon him with the famous enquiry:

“Why have you chosen for your partner such a fool?”

“Because I could not find a greater.”

Very shortly after this the Corsican becomes respectable all at once, and insists that Talleyrand, for an ecclesiastic, is leading a scandalous life. Accordingly the poor pope, Pius the Seventh, is persuaded to absolve Talleyrand, first of the excommunication launched against him in 1791, and then of his vows altogether; in fact, to secularise him by a brief in regular form. Then Bonaparte, seized with a matchmaking mania, insists on all his friends getting properly and legally married. Cambacérés has a narrow escape, and Talleyrand, after a world of trouble with the Mayor of Pierrefitte, near his country house at Epinay, finds a more complaisant mayor in Paris, and is well and duly, but privately, married. Poor Madame Talleyrand is no better off, for she is not allowed to appear at the mushroom court until her husband threatens to resign his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Then only the stern moralist, Bonaparte, relents, and consents that the poor woman shall appear once at court on condition that she never attempts to appear there a second time. On the other hand, Talleyrand’s mother is so scandalised that she refuses to see her son, and even to receive her allowance at his hands.

Again we meet the figure of Madame Talleyrand. She is older by several years than when we last saw her, and she is embroidered in the finest of all possible tapestry, interworked with gold and silver threads, and encrusted with gems. Her features show the vulgarisation that beauty of her peculiar class must undergo with advancing years, but she is yet—as Napoleon, who detested her, was compelled to concede—“a very fine woman.” Fine indeed, both in person, costume, and surroundings. The little house at Montmorency and the villa at Epinay no longer suffice for the buxom Juno-like dame who leans against the mantelpiece in an attitude of easy grace. There is no affectation of simplicity in the decorations of her salon.

Everything is rich, sumptuous, and in the latest style, for her keen-witted husband has just sold his old mansion and gotten a new one with part of the spoil. The velvet cushions are stiff with gold embroidery; enormous bees sprawl over the carpet; great masses of gold bullion fringe and heavy tassels hang everywhere; the vases on the mantel are in heavy gilt mountings; the shawl that hangs over the wide straddling chair is rich with the choicest product of Cashmerian looms. All is rich—rich and golden to the verge of vulgarity—all save the delicious costume of the woman herself. Untaught she may be, but she has a true French-woman's instinct for knowing when she looks well. The low-bodied, highwaisted robe of white Indian muslin hangs in graceful folds, and is absolutely without ornament, save the embroidery of the small train which sweeps the carpet. The handsome arms and hands are bare, and the only jewellery consists of a necklace of immense pearls, with bracelets and earrings to correspond. The "most beautiful hair in the world" is gathered in a mass of curls over the low, broad forehead and thick eyebrows, and a plaited coil gives an elegant finish to the head. Altogether, the costume of Madame la Princesse is a triumph in the art of toning down redundant beauty. She is "looking her very best," and is in high good-humour accordingly; but she has other reason to be pleased, for she expects a visit from the Princess Dolgorouki, whose note she holds in her hand. She is very glad to be on friendly terms with a genuine princess, for she cannot shut her eyes to the truth, that her own serene highness-hood—not admitted save once at the imperial court—is but a pinchbeck affair at the best. At last arrives the genuine "grande dame," covered with the superb diamonds inherited from Prince Potemkin. Ex-Madame Grand smiles her welcome, although a pang of envious fury is wringing her woman's heart. She bursts out in admiration of Princess Dolgorouki's diamonds.

"Oh, madame, what beautiful diamonds: how happy you must be to possess them!"

"If," replies the princess graciously, "you expressed a wish to have some like them to M. de Talleyrand, I am sure he would be delighted to make you a present of them."

"What nonsense you talk!" cries the wife of the sometime Bishop of Autun,

"do you suppose, then, that I have married a pope?"

Verily, as Napoleon said at St. Helena, "silly and ignorant," but "a very fine woman," who receives at her husband's house the best people in Europe—royal, serene, and other highnesses and transparencies; till at last the colour fades from the "most beautiful hair in the world," and the fair Creole vanishes from the tapestry into the world of shadows, leaving to his solitary old age that wonderful man with brazen forehead and icy heart, who, for all her silliness and ignorance, loved her more than he loved any human being—Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord alone excepted.

MY MYSTERIOUS MULETEER.

We were a party of three Englishmen, travelling by rail from Madrid to the east coast, bound to Puerta Muerta, to buy transport mules for a certain little war then in progress in the remote east.

It was at Almanza, the junction for Valencia and Barcelona, that I first saw my mysterious muleteer.

No muleteer was he then to all outward seeming; but dressed like a Spanish gentleman of the old school, wrapped in a wide cape or cloak, which, when he chose, completely enshrouded his face. This was not invariably; more than once I saw his features plainly enough. He was not alone. A strikingly handsome girl, so like him that she was evidently his daughter, clung to him in a manner that betrayed evident anxiety and nervousness on his account. Her eyes, full of loving solicitude, were continually turned to his; now and again she motioned to him as if she wished him to cover up his mouth with his cloak. Was this for concealment, or was he an invalid?

They were rather a remarkable pair. Possibly it was the splendid Spanish beauty of the girl that attracted me, but I found myself thinking of them for the remainder of the journey. I looked out for them on the platform at Puerta Muerta, but they were nowhere in sight. Then the pressure of my own affairs drove them quite out of my head, and for some time I was so busily occupied that I had no leisure for vague dreams.

Puerta Muerta, when we reached it, might, in truth, have been dead a thousand years. The houses were like crumbling

mummies set up in rows along the deserted, dust-encumbered streets; only a stray falucha or two with ragged sails lay in the harbour. The warehouses were all boarded up, the mole overgrown with grass. The great caravanserai or fonda by the sea-shore could have done no business for years; we had the greatest difficulty in persuading its landlord that business had come at last.

But in an hour or two all was changed. A Spaniard has a keen scent for gain, when money can be made without great expenditure of force. The town awoke with a start, galvanised, as it were, into life by the action of English gold. The shopkeepers took down their shutters; merchants hitherto idle came to proffer their services; dealers without mules came in crowds to propose contracts for their supply.

We divided the labour. Clayton—by nature and professional training a suspicious, hard-headed man of business—looked to the finance, and was soon in agonies about exchange and the value of treasury bills, full of vouchers, tenders, agreements, a willing slave to the whole machinery of official routine. Hinks saw to the provision of stabling for our stock, to the supply of water—an important item at Puerta Muerta, where rain had not fallen for fourteen months—bought mule medicines, and examined specimens of alfalfa (clover) and algorraba beans; while it fell to my share to organise the corps of muleteers, to provide nose-bags, head-stalls, picket-ropes, mule-shoes, and marking-irons, so that our mules, when they arrived—as they did presently in hundreds—might be properly cared for, and embarked fully equipped for service in the field.

My duties brought me into close connection with the people of the place; good, easy-going country folk, speaking a provincial patois, clinging to local costume—a black, flat sombrero, as wide as a cart-wheel, a white shirt, black sash, white petticoat or kilt, footless stockings, and rope-soled sandals on their horny feet—very temperate, not over-industrious, but patient and willing to work for a very moderate wage. The times were hard; recent political troubles and a bad harvest had brought many to the verge of want, and men came in great numbers to be “apuntado”—“put down,” or noted for employment, by us. I was perplexed at times to choose, but I relied chiefly on my own judgment of

physiognomy and physique, provided all could produce, as proof of respectability, their “cedulas de vecinidad,” or passports, signed by their local authorities.

We were seated in the patio smoking one evening, when a waiter came to say a man had called to be “put down.” It was after business hours, but he was shown in. He was a tall, well-grown man, in the prime of life, dressed in the country fashion, holding himself very straight, and with voice and manner seemingly above his station. He made his request for employment in an independent, straightforward way, which pleased me.

“What do you think of him?” I said in English to Clayton.

“Pardon me,” said the applicant, also in English, correct, but not fluent, “I understand your language.”

I liked him for his honesty.

“You have papers; your cedula, and all that?”

“No, I have none. I stand simply on my merits, such as they are. I am accustomed to animals, strong, willing to work, honest——”

“That you had better leave us to say,” put in Clayton. We were still speaking in English.

“Do you doubt it, sir?” said the stranger, raising his voice, as if disposed to call the questioner to serious account.

Then, although the light was not good, I recognised him. It was the stranger I had seen at the station at Almanza.

“You are engaged,” I said at once. “Come to-morrow to the Bull Ring, our head-quarters, for orders.”

He made me a courteous bow, and, without speaking again, left us.

“Well, of all the idiotic proceedings,” cried Clayton at once—“to engage a man who has no papers; a man who speaks English——”

“That ought to be in his favour.”

“My experience is, that the linguists of an out-of-the-way foreign town are all rogues. How comes he to know English? It looks fishy.”

“Your absurd mistrustfulness, Clayton, is the worst trait in your character. You will never be a great man.”

“Rubbish! That is beside the question. I protest against the employment of this fellow.”

“And I insist upon it. I was much taken with his looks. Don’t you agree with me, Hinks?”

The “vet” never ventured an opinion

spontaneously; even when directly asked, he hesitated. Now, he felt the sinews of one arm slowly up and down, a favourite habit of his when in doubt, as if he were trying the tendons of a suspicious horse, and after a time only said:

"I wonder what he knows about animals! He *may* be of use."

And he was, undoubtedly. Before he had been in our employment for twenty-four hours, Enrique, as he was called, became our right-hand man. We were now in the full swing of purchase; daily we sat in state at a long table in the arena of the Bull Ring, and gave audience to high and low. The dealers flocked in—some with droves of mules; others with a team or a pair. Now and again, a labouring man, with tears in his eyes, brought his one precious beast—his bread-winner and familiar friend—and sold him to us, or tried to sell him, for double what he was worth. Enrique was invaluable; he was profoundly knowing in animals, and up to all the tricks of the trade. To save trouble, although I spoke a certain amount of Spanish, we installed him as interpreter and go-between; and as such he gave such sound advice, and seemed so trustworthy, that even suspicious Clayton began to appreciate him. He became Hinks's lieutenant, serving him ably when that astute "vet"—a large-limbed, powerful man—put in practice his favourite method of testing a mule's temper, which was to hold the brute with one hand and to belabour his hind-quarters with the other. Enrique possessed, also, the rare gift of organisation to a degree seemingly strange, unless it were the result of long practice added to natural powers. Seeing this, and that the rest of the muleteers readily admitted his superiority, I gave him *carte blanche*. Within a week our men and animals were brigaded; responsible heads were appointed; our stables were as well disciplined and orderly as those of a regiment of horse.

Enrique gave us, ere long, a more substantial proof of his loyalty to our service. One fine morning, with a certain flourish, there entered to us, when we were busy buying, a tall man with a commanding presence. He had a hawk-like nose, bright eyes, and the dark blood of the gitano (gipsy) mantled beneath his brown cheek.

He came forward with a theatrical air and touched himself on the breast.

"Behold me! In me your excellencies

see the key of La Mancha. You want mules? I have but to turn the lock—pouf! you will be overrun with beasts;" and he touched his waistcoat, as if he carried them there within on his manly bosom.

"Tell him to wait his turn," I said rather snappishly to Enrique. We showed no favour or affection. It was first come, first served; and the keys of La Mancha had no special claim to consideration.

"They speak no Castilian, then?" said Rafael Sandunga, as I found out he was called.

"Not a word," replied our interpreter, with so much aplomb that I felt sure he had some reason for concealing that I understood the language.

"Pues bien! So much the better. It is with you, then, that I shall deal. Vamos al caso! Let us come to business; let us arrange the account. They are rich, these English? Of course, all are. They want mules; they have little intelligence in mule stock, how should they? I have the best in the world; they shall have them—as a gift."

Overhearing this, I became fully aware that Don Rafael Sandunga proposed to rob us to the uttermost farthing.

"I will tell them of your liberal offer," said Enrique, dryly.

"Wait, friend. For a mule fourteen hands, sound, gentle, young, the price is—ten ounces. No."

Enrique laughed aloud.

"Hush. The masters will suspect. I mean ten ounces between you and me. Get me ten ounces and you shall go halves."

I was much interested. Enrique hardly meant to play us false. Next moment he said:

"I must tell them something; they will wonder what we are talking about. You hear, captain of my soul," he quietly observed, turning to me, "you hear? He means that if you pay ten doubloons, one hundred and sixty dollars, he and I can divide the difference between that and the real value of the beast. Farceur!"

"What do you think I should do?"

"Turn him out of the Ring, neck and crop. He is a miserable rogue, who deserves to go to the common jail."

Taking my cue from this, I rose and made "the key of La Mancha" a low bow.

"Senor of my whole consideration," I said slowly, in Spanish, "we are obliged to you for your obliging offer to our

servant, but we decline to deal. Anda usted," I added, sharply. "Hook it, begone. You shall never enter the Ring again."

At the first sound of Spanish from my lips the rogue had turned pale. Then he put his hand to his sash, as if in search of a knife, but some of our men seized him before he could do any harm.

"Cursed traitor!" he cried, turning with concentrated passion to Enrique, who stood by smiling with calm contempt. "I will be even with you. There is no debt that is never paid, no bond unfulfilled. I know you. I have seen you before. Beware!"

Next minute Don Sandunga was removed from our premises.

Work, unremitting and anxious, prevented my questioning Enrique further as to the threats of this disappointed sharper; nor did the man himself refer to it. He went on with his duties steadily and quietly, and he made no friends among the muleteers; he seemed to talk to no one but myself, and even with me, although I treated him, as I felt he was, quite as my equal, he was invariably reserved.

Every night at varying hours I visited the Bull Ring, and found Enrique prompt always to answer to my call.

Once, rather late, he was accompanying me on my rounds, when a tremendous knocking at the outer gate made us both start.

"Go and see, Enrique, what that means."

"Excuse me, Senor Capitan. I will send Alejandro;" and with strange alacrity Enrique left me.

I myself reached the gate in time to hear the following short colloquy:

"Who goes there?" from within.

"La autoridad (the authority). Open, in the name of the Queen."

Isabella was on the throne; Narvaez at her right hand. The political air was heavy with electricity, and all Spain was under martial law.

"I am the master here," said I, at once putting myself forward. "What is the meaning of this intrusion?"

The visitors consisted of a posse of civil guards, and at their head was a small dried-up atom of a man, who seemed all gray moustaches and gold-headed cane.

"I am the chief of the police of this city. I require to see all your muleteers. I am informed that you harbour here a dangerous rebel chief."

I resented these peremptory tones, but

even before I could protest, the muleteers, with the instinct of obedience to despotic rule, had ranged themselves in a row.

"They are all here?" said Don Cirilo, turning to me, as soon as he had inspected each in turn by the light of a lantern. "All your muleteers are here?"

"All my muleteers are here," I repeated. Enrique was absent; but he was now our overseer, not a muleteer. I permitted myself this slight evasion, for I felt certain Enrique wished to remain concealed.

"It is very strange."

And then the intruders made a thorough search of the place, all to no purpose. Presently, without a word of apology they took their leave.

On mentioning the affair to Clayton, all his old suspicions of Enrique revived.

"I knew how it would be. You have made a fatal mistake. You were particularly desirous to avoid any collision with the local government, and yet your hastiness in engaging this fellow will compromise us seriously."

"You have always admitted Enrique was worth his weight in gold to us."

"He will be dearer than that, if the Spanish authorities, as I fear, order us to leave Puerta Muerta."

While he was still speaking, a pair of civil guards appeared, and one of them served upon me a summons to appear immediately before the military governor of the town.

Till now, although employed by our own Government, our operations had been conducted as private persons: a purely commercial enterprise suffers from official recognition. But feeling that now we were in some danger of misconstruction, I hastily put on my uniform and went to the citadel.

I was received most courteously. The uniform did that. Directly I entered, the commandant turned to the chief of the police and said rather sharply:

"He is an English officer, you see. This can go no farther.—Captain," he said to me, "pardon our suspicions. Some wise people have discovered a dangerous conspiracy in your doings. Tell me the truth. What is your object here?"

"We are buying mules."

"That I know, but for what purpose?"

"To send them to the East."

"For the British Government?"

"If you must know, yes."

"We heard you were drilling and raising a force of insurgents, and that you meant

to seize the citadel for—Prim. Forgive me. Will you take a cigar?"

He was decorated with the Moorish war medal, and perhaps was not violently opposed to Marshal Prim.

My interview with the authorities ended thus. But we were not yet out of the wood. I saw from the face of the chief of the police that he was not satisfied, and I meant to put Enrique on his guard directly he returned to his post. But he never returned, for obvious reasons. Two civil guards mounted sentry day and night at the gates of the Bull Ring, and made it their business to examine everybody who went in and out.

Clayton was now quite convinced of Enrique's guilt. We must have nothing more to do with the man, that was plain.

I was sorry for my mysterious muleteer. I had seen enough of him to gather that he was a person of superior station, and I had no desire to help him to exile at the Philippines, or perhaps to be shot with only a form of trial—and then his daughter, the Spanish beauty? I had seen or heard nothing whatever of her since the day at Almanza junction.

A few days passed. Then the first steamship arrived to load up with mules, and we proceeded to embark our first batch. While I was "telling off" the muleteers and the animals, and preparing to send them—missing Enrique's services at every instant—a note was put into my hands.

"When can I speak to you? Your uniform courtesy and kindness lead me to throw myself at your feet. Will you add the other favour to the many I am in your debt? The bearer will bring you to me at the hour named to-night.—ENRIQUE."

I was punctual, and was led by a ragged lad down several back streets, and at length below a low archway down into a sort of vault. There, shrouded in his big cloak, was Enrique, and with him was his daughter.

He did the honours of his cellar as if it had been a palace. I was presented to his daughter. She might have been a princess.

"I will not waste your time, Captain Gaythorne," he said, speaking in Spanish. "What I ask is, that you should send me in your steamer to Alexandria to-morrow."

"You are anxious to leave the country?"

"I am."

"Compromised?"

"There is a price upon my head."

"It might involve me, and, worse than that, my Government." I really hesitated. "Oh, sir, for the love of God, have pity—"

His daughter had seized my arm. Tears filled her large eyes. How eloquent they were!

"Concha!" said her father, "you must restrain yourself. I respect your scruples," he said to me. "But, believe me, I am not a very hardened offender. I am more sinned against than sinning. I was led to 'pronounce'—"

"You are an officer?"

"Of course." He drew himself up, as if he wondered how I could have doubted it.

"My father is—"

I interrupted her.

"I had rather not know, *senorita*. But he can command me to the utmost of my power. It may not be easy to get him on board; the police are on the alert, and we must be very circumspect."

I left them as soon as possible, although it was sweet to hear Concha's voluble thanks, and to look into her grateful eyes.

A watch, unobtrusive but close, was kept upon the ship. Civil guards patrolled the wharf; the chief of the police came on board several times, and I was obliged to show him every attention. He made several visits to the mule deck, and inspected our muleteers every day. To the very moment of starting he hovered about, his myrmidons within call, as if he suspected to the last.

But the good ship *Sophonisba* at length cleared for sea. Warp after warp was cast adrift, and she forged slowly ahead past the mole; then her bows swung round, she gained the open sea and went fairly off under full steam, pausing only to pick up one of her boats which appeared to be waiting for her outside.

Enrique was in this boat.

Years passed, and I heard nothing more of the mysterious muleteer; years of turmoil and dissension in Spain. First, Isabella fled before the insurrection of Montpensier and Prim; then came the Republican risings, quenched in torrents of blood; next, Amadeo, and the assassination of the king-maker; last of all the Carlist invasion, and the bitter civil war.

Concha I had never quite forgotten. Often I had wished to revisit Spain. In all the changes and chances of these very years, perchance her father might have found himself at the top of the tree, perhaps, also—

Then a roving spirit took me to the Northern Provinces. San Sebastian was besieged; I must needs push forward and see all I could, when I suddenly found myself surrounded, and a prisoner in the hands of Alphonist troops.

I spoke in Spanish, and said I was an Englishman.

There were Englishmen among the Carlists; my knowledge of Spanish did not befriend me. I was evidently a suspicious person. The subaltern officer in command was for disposing of me at once. My fate would have been sealed but for the opportune arrival of a colonel, in staff uniform, who, hearing my explanation, decided that I must go before the general-in-chief. Accordingly, bound with a thin cord in that ingenious Spanish fashion which is more efficient than handcuffs or shackles, I was, after a long delay, ushered into the presence of the great man.

"Your name," said he, without looking up.

"Gaythorne."

"Gracias al cielo!" cried the general, springing to his feet. "At last we meet, generous friend. Release him instantly. This gentleman is most dear to me—dearer than a son."

"Enrique!" I cried.

"Enrique Guevarra y Camposillos, captain-general and commander-in-chief of the armies of Castile, and your firm friend till death."

I spent the following winter at Madrid, and, renewing my acquaintance with Concha Guevarra, think it is not unlikely that I may become the general's son in more than in name.

AT THE PLAY IN JAPAN.

LONG before miracle-plays ceased to be the chief attraction of Bartlemy Fair in old London; long before actors left off their strolling habits and domiciled themselves in fixed playhouses; long before scenery became an accessory to our dramatic performances; away in distant Japan flourished a complete, distinct national drama. With a few modifications, inevitable in this age of advance and reform, the same drama flourishes in Yedo and Yokohama to-day. Amongst the very many points of resemblance between the French and the Japanese characters, none is so salient as their love of the drama. A Japanese holiday is invariably closed by a

visit to the play; and to all classes of Japanese, the greatest treat that can be offered is an excursion to one of the great theatres of the capital. To an Englishman, a few hours, even of the finest acting, is sufficient—thanks to the combined efforts of too many of our architects and lessees—to make our play-houses barely sufferable; but your true play-going Japanese, regarding his theatre in the light of a big tea-house, will sit out, day after day, the course of one of the mystic, romantic pieces so dear to his mind; and, rather than miss an incident of the story, will provide himself as for a distant excursion, and even be ready to sleep in his box. Every town, almost every village, has its theatre, and the edifice, especially on the eve of a performance, cannot easily be mistaken. The building itself is generally plain and unpretending enough, save, perhaps, that its roof is a trifle higher than those of the neighbouring houses, and that a huge doorway gapes in the place of the latticed shutters which are so characteristic of nine Japanese houses out of ten. On the advent, however, of a performance, the edifice bursts out into individuality quite peculiar and unmistakable. Huge flags stretch from side to side of the gables; a platform appears from the upper storey, on which musicians—such musicians!—keep up an incessant clamour of fife, gong, and drum; shops which were yesterday emporiums for the sale of clothes, or sweets, or hardware, reopen as restaurants, and are turned internally upside down in order to afford sleeping-room for guests; and the dull, sleepy old street awakens to an animation and bustle quite peculiar to these occasions.

The interior of a Japanese theatre resembles our own in many respects, but in many others is quite original and peculiar. The house is similarly planned—that is, with the money-taker's bureau and the vestibule for cloaks and cloaks at the door: a gallery running round, in which are private boxes, and the cheapest seats, running round the pit. The roof is festooned with quaintly-figured lengths of gaudily-coloured cloth, and the lighting of the house proper is effected by huge lanterns, symbolically painted, suspended at intervals. All else is entirely peculiar to the country and people.

From the stage, running through the midst of the audience to the passages behind, passes a platform known as the Hana

Michi, or "flower path," along which the most important actors make their exits and entrances; processions pass, and travelling litters or sham animals are introduced. Above the stage, in a cage with blinds, are the orchestra—singers, fife, drum, cymbal, guitar, and gong players. The stage itself is a marvel of ingenuity and handiness; that part on which the actors are is circular, and works on a windlass beneath; thus the hurry and confusion so inseparable from shifting flies and scenes is obviated by the simple expedient of turning the stage round, so that the half hitherto behind appears as the new scene.

Though peculiar in their ideas of perspective and the harmony of colours, the Japanese are wonderful scenic artists. Some of the effects produced, notably the favourite weird, solemn, midnight scenes, prelude a tragedy or a romantic event, are really excellent; for realism the Japanese are not enthusiastic, but in their imitations of nature they are generally very happy. No one who has witnessed Japanese juggling and sleight of hand can wonder that in the science of "stage trickism" they are adepts. Without half the ingenious mechanical appliances used in our London pantomimes the Japanese actors, by swiftness and cunning of hand, can produce an endless variety of startling illusions, and the spectator cannot help sometimes wondering whether what he has seen has really taken place, or whether his eyes have played him false.

Within the last four or five years gas has been introduced into one or two of the big theatres of the capital, but until the year 1873 the means of illumination were but feeble. Three tallow flambeaux stuck into sconces served as foot-lights, and even with these it was necessary that each leading performer should be followed about by a boy, draped in black, so as to simulate invisibility, holding a long bamboo, at the end of which flickered a candle within a few inches of the actor's nose, so that every distortion and play of feature might be observed by the audience. So conservative indeed are the Japanese in matters theatrical, that even in the theatres lighted by gas this old method is adhered to.

Behind and above the stage are the green-rooms, property-rooms, and dressing-rooms; these latter, vast apartments, dimly lighted, and smelling abominably. About the stage of the Japanese theatre, and the regions behind the curtain, there

is none of the secrecy and mystery which so profoundly impress the majority of play-goers at home. Directly the curtain is drawn across at the end of an act, a pell-mell rush is made by the juvenile members of the audience for the stage, and fine games of hide-and-seek or follow-my-leader are indulged in amongst the lumber and musical instruments there accumulated. No obstruction is put in the way of the foreigner wishing to see the actors in private, to talk with them as they con their parts over the charcoal braziers of the green-room, or to sketch them as they squat before their looking-glasses, transforming themselves into heroes, villains, fair damsels, or monsters of the nether world. A little "back-sheesh," in the way of a bottle of wine, goes far to loosen the tongues of those free-and-easy Japanese actors; and out of their mouths flow far more information and humorous stories than one can coax, by any amount of persuasion, out of a professional cicerone.

To the European spectator, even if he be a good scholar or attended by an interpreter, the plays performed are well-nigh incomprehensible as far as the meaning of the words is concerned; but the wonderful tact of conveying meaning by gesture, so inherent in the Japanese race, serves to make the plot tolerably intelligible; and as, in many instances, the language is in the obsolete form of past times, and therefore but imperfectly understood by the majority of the spectators, one need never dread lack of amusement on account of not being able to understand the ranting and mouthing of the speakers.

Japanese plays may be divided into three classes: screaming farces of everyday life; romantic or historical dramas; and "féeries," or musical burlettas. To the foreigner, the first are, perhaps, the most amusing and instructive; but if the visitor be determined to see the Japanese farce pure and unadulterated, he should not carry with him any prejudices on the score of morality and refinement, for the humour of these pieces consists in a great measure of "breadth" of incident, which would scarcely be tolerated even in the lowest London "gaff." Of late, much of this indecency has been expunged, at least from the theatres of Yokohama and Yedo; but even now it is a very unwise measure to take a lady to a theatre in Japan. The scenes of these farces are those of everyday life; the personages are exactly the

men and women of the lower orders whom one sees chattering at the doorways, or chaffing and joking in the streets. Every part of the action is, of course, grossly exaggerated; the fun is uproarious and ceaseless; the dialogue brims over with puns, repartees, and allusions to current events; and every actor, from the highest to the lowest, enters into the spirit of the thing thoroughly and unaffectedly. Hitches and awkward pauses are almost unknown.

The romances and historical legends are the most popular representations. These frequently range over several days in performance, the curtain being drawn at about midnight, and the thread of the story resumed on the following day. Blood and thunder enter largely into the composition of these pieces; of sentiment, there is but little, of pathos, none. The stories—some of them many hundreds of years old, others, as the celebrated "Forty-seven Ronins," of comparatively recent origin—are as well known to every man, woman, and child of the audience, as are the tales of Cinderella or of Jack the Giant Killer amongst ourselves. Hence the enthusiasm of the sightseers is as genuine as it is universal, more especially as, for the greater part, these dramas deal with the deeds of the great and heroic of old times. In the eyes of the European visitor, these dramas savour too much of Richardson's show to possess much merit. It is a common thing to see a dozen actors decapitated, disembowelled, or maimed, in the course of an evening, and the faster is the flow of blood, and the greater the accumulation of horrors, the better are the spectators—male and female—pleased. Tempests, thunderstorms, and earthquakes are the never-failing accompaniments of the deaths of the heroes; the lanterns in the theatre are extinguished, the stage is darkened, the orchestra bewail and bemoan in sympathy with the discord of the elements—not a horrible detail is left to be imagined. Men covered with wounds and blood stagger across the stage, cut a somersault and die; ghostly lights flicker from the wings; deep-toned bells boom; and, at the climax, the stage revolves, and the scene changes amidst the enthusiastic shrieks of the audience.

The "féeries," or burlesques, are, as a rule, mere spectacular displays, the singing dialogue being entirely subservient to the magnificence of the scenes and dresses. Occasionally these eccentric performances are varied by feats of juggling and pos-

turing, and by distributions of substantial prizes to the holders of lottery-tickets drawn on entering the theatre.

Up to the year 1873 no woman ever acted on the Japanese stage in public, although the private performances given in tea-houses and at the residences of the feudal lords were entirely by women. Before the above-mentioned date, the women's parts at the Japanese theatres were always taken by men; and very admirably the parts were performed, the "make-up" being perfect; and, as all dialogue on the Japanese stage, whether by male or female characters, is spoken in a nasal falsetto, the difference of voice is really unappreciable. Successful actors in Japan, like successful wrestlers, become the pets of society. Testimonials and presents are showered upon them, and a man has but to make a hit on the Japanese stage to be secure of a certain opulence for the remainder of his natural life.

Their lives, however, are not entirely destitute of thorns. The office of Lord Chamberlain is not exercised in Japan by one official, but by the whole force of the Government, which has spies and informers placed in every theatre in the country, to report upon anything which may be construed as having political significance in the plays, and on all actors who attempt to caricature those in power. More than once has it happened that an entire company has been marched off to durance vile, for some infringement of the very exacting regulations of the powers that be, and the Government takes especial care that an actor once caught tripping shall not be allowed an opportunity of doing so again. The audience, too, are by no means tolerant, and so keen is the national sense of the ridiculous that the slightest failing or slip, on the part of an actor, frequently brings about much more substantial signs of disapprobation than mere outcries and hissing, and theatre-wrecking is not altogether unknown in the history of the Japanese drama.

Tragic and romantic actors in Japan enjoy the greatest popularity, the comedians being considered much in the same light as were the court-jesters of old, privileged mummery and caricaturists. Acting, in the Japanese sense of the word, must be acting; nature is suppressed as much as possible, and the wilder or more fanciful an actor can render his part, the finer performer is he in the eyes of the public. In their tragedies, all the faults

of our earlier actors are visible. Rant passes for impressiveness, stilted movement for dignity; the heroes go through their motions as if impelled by mechanism, and what might be construed into sentiment or pathos is lost in absurd mouthing and overdone gesticulation. Unities, probabilities, and possibilities are utterly ignored. Men, pierced with numberless ghastly wounds, only die after ten minutes' bellowed oratory, and lovelorn maids sob and go into hysterics, to the accompaniment of guttural sounds of the strangest kind. With the comedians it is different; their facial expression is marvellous, in powers of gesticulation they are unrivalled, and so easy and natural is their performance, that one hesitates to give it the name of "acting."

Free-and-easiness is the great characteristic of Japanese audiences. During the performance everyone smokes, eats, and drinks; criticisms are very audibly expressed, conversation and chaff are very general: people come in and go out as they like; if the weather be hot, superfluous raiment is laid aside "sans cérémonie: coolies enter with their implements of trade, and reeking with the dust and sweat of the day, much in the same way that one may observe peasants slouching into continental cathedrals for a few minutes' prayer. On the stage the same nonchalance is apparent. If an actor be not "word-perfect," the prompter follows him about with a book without the slightest attempt at disguise; a stage-carpenter, wanting a light for his pipe, does not hesitate to crawl in front of the actors, and take one from the stage-candles; men who are killed during the play are allowed to make their exits behind a piece of black cloth, boldly brought and held up by a boy; and no hitch or accident ever justifies the drawing across of the curtain.

Applause takes the form of wild shrieks—most frequently the name of the actor. Dissent and disapprobation are invariably expressed by loud and long-continued chaffing and hooting.

Matters now, however, are fast changing. To see the real, unadulterated Japanese drama, the visitor must go to the theatres in the essentially native parts of the capital, or to one of the great inland towns. In the stuffiness and gloom of the old Japanese playhouse there was a charm which the present gas-lighted and rigidly-inspected theatres do not possess; the old plays, with the old habits and customs of the

people, are going out of fashion; and new-fangled compositions, touching on the influences of Western civilisation, are becoming the rage. Still, there is much to be seen, even now, that is both amusing and instructive; and no visitor to the country, however short his stay, should miss an opportunity of going to the play in Japan.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERBARD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXV. A NICE LITTLE DINNER-PARTY.

"I THINK, Gracie, you should call on Miss de Horsingham before she comes to dinner to-night," said the commissary, on the morning after his daughter's return. Gracie was making the tea for breakfast, to which her friend had not yet come down; she paused in her occupation, and looked up with a surprised air.

"Why, papa? It is not as if she were a stranger to me; and surely it is scarcely fitting that I should go about just now making calls."

"Not in a general way, of course," returned he sharply; "I thought I explained to you last night that this lady has earned the right to be considered an exceptional case."

"But the commandant's family have not earned it, papa; and if I go to the house, I must needs seem to be calling on them also."

"Stuff and nonsense, I have no patience with such conventionalities. This is a matter of which I should think you might trust your father to be the best judge. I am sure Miss de Horsingham would not wish it, unless it was the correct thing, and so forth; and I happen to know she does wish it. I know of no better authority on all questions of propriety and— Ah, Mrs. Landon, how are you?—though, having seen you, I scarcely need ask. Woolwich is, as it were, your native air; and I am delighted to see it agrees with you."

"I am quite well, thank you. How are you, Gracie?—what is the matter?" for Gracie was looking deadly pale.

"Nothing, dear Ella; my father and I were having a little discussion about my calling on Miss de Horsingham to-day, and since, as he says, it is a question of propriety, I should be glad of your opinion. Do you think it necessary that I should do so?"

"One moment," interrupted the commissary; "I did not say 'necessary,' Mrs. Landon; but merely as an act of civility—of acknowledgment of kindness to her father under certain exceptional and distressing circumstances—I venture to recommend it."

"I should not go, if I were Gracie," said Ella quietly. "The lady is much her senior, as I understand, and can scarcely require what must be taken more or less as an act of chaperonship. If Gracie were about to return thanks in person for kind enquiries, not to her in particular, but to other friends, Miss de Horsingham might be included; but otherwise I think at present Gracie should not make calls."

"Very good," said the commissary indifferently. "It is, after all, a woman's question, and I bow to your opinion," Mrs. Landon."

He looked so black that Ella could not help remarking—though she was sorry for it the next moment:

"I should not have expressed it, Mr. Ray, had I not been asked to do so."

"I am sure you would not," said he; "but since Gracie thought proper to appeal to you, you were, of course, obliged to answer." He cast an angry glance in the direction of his daughter, and sat down to breakfast. He perceived that there were disadvantages, as well as advantages, in the presence of Mrs. Cecil Landon beneath his roof. If she had not been there—though in this he was in error—he felt sure that Gracie would have given in to his wishes at once; the consciousness of the neighbourhood of an ally, he thought, had made her audacious; whereas, as we have said, she was not so pliant—being under no such compulsion to be so—as of yore. Indeed, on any question involving respect for her mother's memory, she was more than resolute—she was unflinching.

So Miss de Horsingham came to dinner without the preparatory call; and, it must be confessed, without any appearance of having lacked that attention to place her perfectly at her ease. The commissary, in speaking of her to the colonel in confidence, had poetically compared her to Juno. She was certainly a tall, fine woman, with large eyes and a majestic step; but, to less prejudiced observers, she might not have seemed of the first Olympian quality. They would have set her down as a Juno, who had been Jupiter's housekeeper—in a perfectly decorous way, of course—or had

let lodgings to the lesser gods. Her raven hair hung in two flat festoons upon her broad white forehead, which gave it an artificial appearance that it did not deserve; and she wore upon her stately person such a profusion of jewellery as is not often seen, except upon young ladies in cigar-shops. There was this important difference, however, that Miss de Horsingham's ornaments were what they professed to be—gold and precious stones—as the commissary had assured himself, by every means short of actual assay. No one that was not at all events in easy circumstances, he argued, could afford to wear that amount of precious metal; it was like letting two hundred pounds, at least, lie idle, and equivalent to a loss of ten pounds per annum. She had a sweet and rather sad smile, which was somehow unexpected in one of her robust appearance, and therefore the more pleasing, and her voice was soft and low, though very distinct. Gracie received her with some warmth of welcome, for she liked her rather than otherwise, and was willing to please her father in all things permissible. Her guest returned her kiss with tenderness, but without effusion.

"I should not have come so soon, Gracie," she whispered, "at least not like this"—she meant on any such festive occasion—"but for your father's wish."

"I understand," returned Gracie gratefully; though she was, in truth, very far from doing so, except that she saw Miss de Horsingham meant to be very considerate. Her success with Ella was not great.

"I have heard so much of you, and am so pleased at last to see you, Mrs. Landon."

"You are very kind to say so," said Ella. "I have been always so unfortunate in not seeing you, when we dined at the commandant's."

This was a sharp flick of the tongue, for Ella very well knew that the reason she had not seen her was that the governess did not dine with the family, when there was a dinner-party. It was quite contrary to her custom to be so cruel, especially considering the subordinate position of the other lady; but she was angry with her upon her friend's account (who was still quite unconscious of her designs upon her father), and resented, on her own part, Miss de Horsingham's air of patronage.

Nevertheless, the two ladies smiled upon each other quite prettily, and it was in

Miss de Horsingham's most dulcet tones that she enquired after Cecil.

"I have heard so much of him, too; I hope it is not ill-health which prevents him from being here to-night—but that is impossible; I forgot that in that case you would not have left him."

"He is quite well, thank you," returned Ella, calmly; but she felt that the "flick" had been returned with interest, and winced under it.

Then Miss de Horsingham exchanged a few words with the colonel, whose courtesy never failed him with a "fine woman" (unless when speaking of her to others), and was conducted to the sofa by her host. Her magnificent proportions occupied the whole of it, and shut out the glories of the "Abbey by Night," that blazed upon its back, from all beholders.

"It was so good of you to come," whispered the commissary.

"Nay, general, it was so good of you to ask me. How beautiful Gracie is looking! Even the charms of Mrs. Landon cannot throw her into the shade."

"They are both very well in their way," answered the host indifferently.

He would have liked to have added something about somebody else's style of beauty being more in his way, but he felt a difficulty in expressing it neatly; and, besides, he still felt too uneasy about the existence of that ten thousand pounds to commit himself to such an extent.

Of course there are some circumstances under which stout gentlemen and ladies find themselves at a disadvantage in society—in a stall at the opera, or on a plank between the quay and a steamboat, and in a shell-jacket; but taking them all round, they are certainly in a position of superiority. Their appearance gives them a certain aplomb: if their conversation is grave, a moral accompanies their physical weight; if lively, it adds a piquancy to the jest. I doubt whether Falstaff would have been so great a wit if he had been a lesser man. If fat folks are stupid, allowance is made for them; and if otherwise, they overwhelm opposition.

Miss de Horsingham was by no means stupid, and she carried all before her on the evening in question, and apparently without effort. She did not put herself forward in any way, and made herself agreeable to everybody, including Ella. She was apparently content at having shown her teeth to her at their first encounter, and was amiable without an

attempt at conciliation; nor did she irritate her by showing the least sign of encouragement to the commissary. His attentions were, to Ella's eyes at least, unmistakable; but Miss de Horsingham either affected not to see them, or accepted them in such a manner as robbed them of much of their significance. She spoke quite naturally of her own way of life, using indeed that favourite phrase of hers with respect to her pupils, that she "loved to see their minds expand like the flowers to the sun;" but she had employed the metaphor so often that it had become at last second nature with her to use it.

"And yet you will some day get tired of teaching?" observed the commissary.

She shrugged her shoulders very slightly, yet sufficient to show what very fine shoulders they were, and answered quietly:

"Perhaps I may. Then, I suppose, I shall give it up."

"Gad, it isn't everybody who can give up what they get tired of," observed the colonel. He did not say it with any intention of assisting the commissary—the rogue was thinking indeed of the married state, of poor devils with wives—but nothing could have been more grateful to his host, who would have made the same remark himself had he possessed the courage. He awaited Miss de Horsingham's reply with eager ears.

"I cannot imagine anyone, of principle," said she, coolly, "pursuing a calling for which they felt themselves no longer fitted."

The answer was not very satisfactory, it being another sort of principle which the commissary was anxious to hear about, and he could not resist the opportunity of pursuing the investigation.

"Unhappily," said he, in a low voice, "the vulgar question of pounds, shillings, and pence, Miss de Horsingham, keeps most of us to our posts whether we will or no."

"It may do so in a man's case," said she, "but women are in a better position. If we are not ambitious, and know how to live on a little, we can afford some sacrifice to maintain our self-respect."

"I should not have thought your own tastes were very economical," continued the commissary, with a glance of his hawk's eye that took in earrings, brooch, and bracelets at one swoop.

"Ah, you are thinking of my jewels.

They were my dear father's gifts, who could deny me nothing; but as for myself, I think I may say I have never spent a shilling in my life in mere extravagance."

"Pray take some more champagne," said the commissary with effusion. "It is really very good."

"I have no doubt it is," said she, smiling; "but champagne—to me, at least—is an extravagance, and therefore a thing to which I have not been used."

"She is perfectly charming," thought the commissary, "and yet," suggested his practical intelligence, "she may have frittered away the money in speculations after all; women are so foolish in their frugalities." How could he make himself sure that it was not so in the present instance? He remembered the colonel's formula about "generous instincts;" but that would only serve him as respected her habits of economy, of which he now felt assured. He had no formula for the enquiry whether she had invested her money in bad securities.

It was very unfortunate, since the colonel and the other two ladies were engaged in some topic of interest, and the ear of Miss de Horsingham was all his own. The commissary's intelligence did not, however, fail him at this pinch. A most ingenious thought occurred to him. He would propose to her that they should play a round game after dinner, and would ask if she liked "speculation." Whether she replied "yes," or "no," or even that she knew nothing about it, the opportunity would be given him of speaking of the risks of investments. Like all the suggestions of real genius, nothing could be more simple, or go more directly to the point. It was one of those things the success of which appears assured until we try it, when some unforeseen misadventure wrecks the whole scheme.

"Are you fond of cards, Miss de Horsingham?"

"No; they don't interest me in the least—What is that you are saying, colonel, about Mr. Darall?"

The bird had escaped from the snare of the fowler and flown in his very face. The lady had turned from him abruptly, and, if it had been possible, like a listener bored, to ask a question, which she knew to be offensive to him, of another. For Miss de Horsingham was certainly not unaware that young Darall had paid some attentions to Gracie, against which he (her father) had put his veto; it was

known throughout the garrison, and Miss de Horsingham was not the sort of person who would be the last to hear such a piece of gossip. The commissary bit his lip, and in his nervous vexation spilt his champagne over his trousers. Fortunately, among his recent acts of extravagance he had substituted a pair of superfine black ones for the "ducks" that had hitherto been his evening wear; but still it was very annoying. His attention was necessarily directed to the conversation too, which he did not wish to escape him, though its topic was so unwelcome. He perceived, indeed, that Gracie did not join in it, but she kept her eyes fixed before her, and was evidently bestowing on it her best attention. The others were giving tongue fast enough (confound them!) and all together, like a pack of hounds in full cry.

"I am glad he has got it," said the colonel, "for I think he deserves it."

"Who is that who has got his deserts?" enquired the commissary, with irritation; "has anybody been hung?"

"Not exactly," replied the colonel, grinning. "He has only been suspended from his military duties. We are talking of young Darall, who is to be sent on survey, it seems, to the South of England."

"He is surely very young in the service, to get such a good appointment?" observed Ella, with interest.

"It does not require much intelligence for such a post, my dear madam," remarked the commissary. "His stock-in-trade will be a theodolite and a chain—with which he will probably hang himself in the South of England——"

"Not a bit of it," interrupted the colonel; "he is going to Pullham, or thereabouts; very excellent quarters, as it happens, with plenty of society."

"Pullham—I've heard of Pullham," said Ella, reflectively.

"It is where the accident occurred upon the railway," said Gracie softly, and speaking for the first time.

"To be sure," sighed Ella, "I had forgotten."

She remembered it all now, and all that had happened since; the moments were rare indeed when it was out of her thoughts. Her interest in the conversation vanished from that moment, and the colonel and Miss de Horsingham pursued it alone.

"I believe Sir Hercules got it for the lad," continued he; "he had always a very high opinion of him."

"That is true," observed Miss de Horsingham. "I heard him one day—at luncheon—speaking of Mr. Darall to the commandant, and he said that he had never known good conduct and hard work combined so happily in any young man."

"I should think he was plodding," put in the commissary with a sneer.

"That is the pace that tells," replied Miss de Horsingham; "I think I may say that much from my own experience in education."

"Gad, and it is the pace that kills, madam," observed the colonel, with the air of a man whose natural genius had been too great for his advancement in life.

"I am wholly of your opinion, Colonel Juxon," said the lady, and with a sweet smile of acknowledgment, in reply to her young hostess' signal for retiring, she sailed majestically from the room.

"Well, commissary, did you bring her to book?" enquired the colonel, as soon as they were alone together. "I saw you whispering soft nothings to your 'Juno' all dinner-time; was there anything wrapped up in them?" The colonel's air was gay, and his manner good-natured; to do him justice, champagne had always a conciliatory as well as an elevating effect upon him, which is not universally the case with gentlemen with "tempers."

"Why, no," replied the commissary, sulkily. "I was getting on well enough with her, till you began to talk of that young scoundrel Darall, and that distracted her attention. There's one thing, however. If she was not independent—if it was of material advantage to her that she should marry yours truly, she would not have ventured to take that line—I mean of cracking up the man, when she knows I hate him like poison."

"A very intelligent observation, commissary; and there's also another thing, which you seem to have overlooked, but which to my mind argues better for you than anything—shows, in fact, that she has made up her mind to catch you."

"What's that?" enquired the commissary, nervously. He didn't quite like the notion of being "caught."

"Well, this very praise she indulged in of young Darall. She wants to recommend him to your daughter, don't you see?"

"I see that, of course; and I don't like it," added the commissary with irritation.

"Then you must be a bigger fool than I took you for. Is it possible that you don't perceive her object? She doesn't

care a farthing for Darall, but she wants to get Gracie off your hands. A widower with a pretty daughter is not half so pleasant a party in her eyes"—it is probable the colonel meant "parti"—"as a widower without encumbrance. Don't you see?"

"There is something in that," observed the commissary. "I have no doubt, however, that the prospect of becoming Mrs. Ray was agreeable to her."

"Ah, you have your misgivings, have you," said the colonel, irritated perhaps with his companion's complacency, "as to which will be the better horse when you come to run together in double harness?"

"Not I," returned the other, with a laugh that had some smack of brutality in its contemptuous ring; "for my part I can't understand a man knocking under to his wife. I'll venture to say that there's not a shrew in England whom, were I her husband, I wouldn't tame in three—well, within twenty-four hours—after she first showed her teeth."

He brought his great hand down upon the table to give emphasis to his words, and the action, coupled with the menacing expression of his face, was very significant.

"You wouldn't larrup her, would you?" enquired the colonel, with the air of a member of a social science committee asking for practical information.

"Be gad, but I would though," answered the commissary roughly; "that is, of course," added he in a gentler tone, "if all other means failed."

"You may swear at them—I mean at a shrew—for forty minutes without anything coming of it, if you mean that by 'other means,'" returned the colonel in that tone of profound conviction which is produced by experience alone.

"I don't know about that," answered the commissary; "but I think I should be equal to the occasion, whatever remedy seemed requisite."

"You do, do you? You think yourself a Rarey for breaking in wives? I don't approve of the practice, mind. I think the fellow is right who wrote, 'The man who lays his hand upon a woman, save in the way of kindness, it is rank flattery to call'—You know the lines?"

"No," returned the commissary sulkily; "and I don't want to know them. What are you driving at?"

"Well, you know Rarey gave public exhibitions, which is too much to be ex-

ected in your case; but if, when your experiment is about to come off with the second Mrs. Ray, née De Horsingham, you will do me the favour to send for me, I'll give a ten-pound note to see it."

"You have some doubt of the result, eh?" said the other, carelessly. "You were always afraid of the women, colonel."

"You mistake me, sir," observed the other with energy, as he rose to join the ladies; "I have not the least doubt of the result. The result will be, if you do proceed to such an extremity, that you will get the soundest hiding from Mrs. R. number two that you ever got in your life."

At this the commissary only laughed contemptuously, and thought no more of the matter; but the colonel, like some too professional sibyl of old, could not get his own prophecy out of his head. People often express their wish to know what other people are thinking about; and very much astonished they would often be if their desire were gratified. But if the idea that was filling the colonel's mind for the next hour or so could have been imparted to the rest of the company—and especially to the guest of the evening—it is probable that they would never have entertained so imprudent a wish again. He watched the majestic movements of Miss de Horsingham as an artist his model, or a surgeon the subject of his lecture. "By jingo, what an arm!" "By gad, what a biceps!" were his muttered expressions of admiration. It was evident to everybody, including herself, that Miss de Horsingham was making a very great impression upon the colonel. It filled the commissary with a pardonable pride, and also with the fixed resolve that he would see the lady home himself, and not trust her to his friend's escort. The colonel was a man of honour, but he knew that the lady had ten thousand pounds, and everybody has his price. To do him justice, however, the latter went away without attempting any coup of this description, and the host took leave of him at the door in high good-humour.

"She is a fine woman, colonel, is she not?" said he confidentially.

"By gad, she is, sir; a very fine woman!" When the door was closed upon him the colonel added these remarkable words—"as you'll find out. She'll give him the soundest hiding—will Mrs.

R. number two—he ever got in his life; and serve him right."

In the meantime the lady who was the unconscious subject of this impassioned criticism was winning golden opinions in quarters the most difficult—namely, with her own sex. Ella almost forgave her for her designs upon the commissary, for the way in which she snubbed him under his own roof, whatever she may have done outside of it; and, the more she snubbed him the more he said to himself: "She must have that ten thousand pounds," and hugged himself accordingly. As for Gracie, she could have thrown her arms round Miss de Horsingham, or rather, half way round, for a certain reason which she did not think it necessary to mention.

"I really think, my dear Ella," said she, when she and her friend were having their usual chat that night in the latter's room, "that Miss de Horsingham is very nice."

"You mean that she entertains a high respect for Mr. Hugh Darall, and has the courage of her opinions," returned Ella, patting the other's blushing cheek.

"Well, that was very nice of her indeed, Ella; but besides that, I really like her. Don't you?"

"I like her as Miss de Horsingham," returned the other gravely.

"What do you mean, Ella?"

"Why, you little goose, don't you see what she is after? She is after your papa, my dear; and I am not sure that you will like her quite so much when she becomes your step-mother."

Gracie uttered a little scream of horror.

"What must be will be, Gracie. It is merely a question of time, and when it happens, if you don't like it——"

"Like it!" echoed poor Gracie, "I should think it to the last degree hateful and abominable."

"So much the better, darling; for then you will come and live with me. I shall be quite alone—quite alone, Gracie."

The pathos of her friend's tone went to Gracie's heart. Ella's sorrow was, after all, more cruel, and harder to bear, than her own. In the one case, the sacred memory of the dead was outraged; in the other, the living fibres of love were being strained and torn. The twain whom God had joined were slowly but surely being rent asunder; and one of them, at least, felt every pang.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER VII. A REFUGEE AT HOME.

I ENTERED a confined chamber, with whitewashed walls and a sloping ceiling, imperfectly lighted by a narrow attic window. A starved-looking fire burned blackly in a very pinched stove, occupying one corner of the room. The floor was bare; the furniture very scanty; a truckle-bed, a little writing-table littered with papers, two rush-seated chairs, a painter's easel, a bruised and soiled portmanteau—there was little else. Here and there could be traced a charcoal outline upon the walls, or a rough sketch in coloured crayons. The scent of tobacco was strong in the room.

"Ah, mademoiselle, you do me too much honour!"

M. Riel rose from his chair by the stove and approached me, hurriedly throwing away his cigarette. He wore a workman's blouse and a pert little cap with a peak in front; a red silk kerchief was twisted loosely round his neck. He looked like a handsome young man of the *ouvrier* class. I scarcely knew him at first, he was so changed in appearance; I could not but recognise, however, the tones of his voice.

"I have taken a great liberty in calling upon you here," I said in some confusion.

"Mademoiselle, it is, as I said, an honour—and it is more than that—it is a kindness, and a charity."

He handed me his chair, and remained standing himself. He looked at me in-

tently, and, as I read his glance, reproachfully.

"You are surprised to see me here, M. Riel."

"I admit it, mademoiselle. How could I look for your presence in so poor, and humble, and unworthy a place? But you would not have come but for some sound reason. It was not, I am sure, to see with your own eyes the reality of my misfortunes. You judged that I was poor, without doubt. I have never concealed the fact. Yes, and now you can look round and satisfy yourself that I am very poor—poorer even than you could have believed possible. But it was not for that you came here."

"Indeed not, M. Riel. I was wrong to come, perhaps."

"That is possible," he said abstractedly.

"But you will forgive me for coming?"

"Ah, mademoiselle, can you ask it? I forgive you with all my heart. Yet," he added after a pause, "I will, if I may, annex a condition to my forgiveness." He smiled rather sadly.

"What condition?"

"You must not repeat the error. Mademoiselle, promise me that you will not come here again. Indeed this is no place for you. Avoid this district of the exiles. It is not only that it is miserable—it is dangerous."

"Dangerous?"

"Yes. The air here is unwholesome; it is heavy with discontent, it is oppressed with the moans of the suffering. We are as hunted creatures chased to a corner. We are safe, you will say. Yes! but if we dare to stir ever so little, our every movement is watched. The mouchard is always on the track of our footsteps. We are surrounded by eavesdroppers; we are

followed by spies. Those we speak to—even those we look at—are marked down as “suspects.” Even you, mademoiselle, may not escape the consequence of your visit here. You are liable to be classed with us now, who are suffering for our political sentiments—and who wait but the opportunity to rise against the tyrants who have betrayed and down-trodden us. You have shown kindness to a refugee—your presence has brought light for a moment into the darkness and the wretchedness of his hiding-place. You have cheered his solitude and suffering by the music of your voice, the grace of your speech. Ah, but take care that you are not counted his accomplice!”

“His accomplice!” I repeated.

“The word is an insult, you think. Well, it is to spare you from insult I beg you to come here no more. It is not right that you should be reckoned with us, for our cause is not yours. You cannot share in, you cannot fully sympathise with our hopes, our plans, our cares, our desperation. Why, then, should you be subjected to the penalties of our actions, our crimes, as our foes describe them? For it is a crime to be an exile and to aspire to return home; especially, if one would return armed to execute justice upon tyrants and traitors. You must not be marked down in note-books, and peered at by the eyes of police, and watched, and tracked, hither and thither. No, mademoiselle, that is not for you. For us others it is different, it is almost our privilege. You are surprised? You think we are so safe here? You take pride in thinking that this, your England, is a land of liberty, an asylum to the suffering for whatever reason, an especial home to those exiled because of their political convictions? Well, and that is true to a certain point. But—you receive the refugee—you offer him a home, shelter, an abiding-place. Yes, but the spy of the police who follows in his track, you welcome him also; you accord him the right to watch the refugee, as a cat watches a mouse; you permit him to follow the poor exile hither and thither, taking note of his incoming and his outgoing, registering every scrap of his conversation that can be overheard; yes, and scanning, and tracking, and suspecting even each stranger he may meet in the street or the coffee-house; the man to whom here he hands a newspaper, to whom there he proffers a light for a cigar. Ah, for English sympathy! it is too wide, too general, too indis-

criminating; it is extended alike to the oppressor and the oppressed—to the refugee and to the mouchard. But you will pardon me, mademoiselle, that I have spoken of these things. They betray me, I own it, into a warmth, an excitement, which must seem to you strange, excessive, rude. Your visit—certainly it was not to hear my wild speeches. But it had a motive?”

I explained to him the opportunity that offered. I spoke of Mr. Leveridge and the pictures he desired should be copied. I expressed myself badly, perhaps—for, in truth, I felt ill at ease. I was conscious that I had placed myself, indeed, in rather a false position.

M. Riel listened to me patiently, and bowed to me politely when I had completed my explanation. He expressed himself as grateful, most grateful, for my intervention and exertions in his interest. Yet he was not, I think, really very grateful. Indeed he seemed to hesitate rather in his acceptance of Mr. Leveridge's offers; and certainly, he replied to me with rather an embarrassed air.

“Yes,” he said with hesitation, “I will see this Mr. Leveridge, your professor. I will listen to him; I will work for him, if I can, and if I may. But—I work only to live, mademoiselle; to buy bread, and clothes, yes, and tobacco, to pay my way as I journey through life. It is no great ambition that animates me. But mademoiselle will perceive that to paint is not my sole occupation. If I give my hands to it, my heart may be elsewhere. I make my copies and take my wages, but my thoughts are not in my task. After all, it is an unworthy artist you have so kindly commended to the favourable notice of your professor. Yet I will strive to do justice to your recommendation. I will endeavour, so that Mr. Leveridge may not regret that he has given me employment. I will see him upon an early day. If I may, I will work for him.”

I rose to leave him. I had accomplished my mission. His hand was upon the door-handle; he seemed to motion me to remain another moment.

“Mademoiselle,” he said, “will understand that I am really and truly grateful. I have not said as-much on that head as I should have said, perhaps, but let it be taken for granted that I am fully sensible of the honour mademoiselle has done me, the kindness she has shown me, in visiting my very humble home. How poor, how

humble it is she did not know—but her sole purpose was to befriend me, she had that thought only. I am well aware of that. I do not for one moment misinterpret the visit of mademoiselle."

I knew from his manner—but, indeed, I knew it before—that my conduct was very open to misinterpretation: that he would have been justified in thinking very strangely of me.

"And you, mademoiselle, you will not judge me the less worthy of your kindness, your sympathy, your interest, in that my manner of life is what you have found it?"

"Indeed not, M. Riel."

"And you will not avoid me in the future? You will not shrink from me when we meet again?"

"Indeed not, M. Riel," I repeated.

"For we shall meet again," he said musingly.

"Surely; at the Gallery. Perhaps even at Mr. Leveridge's."

"Ah, true, at Mr. Leveridge's. You will not forget me, Miss Doris?"

It was the first time he had ever so addressed me. I started at the sound of my name invested with a foreign accent.

"I shall not forget you, M. Riel."

"And you will not despise me, whatever tidings you may hear concerning me—now, or at any future time?"

"I can safely promise that, M. Riel."

"I thank you, Miss Doris. You have a brave, frank, English nature. Ah, if all were as you are!"

I put out my hand. He took it, pressed it gently, then raised it to his lips.

He was about to open the door.

"Stay!" he said with a little start. "There is a footstep upon the stairs. Some one comes. It will be better to wait for a moment. Let me see." He paused with a listening, reflective air.

"It may be only a letter, a message," said M. Riel. "You are not frightened, Miss Doris?"

"No, I am not frightened," I answered promptly. "What is there to fear?"

"True, there is nothing to fear. But the step comes up the stairs. Yee. It is close by now. And it is for me it comes. Ah!"

Someone without tapped at the door; not once, but repeatedly. There was something mysteriously significant, as I judged, in the manner of the tapping.

We could hear the sound as of a hand moving about the outer panels of the door, in search of the handle or the keyhole.

"Do not fear," said M. Riel. "No harm can come to you, Miss Doris."

His own face was very pale, however.

"Ouvrez," the voice whispered through the keyhole.

"I must open," said M. Riel.

"Au nom de Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité."

Surely it was an English voice!

"Stand in the shadow, Miss Doris. Draw down your veil, if you will. All is well. Again I say, do not fear."

He opened the door; a man entered the room.

"I am sorry to disturb M. Riel. They told me below that you were not alone. But it was important that I should see you, if only for a moment."

How well I knew the voice! I hesitated; but I felt that perfect frankness was my best course.

"Basil!" I cried.

For M. Riel's visitor was my brother.

CHAPTER VIII. MY IMPUDENCE.

"You here?" cried Basil with a start. Then he glanced rather fiercely from me to M. Riel, and back again from M. Riel to me. "What does this mean, Doris?" He had never spoken so sharply to me before.

M. Riel seemed all amazement. "You know this gentleman, Miss Doris?"

"This gentleman is my brother, M. Riel."

"Ah! Your brother? M. Basil is your brother?" He was relieved, I thought, by this information. Still he turned to Basil, as though to have my statement confirmed.

"That is so, of course," said Basil.

"Ah! that explains everything," said M. Riel.

"It explains nothing," Basil cried rudely.

"Why is this, Doris? What foolish prank has brought you here? But perhaps," he added, looking round the room, "this is not the fittest place in the world for an explanation."

"It is not," I said, "although the explanation is very simple: in truth, there need be no mystery about the matter. It was not 'a foolish prank' in any case. I did not come without, as I think, a sound and sufficient motive. It was imprudent, perhaps—"

"It was very imprudent. Indeed, indeed, you should not have done this thing, Doris, whatever your motive."

"Well, it's done now, and there's an end of it. You need not be so angry, Basil."

"You are offended, and with me?" enquired M. Riel, who in his turn had assumed rather an aggressive look.

"I will discuss the subject with you at some other time, M. Riel," Basil said coolly and almost contemptuously.

"M. Riel is quite without fault in the matter. If you must blame someone, blame me."

"I have no desire to blame anyone. But, this must never happen again."

"It is not likely to happen again—it shall not happen again."

"I have already entreated Miss Doris that she will not on any account repeat the kindness she has shown me this day," interposed M. Riel, with more of a soothing air than he had hitherto worn.

"Basil," I said, "you are making much of what is in truth a very trifling thing. I brought M. Riel a message from Mr. Leveridge. M. Riel wants work; Mr. Leveridge can give him work. I came here simply to say as much. That is the whole story very bluntly told. M. Riel will forgive me for telling it so bluntly."

"You had already made the acquaintance of M. Riel then?" Basil demanded of me. "It was not to an absolute stranger that you showed this kindness—that you paid him this visit?"

"I had already made the acquaintance of M. Riel. We met at the National Gallery. He helped me with my studies there. Now, you know all, Basil."

"I know enough, I suppose. But, you are too impulsive, Doris."

"I can't always be stopping to think, if that's what you mean. How often 'stopping to think' signifies merely loss of time and opportunity!"

"It may mean great gain also. It may save us from the commission of grave imprudences—of desperate follies."

"Well, it may be very safe to be inactive, but it may be rather cowardly too."

"I won't dispute it, Doris. Thought before action may be only cowardice—thought after action may be only remorse; and yet we needs must think—at least some of us must. But we are forgetting M. Riel. I have business with him—only a word or two to say, however. My surprise at meeting you made me forget the object of my coming here. Excuse me for one moment, Doris, and I will see you safely home."

Basil drew M. Riel into the recess of the attic window. They conversed in a low voice and interchanged certain papers. M. Riel collected the sheets scattered

about his little writing-table, and handed them to Basil.

I did not try to hear what they said to each other. I stood by the door, and amused myself with noting the numerous sketches and caricatures that adorned its panels. The pear-shaped head of the King of the French appeared very frequently; there were representations of his Majesty in all sorts of ludicrous positions. His richly-laced coat was brought into droll contrast with his stiff shirt-collars, his short white trousers, and his battered umbrella. His many sons were also depicted in a contemptible light, and here and there was seen the austere and rather arrogant face of his Prime Minister. It was plain that these designs were not all the work of the same hand. Some were executed with quite an artistic adroitness; others were very rude and rough. On the whitewash above the door a guillotine was sketched in red chalk. In its neighbourhood was scrawled "Vive la République!" and above this appeared the inscription, "Crédeville, voleur!" "Crédeville, voleur!" over and over again, as though it were some memorable motto or watchword. Who was this Crédeville, I asked myself, and did he deserve to be thus stigmatised?

M. Riel, bowing and smiling pleasantly, advanced to me.

"Ah, Miss Doris, it is a new title to my regard and my respect that you are, as it appears, the sister of my friend M. Basil—if indeed I may call him my friend." Basil bowed with rather Britannic stiffness. "At least he is my collaborateur. I have known him only as M. Basil. That was enough for me. I did not enquire as to his surname. I could not suppose him to be related to the lady who has shown me such great and true kindness. Again let me thank you, Miss Doris. You have studied my door? It is my sketch-book—my memorandum-book—my work of reference. See here a list of addresses, my friends, employers. I will add the name of Mr. Leveridge, with his address." Thereupon he wrote as I dictated. "Yes, as I said, I will see this professor, and, if I can, I will work for him, and take my wages. A thousand thanks, Miss Doris."

"Adieu, M. Riel."

Something further he desired to say, I think. He was checked perhaps by the presence of Basil, who was urgent that we should depart forthwith. M. Riel would have attended us to the outer door of the

house, but this I refused to permit. We left him at the top of the staircase.

Basil was silent for some minutes.

"I'm glad to be in Oxford-street again," he observed. "That garret was terribly close. The whole neighbourhood is very confined."

"Poor M. Riel cannot choose his dwelling-place," I said. "An exile must live where he can, where he must."

"Yes, but we need not squander our sympathies. After all, an exile may well have deserved his expatriation. Why should we pity him? He may be only paying the penalty of his own wrongdoing."

"But a political offence should be leniently viewed. It is not as other offences are."

"That depends. At any rate a political offence may involve very serious consequences. Conspiracy against the state—an attempt to overturn constituted authority—to assassinate a king—those are not such light matters."

"Basil! Do you charge M. Riel with being an assassin?"

"Well, no. I will not say that of him. He is not directly chargeable, perhaps; at least, he is entitled to the benefit of the doubt. But there is a certain line of conduct, which seems to lead to assassination, or to lead nowhere. We will say that it leads nowhere in M. Riel's case; and we will agree that assassination is not the right word to use. We will call it tyrannicide. It may mean the same thing; but you will confess that it has a grander, a more respectable sound."

I scarcely knew how to answer.

"It is sufficient for me that M. Riel is a refugee," I said after a pause. "Poor, unhappy, an artist and an exile: surely he is well deserving of our sympathy and our assistance, if, indeed, we can assist him—if he will allow us to assist him."

Basil was silent. I was in hopes that he would have said something more of M. Riel. I was, I must confess, anxious to know all he knew of M. Riel. I was rather provoked at the attitude of apathy he seemed resolved to maintain in regard to M. Riel.

"Have you no feeling, Basil? Have you no heart?"

"Yes, I think I have a heart, Doris; I think I can feel for others. But, perhaps, I am rather apt to see both sides of a question, where you are content to see only one. Thus, my opinions become divided,

and I am only half sympathetic. To be very enthusiastic, we must be rather one-sided—something of a partisan."

"But, in certain cases, it is good to be something of a partisan; indeed, very much of a partisan."

"Yes, in certain cases."

"You mean that such cases are not common?"

"I mean that I don't find them common."

"And this case of M. Riel's does not command your sympathies?"

"Perhaps we neither of us know enough of M. Riel, to be sure that his case merits our sympathies in every respect. It is true that he is an exile; and, as you have told me, you find that fact sufficient. I ask for more than that."

"You object to him because he is a conspirator."

"He has told you that he is a conspirator? Yes, of course. He makes no secret of it. He rather boasts of it. That is unwise, to my thinking. But the refugee who conspires rather gains than loses sympathy on that account. You can view tenderly the foreigner who plots. But if he were a mere Englishman—poor, humble, hungry, roused by a bitter sense of oppression to take arms against his rulers, to revolt against a condition of society which, to his thinking, wrongs him greatly, inflicts upon him cruel injustice—how would you judge him? how should you speak of him? You would despise him utterly; you would shrink from him with loathing. You would denounce him as a wretched, squalid, misguided, brutal fellow of the very dregs of the populace, unworthy of contact with decent people. And if, in a moment of madness, he raised his hand against his sovereign—he flung a stone in the Park, or fired a pistol upon Constitution-hill—you would hold no chastisement to be too severe for him. Is not that the truth, Doris?"

"Well, yes," I said. "I can't think the same of the English rebel or ruffian you have described and of a foreign refugee—such as M. Riel—suffering for his political opinions, and conspiring against a government that has persecuted him. And surely, Basil, there is a difference."

"Yes; the foreigner has the cleaner face and the whiter hands; but his crime is the same as that of the miserable, unwashed, starving Englishman; for it is a question of crime, you understand."

"But the Englishman has no reason to rise against his rulers."

"But he thinks he has. You must accept his point of view; or it might be said that the foreigner has no reason to rebel against his government; for it is a government that he rebels against. It is acquiesced in by the nation; it is entitled to obedience."

"Basil," I said, "tell me all you know of M. Riel."

"Doris, tell me what is this M. Riel to you, that you should care for him so much; that you should espouse his cause so warmly; that you should be so prompt with your sympathies on his behalf; that you should call at his wretched lodgings in Soho."

"I have already told you, Basil, how I came to know M. Riel—and the sequel."

"He has interested you because of his state of exile; because he is poor, and you judge him to be unhappy; because he is an artist by profession; and, because, perhaps, of his beaux yeux. And he has piqued your curiosity, that is very clear. Now, what is he to you more and above all this?"

"Nothing."

"You are sure?"

"I am quite sure."

"My sister," he said, "let us play with our cards upon the table. Do you love this M. Riel?"

"Basil, how can you ask me such a question?"

"Do you love this M. Riel?" he repeated.

"I do not love this M. Riel. I have never loved this M. Riel. I shall never love this M. Riel. Have I said enough?"

"More than enough. In truth you have said too much. You answer for more than you are entitled to answer for. Still, I am glad that you have said this, it relieves my mind. For I feared—but no matter what I feared. It would not be right, Doris, for you to love M. Riel."

"Because he is so poor? because he is a refugee?"

"Well, yes; and because of other things."

"Frankly, you don't like M. Riel."

"Frankly, I don't think I do. And yet I'm not sure. One should like the friends of one's friends."

"And M. Riel is the friend of a friend of yours?"

"Of my dearest friend—of Mr. Gris-dale."

"I understand. Mr. Grisdale is the friend of all refugees."

"Yes. And there is more in it than that. M. Riel writes in Mr. Grisdale's journal—The Warcry."

"That was why he called you his collaborateur?"

"That was why. He is our Paris correspondent."

"Although he may not return to France?"

Basil laughed.

"Our Paris is situate in Soho," he said.

"It is not the true Paris absolutely, yet it resembles it. Ours is the Paris of the disaffected, of the discontented. M. Riel compiles and notes. He is for ever among Frenchmen fresh from France. It is true that he writes in Soho, yet he is enabled fairly to represent a section of Parisian opinion. The fraud upon the public, our readers—perhaps I should not call them the public—is but a small fraud. In truth, no Frenchman would be permitted to write from France, as M. Riel writes from Soho in The Warcry."

"Has M. Riel been long in England?"

"He knows England well. Yet he has not always been an exile. He is, I believe, a refugee of but a few years' standing."

"When was he driven from France?"

"He was suspected of complicity in the affaire Lecomte, or it may have been the affaire Henri. I scarcely know which it was. He fled to avoid arrest. Of course he may have been wholly innocent."

"What was the affaire Lecomte?"

"Lecomte fired at the King of the French, as he sat in his char-à-banc driving through the forest of Fontainebleau."

"What was the affaire Henri?"

"Joseph Henri fired at the King of the French, as he bowed from the balcony of the Tuileries to the crowd assembled to commemorate the anniversary of the Revolution of July."

"But M. Riel may have taken no part in, may have known nothing of, those attempts."

"I have said that he may have been wholly innocent."

"Do you meet M. Riel at Mr. Gris-dale's?"

"Yes. I first met him there. I meet him there repeatedly; and I visit him at his lodgings, as you saw to-day, upon matters connected with Mr. Grisdale's newspaper."

"One question more, Basil. Does Catalina like M. Riel?"

"Enough, enough of this," he said,

sternly. "And, please, do not again connect the names of Catalina and M. Riel. You are too imprudent, Doris."

He would not speak another word upon the subject.

HARLEQUINIANA.

Who and whence is Harlequin? What does he symbolise, and what is his history? These are questions, to some at least of which a partial answer is both obvious and accessible. That Italy was his birthplace; that his native nomenclature was Arlecchino; that he wears a closely-fitting suit of resplendent, many-coloured motley; that in modern times he hibernates on the boards of a large proportion of English theatres; that he is a tricksome elf, personifying in the minds of some tens of thousands of children of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland the essential genius of pantomime; these are facts which are as familiar as they are indisputable. Some of them are recorded in every popular repertory of miscellaneous knowledge; the rest are written in the juvenile experience of most of Her Majesty's subjects. On some other points, too, connected with the history of harlequin, much interesting, if more or less irrelevant, information may readily be obtained. As, for instance, that at an earlier epoch of his continental career, he was not condemned to his present dumbness, but was as quick and nimble with his tongue as he now is with his wand and legs; that his vesture did not always consist of the sparkling skin-tight integuments for which his person is in these latter days conspicuous; that within the last fifty years the pattern of his costume had not reached its now established uniformity of combination and shape.

As it is our object to acquaint the reader with certain occult or forgotten truths anent harlequin, rather than to serve up a rechauffé of conjectures or certainties which may be procured in any manual of popular information, the points just mentioned may be passed lightly over. Grimaldi has been called the Garrick of clowns. The Garrick or Grimaldi of harlequins, so far as the English stage is concerned, was assuredly Rich, who in 1761 placed upon the boards of Covent-garden Theatre the pantomimic drama of "Harlequin Executed." One fact about Rich is not generally known, and may here be stated. Rich had a very

formidable and accomplished rival, in his performances as harlequin, in one Woodward, employed by Garrick, who, finding that "Harlequin Executed" drew crowded audiences to the rival house in Bow-street, brought out a pantomime at Drury-lane, Queen Mab. In this, Woodward gained an immense reputation; but posterity, including many professional writers on the stage, ignores his name, because he is "without the sacred bard"—in other words, because Pope never pilloried him as he did Rich, in the Dunciad. Apropos of Grimaldi, it is stated by the famous biographer of that great master of flexible humanity, that until the beginning of this century, harlequin wore a loose-fitting jacket and trousers, and that the now existing dress was first introduced into England by Byrne, father of the late Oscar Byrne, in Harlequin Amulet, first played at Drury-lane on Boxing Night, 1800. There is a drawing extant of Inigo Jones, under which the artist has scrawled the words "Harlequin for Mountebank," and wherein harlequin is depicted clothed in a light and airy dress of white linen or nankeen jacket and trousers, which nowadays would be hissed off the stage.

The truth is, that when we come to ask who harlequin is, and what are his antecedents, we find that he is the composite growth of many generations, the hybrid birth of a long succession of ages. The late Mr. Byrne, of Harlequin Amulet celebrity, is as much entitled to be christened the father of harlequin, and, indeed, of pantomime generally, as we understand the word, as Homer to be called the father of poetry, or Herodotus of history. His conception of harlequin was a happy generalisation from many previously-entertained and widely-varying ideas. The materials for Byrne's creation may be said to have been ready to his hand; but to combine and assort them required genius. Hitherto harlequin had been a personage whose functions and whose presence were scarcely distinguishable from those of clown. Byrne it was who separated and mutually subordinated the parts played by harlequin, pantaloon, and clown.

Let the reader now transport himself to an era some two thousand five hundred years anterior to the creation of the harlequin of to-day. A rude kind of entertainment is very popular with the villagers and peasants, as well as the townfolk, of ancient Italy; a

grotesque species of pantomimic action, varied by occasional songs, which are sung to no tune in particular, and by interludes wherein episodes of mythic or national history, heroic or pathetic, are portrayed by the gesture and action of mute players. The characters in the farcical pantomimes are generally the same, and the interest chiefly depends on successive incidents of practical deception. There are the dupe, and the knave, and the jester, the jack-pudding, or merry-andrew, who delivers a sort of running commentary, more or less satirical, the satire being indicated sometimes by words, but more often by grimace or gesture, on the frauds and frolics of which he is witness. Sometimes he takes part in those himself, and is alternately rogue and fool. He is called, almost indifferently, Centunculus, Sannio, Bucca, and Macchus. The reader will kindly note the final word; for, in a Latin dictionary, published about a hundred and fifty years ago by an unknown author, the explanation "whence is derived the modern arlecchino or harlequin," is printed in brackets after it. Scientific etymology is often a very far-fetched business, and constitutes a severe tax upon the credulity of students. It may be that the derivation which the anonymous lexicographer would appear to suggest is correct, but the process by which it is established is not clear. Of the employment of the word "arlecchino" or harlequin, no traces can be found before the fourteenth century, and dictionaries of all kinds and in all languages display a curious unanimity in ignoring its etymology. It may, however, be conjectured with tolerable certainty that the root of "arlecchino" is identical with that of "arlotto," signifying a glutton or stupid fellow, both of which characters met in the primitive conception of harlequin. As for the termination, that is sufficiently accounted for by the adjective "chino," which connotes all the attributes of one whose business it is agilely to execute fantastic movements.

As time went on in ancient Italy, and new modes of ornament were introduced, the costume of the actors in these primitive pantomimes naturally became more elaborate. Delineations in marble, bronze, and encaustic colours have come down to us, in which a prominent figure among the mimes of Imperial Rome—in the days when Bathyllus and Pylades divided the partisanship of the play-going city between them—is one clad in a par-

ticular dress, with shaven head, semi-transparent half-mask, cap, and wand. Now, it can scarcely be doubted that here we have one of the many progenitors of harlequin. The subject-matter of these pantomimic dramas was suggested by various patterns of the classic mythology, in some of which Mercury with his "caduceus" or staff would naturally appear. Is it not a legitimate hypothesis, that the "caduceus" of the pagan god was the origin of the wand of harlequin? And what of columbine? Upon pictorial evidence, similar to that just mentioned, it has been stated that the loves of Cupid and Psyche, of Hero and Leander, were sometimes pantomimically presented as pathetic interludes by the same histrios as those whose prevailing rôle was broadly comic. That being so, it is easy to see how the loves of harlequin and columbine may have found their way into modern pantomime.

So much for the more ancient and venerable affinities of the stage-skipper, who follows in the wake of pantaloons and clown. If some persons may be surprised at learning that there is, at least, ground for believing that harlequin is a personage of classical origin, all are aware that he is of Italian extraction. In the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, contemporaneous comedies were a recognised entertainment in Italy, and, indeed, in Spain and France. The dramatic personæ never varied much, and comprised the familiar rôles of pantaloons, doctor, clown, harlequin, scaramouch, and so forth. The dialogue was, for the most part, impromptu, and abounded in hits and allusions, suited to the locality in which the performance of the strolling players happened to take place. Different towns had a special reputation for furnishing different actors of the typical characters of these rude dramas. Venice, in particular, was famous for its pantaloons; and Bergamo, for its harlequins—the parti-coloured costume of the latter being emblematic of the sundry patches wherewith poverty must be content to clothe itself. The entertainment was frequently nothing better than a loose kind of horse-play; and harlequin was as free with his wand, which was often a cudgel, as with his tongue. Hallam says that the last company of performers in this sort of comedy existed within the present century in Lombardy. The nearest approach to it which can be found in England would be the morris-dances of villagers, the merry-

andrews exhibiting at country fairs, and, possibly, the masques which were popular three centuries ago in fashionable circles. Both at the country fairs and the masques harlequin made his appearance. The merry-andrew frequently wore a costume nearly identical, so far as colour is concerned, not cut, and the triangular patches of many tints, like the harlequin of the present day; while, in the masques, harlequin, usually with the preface of mountebank, was a prominent personage. In his memoir of Bartholomew Fair, Mr. Henry Morley tells us of the great theatrical booth, erected by Lee and Phillips at the corner of Hosier-lane, on which there were seen together Cupid and Psyche, Scaramouch, Punch and Columbine, Clown, Pantaloon, and Harlequin. The mention of Cupid and Psyche in this context suggests, and may even fairly be regarded as confirming, the hypothesis ventured on above, as to the origin of the relations between harlequin and columbine. A further examination of Mr. Morley's memoir of Bartholomew Fair seems to show that during the earlier portion of the eighteenth century, harlequin was regarded as the essential genius of pantomime; that he manifested himself in different shapes, sometimes in two distinct entities; that he was by turns clown, scaramouch, pantaloon, harlequin, pure and simple. There was only one respect in which our English harlequin failed to acquire the prestige of his continental prototype. In Italy, and even in France, during part of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, there is evidence to show that harlequin was the title which the jesters of kings, princes, and potentates frequently selected for themselves. The Emperor Mathias ennobled Cecchini, Hallam tells us, a famous harlequin, a royal favourite, and also a man of letters.

It is, however, possible to assign a more specific ancestry to the hero of these speculations, and that of distinctly English origin. Both in the mysteries and moralities, which were the popular form of dramatic entertainment in England during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, the devil was generally introduced upon the stage. A sporting, rollicking sort of fiend he was represented as being, but his pranks and his jokes masked a sinister purpose, which was exposed in the end, and for which his Satanic Majesty was cudgelled and belaboured with becoming severity. This duty was en-

trusted to a character indifferently called buffoon, jester, Punch, and vice. His robes were decorated with spangles, he carried the instrument of castigation in his hands, he leaped from one end to the other of the platform—that was the stage—with incredible alacrity. He deceived crowds, mocked the foul fiend, interposed to check him and trip him up, just at the moment when success seemed within his grasp. In a word, the vice of the moralities or mysteries performed much the same services for the personification of the evil one, as does harlequin for the clown, when the latter is bent upon the perpetration of his peccadilloes and iniquities. That the popular puppet-show of the London streets, Punch and Judy, is a direct survival of this feature in the mediæval semi-sacred plays, is beyond all question. Is it possible to miss the application of the mediæval tradition to the modern pantomime? Is it possible to doubt that Punch and harlequin are but different developments of the same idea, that the wooden puppet and the glittering wooer of columbine are in truth twin brethren?

Such seems to be a fair, if not an exhaustive account of the rise and growth of harlequin. Just as the modern pantomime is a complex entertainment, so is the modern harlequin the result of a similarly eclectic process. He is the creature at once of the pagan and christian tradition; his ancestry is at the same time ancient and modern. At different periods he has united in himself the attributes of clown, of pantaloon, of every character known to pantomime, save columbine. He has been the mischievous imp of the Atellanæ Fabulæ, the loquacious satirist, the favourite of court and king, the chastiser of the devil; and now he is, in the words of Mr. Planché, "the mute, dancing, glittering nondescript," who thrashes by turns pantaloon and clown, the very two personages who should most remind him of what he once was.

THE DESERTED PARADISE.

SILENCE, that was not peace, so held the place
 As terror holds the tongue of one death-fronted;
 No wind stirred there, no insect held gay chase,
 No darting bird 'midst those dense coverts hunted.
 Even the shadows moved not save in growth
 Slow hour by hour, as on some mystic dial
 Which no man marks. Dumb fate, austere and loath,
 Did seem to keep espial,
 Jealously impotent, o'er one sole thing
 It might not wholly slay by silencing.
 Loveliness lingered yet, unslain though still,
 The last lone relic of delight departed,
 Of splendour vanished. Joy had fed its fill
 In those fair pleasaunces, and Love, gay-hearted,

In days when lovely ladies thronged the ways,
 Amidst the roses there had held high revel.
 Now sadness reigned in every flowery maze,
 Slope bank, or lawn level,
 Whence power, and pride, and princely cheer had fled,
 Where Beauty only showed as less than dead.
 Lifeless as fallen tears those waters lie,
 In languorous snake-like curves and crescent
 reaches,
 By turfey shore and terraced bank, and by
 Dim towering groves. What lore in silence teaches
 The spirit of dead days which reigneth here?
 A shadow-moulded sphinx that no keen vision
 May fix to form, yet which, a phantom fear,
 Fills all these glades Elysian;
 A mystic power, viewless yet intense,
 Speaking through silence to the inner sense.
 The roses like a rolling stream of red,
 Dashed with white foam and golden gleams of
 morning,
 O'er sweep the valley from each skyward head,
 Down slope descent and terraced cliff, adorning
 With lavish loveliness the whole sweet space
 From cloud-kissed crown to bowery deep, and
 trailing
 From crag to crag in careless-ordered grace;
 And yet no wood-nymph wailing
 For spring departed 'midst her leafless bowers
 Were sadder than the splendour of those flowers.
 Above the unstirring stream their blossoms bend,
 Like grief-tranced Beauty brooding o'er Love's
 grave;
 Where their shed petals fall they lie, and lend
 A fleeting grace to the too lullen wave
 Then wither and are whelmed, like myriads more,
 That moon by moon in silence fall. They fill
 The hollows of this garden, wave or shore,
 So sadly strangely still,
 With dust of long-dead roses, such sweet earth
 As should to happier blossoms give glad birth.
 But there all flowers are phantom-still though fair,
 Their heavy odours by no soft wind shaken,
 Incense unwafted, lade the drowsing air;
 Legions of lilies, which no zephyrs waken,
 Still-shafted stand like sentinels of Death,
 Though lovely as his best-loved prey. All flowers
 Of daintiest beauty and most fragrant breath
 Throng these enchanted bowers,
 Thick gem the turf and trail from topmost height
 Of tree or towering cliff—a heavenly sight!
 But o'er the unfooted paths strange mosses spread
 Their pallid green; and over shaft and slope
 Of tree and terrace a small blossom, red
 As a blood-rusted sword, doth seem to grope
 With its slow sanguine lips as though for prey;
 And sluggish undergrowths of shapeless life,
 Which seem the soul of animate decay,
 Wage still and voiceless strife
 With soulless loveliness which garlandeth
 With deathless charm the very brows of Death.

SHALL LONDON HAVE ANOTHER BRIDGE?

It was all very well for Dr. Johnson to say, "Sir, let us take a walk down Fleet-street." There was space enough there for the burly form and rolling gait of the great man in the snuff-coloured suit. But were Professor Max Müller, for instance, to invite me in this present year to take a stroll with him over London-bridge, I should, although keenly sensible of the honour of being seen abroad with so great

a scholar, be careful to eschew certain hours for our promenade. Bridges—crede another professor—are cheerful spots at midnight, beloved, it is said, by wary diplomats and weary statesmen, who, like the late Lord Palmerston, find infinite rest and charm in a lonely nocturnal stroll. But, perhaps, Professor Müller might object to the breeziness of London's famous bridge at the midnight hour, and care less than would M. Gustave Doré for the glint of the moonlight on the steely-hued river, and the dark masses of shipping which confine the water-way to narrow bounds. If thus debarred from the middle of the night, I should have only one alternative—the middle of the day, between noon and two o'clock, as at other times the passage of the bridge is an awesome undertaking, not to be thought of by middle-aged gentlemen, whose shoulders are rheumatic and whose toes sensitive. On either side of the four rows of vehicles rolling to and fro, rushes a swifter stream of foot passengers—all in the desperate hurry that seems to come over everyone when he gets into a crowd. From nine to twelve in the morning, and from three till seven in the afternoon, it is devil take the hindmost on the pavement of London-bridge, and it is wonderful that more accidents do not occur from persons being thrust off the pavement, under the wheels of the heavy waggons which form an unbroken string from early morning till late at night. On the bridge, vehicles are marshalled so well that they enjoy a little space for breathing, as it were, after being shut in for long hours in Eastcheap and Fenchurch-street, in Tooley-street and Rotherhithe; but if I follow them into the streets which open on the handsome "approaches" of the bridge, I encounter hopeless "blocks," and my estimate of human patience improves by a very large percentage. There is, of course, swearing, and there is at times a considerable consumption of beer, and bread and cheese—human patience requiring sustenance both liquid and solid during its prolonged trial—but there is very little quarrelling, and hardly any fighting, the carmen of Old England being less violently inclined than those of New York. Perhaps this apparent sluggishness may be traced to the effect of beer, as opposed to whisky drinking, but I am rather inclined to assign it to the hopelessness engendered by a life spent in waiting for somebody else to move on. Only one comparison will serve to bring home the condition of the carman's life

to the uninitiated. It is to be found in the state of the streets on the night of a grand illumination in honour of a royal marriage, a European peace, or some equally auspicious event. If we turn night into day, and suppose the conditions of the traffic to be normal instead of phenomenal, we arrive at a correct idea of the state of the approaches to London-bridge.

It is more than probable that the bridge which crosses the ancient ferry of St. Mary has always been crowded, for London was no inconsiderable place when its first foundations were laid. It is true that the bridge built by Ethelred, and rebuilt by the Red King, was but a wooden edifice, yet its functions were important, as in fact it connected northern with southern England. By degrees, the traffic of the old Roman road known in Saxon times as Watling-street turned aside from the ferry above Westminster and passed over London-bridge, which brought the seaports of Kent and Sussex into direct communication with the capital. Nevertheless, the sticklers for good old fashions objected to the bridge as an obstacle to navigation, as, no doubt, it was, and it is curious to trace the history of the concessions perpetually demanded by vested rights. From examples, of which pictures exist, it is easy to imagine the old wooden bridge, with its narrow arches and central drawbridge to admit of the passage of masted vessels, then unloading mostly at Queenhithe. This device was perpetuated in the first stone bridge—the arch called afterwards the “draw-back” was originally built with a drawbridge, to admit ships loaded with corn and fish to pass up to the great markets, held on or about the site of the present Mansion House, and the champions of vested rights were appeased for many centuries. The original wooden bridge was not a long-lived structure. Frequently catching fire, it was at last so seriously damaged as to be found past repair, and the first stone structure—the old London-bridge of history—was completed in 1209. Long before that date, far-seeing men had perceived the necessity of building a stone bridge.

William the Conqueror, like the mighty ruler that he was, “commanded” Peter the Architect to give up the wooden bridge and convert it into one of stone forthwith, but with the understanding that the good citizens of London should find the money. These sturdy burghers took a

different view of the enterprise, and stoutly declined to provide the necessary funds, while the stern king pressed Peter to push on vigorously with the work. Between the king and the citizens the unhappy architect had but a sorry time of it, and—being made weary of his life—died and was buried, and thus got quit of king, citizens, and bridge, for ever and aye. Patching and rebuilding went on till that intelligent but not otherwise admirable prince, John Lackland, took the matter in hand, and the stone bridge was built at last, after the labours and squabbles—probably financial—of eleven years. The new bridge, with its nineteen arches and drawbridge, was declared a marvel of genius, although constructed on a singular principle. Of its entire width—seventy-three feet—the roadway only occupied twenty; the remainder being devoted to two rows of houses, arched over the street and overhanging the piers. Hence, what with darkness and crowding, and the interruption of the drawbridge, the passage of the bridge above was nearly as dangerous as that of the arches beneath—the “shooting” of which was a perilous undertaking. At times the bridge was considered as royal, at others, as municipal property. Henry, the builder of minsters and castles, gave it to his consort, Eleanor of Provence, who pocketed the proceeds, and let the estate go to ruin. Edward the First exacted the then heavy toll of a penny, but restored the bridge, which again passed into the custody of the City during his reign. Perpetually being more or less burnt down, the tough old bridge, nevertheless, enjoyed a long life—the ancient drawbridge, with a tower on the north side of it for resisting the attack of an enemy, having endured for six hundred years. In olden times London-bridge was an important strategic point, as the only bridge over the Thames between Kingston and the sea. Sir Thomas Wyatt found this out to his cost. When he marched to London at the head of the men of Kent, the boats were removed from the Surrey side of the river, and the bridge fortified; a simple precaution, but an efficacious. To cross the Thames he was compelled to ascend to Kingston, his army of thirty thousand gradually melting away, till he reached Temple-bar, faint, weary, and almost alone. He “kept touch” with the citizens, but these prudent men having in the meantime made their peace with Queen Mary, closed

against him those gates ever which his head was soon to blacken in the sun.

Long after Sir Thomas Wyatt, London possessed but one bridge—the old edifice of John Lackland—so massively built, that it might be compared to a very strong stone embankment built across the river, and perforated by a number of small, low openings, resembling at high-water rather culverts than arches, through which the tide, as it rose or fell, rushed with tremendous force. The enormous “starlings,” in which the patient angler ensconced himself during favourable states of the tide, are familiar objects in the old engravings, which represent London-bridge in all its glory of quaint picturesque houses overhanging the river, gatehouses, draw-bridge, and battlemented turrets.

As the bells of St. Botolph's rang in this present century they tolled the knell of the old Plantagenet bridge. It was a venerable institution; but roaring, busy, active London had swept past it, and demanded that the old bridge should make way for something better adapted to the wants of the age. The houses had been removed, and the arches widened; but palliative measures were given up at last, and it was confessed that London must have a new bridge. As of old, the first objection to be grappled with was that opposed to Ethelred's wooden bridge nine hundred years before. Navigation might not be impeded. If the fish-market had dropped below bridge to Billingsgate, the jilky-boys yet came up to Queenhithe, and night not be interrupted save by bringing the city to ruin. All kinds of odd schemes were prepared for bridges with “a lofty centre arch, and a descending causeway leading to some principal street on each side of the river;” “for a similar bridge having its approaches at right angles and parallel to the shore;” and “for two parallel bridges, enclosing a space sufficient for so many vessels as would probably pass in one tide, their passage being through corresponding drawbridges, one of which should always remain lowered for the use of passengers.” Mr. George Dance, architect to the City, furnished the Port of London committee with a design for these parallel bridges. He proposed that the space between them should be of three hundred feet, and furnished with mooring chains for securing the ships in tiers, so as not to interfere with the passage of smaller vessels. Mr. Dance's plan was induced by the great “expense, steepness, deformity,

and inconvenience attendant on an arch high enough for the passage of vessels.” Over and above all other considerations, still appears prominently the idea that the spirit of the old drawbridge must in some form be maintained. It underwent further development in the plan suggested by General—afterwards Sir Samuel—Bentham. Its principal characteristic was an enlargement in the centre into a “sexangular form of more than twice its ordinary breadth,” having in the middle an octagonal basin, spacious enough for a ship to lie in without touching a drawbridge constructed in each side—in fact, a bridge with, as it were, a loop in the middle: the object aimed at being the non-interruption of land traffic, which would be made continuous by keeping one drawbridge always down. Between this and the high-level bridge proposed by Telford and Douglas, opinion oscillated for nearly twenty years, when Rennie's plan was finally approved. The great engineer died at this point, and his son, afterwards Sir John Rennie, carried out the work. The new bridge was opened in state by William the Fourth and Queen Adelaide on the 1st of August, 1831, amid general rejoicings. About a million and a half sterling was invested in this great work—about one-third being expended on the bridge itself and the remainder on the approaches. Handsome and ample, new London-bridge—relieved also, but to a much more moderate extent than is generally supposed, by the erection of several bridges higher up the river—appeared likely to fulfil all the hopes of its projectors, and would unquestionably have done so had not an important factor in the calculation been overlooked or partially ignored. Had the population of London remained stationary, the bridge opened in 1831 would have sufficed for the traffic of to-day; but, as a matter of fact, it has increased beyond any estimate that could have been formed in Rennie's time. In 1831, the population of the metropolis was a little over a million and a half, and, in 1870, had nearly approached four millions. The traffic of London-bridge has increased in at least equal proportion. Twenty years ago the increase of population and traffic had already overtaxed the accommodation deemed so ample in 1831. In 1865 great difficulty was experienced in arranging the traffic, which has now outgrown all management whatsoever.

There has been talk of widening London-bridge ever since 1852, when the subject was brought before the Court of Common Council. In the following year, Mr. Francis Bannoeh brought forward some curious facts with the twofold object of proving, first, that London is under-bridged; secondly, that the bridges in existence are for the most part in the wrong place. "In Paris," wrote Mr. Bannoeh, "in a distance of four-and-a-half miles, there are fourteen bridges, or one to every five hundred and eighty yards. If to these be added the others leading to the old city, the number would be increased to twenty-seven. All are free, and the population of Paris is only one-third that of London. At this rate, London ought to have forty-two bridges. At Lyons, over the Saône, in five miles there are twelve bridges, and in three-and-a-half miles over the Rhone, seven; altogether nineteen bridges for a population of three hundred and fifty thousand. For the same proportion, London ought to have a hundred and thirty-two bridges." In the same pamphlet, it is pointed out that the traffic of London-bridge equalled, within a fraction, that of all the other bridges put together—the traffic of Westminster being equal to the half of London-bridge, and that of the intervening bridges equal to the remaining half. In 1866, Mr. Haywood wrote strongly in favour of increasing the bridge power of London below London-bridge, to keep pace with the rapid extension of the metropolis to the east and southward, and declared that there was only one complete remedy—"the formation of a new bridge or tunnel, with suitable approaches, lower down the river than London-bridge." Mr. Haywood dwelt strongly on the rate of growth of London, computing that, at the rate of progress still more strongly confirmed since 1866, the population of the metropolis doubles in every forty years; so that in 1906 the inhabitants of the great city will number six millions—a fact to be taken into serious consideration in constructing great public works.

It would hardly be credible, were not the power of vested rights and the horror of Englishmen for great and comprehensive schemes so well known, that the next appearance of London-bridge in civic debate was in connection with a scheme for widening the existing bridge. A plan, ingenious enough, if London were a pauper city, was put forward by Messrs. Horace Jones and Charles Hutton Gre-

gory, for throwing out ironwork on either side of the bridge and thus increasing its width. At once a storm of disapprobation arose. The absurdity of increasing the width of the bridge without proportionately increasing its approaches was pointed out; but the chief outburst of indignation was caused, oddly enough in this country, against any projects for deforming Rennie's splendid work. Nevertheless, the scheme was adopted by the Bridge House Committee, only to be subsequently rescinded. The plan of adding iron arches of a different span to existing stone arches had been tried on one of the Paris bridges, with such hideous results as to throw discredit on the entire scheme.

From time to time other plans have been brought before the public by engineers of reputation. The Londoner has been invited to continue on a more extended scale his subterranean existence. It has been proposed that a carriage-road should be made from the south end of the Minories, passing under the Thames near the Tower, and terminating at Tooley-street, near Burnham-street, with a length of nearly a mile and a half, with connections to the existing Tower Subway from Thames-street to Trinity-square. This may be described as a corkscrew scheme.

The northern entrance would commence at the south end of the Minories, and fall by a gradient of one in forty for a length of four thousand feet to a depth of a hundred feet; of this descent a length of two thousand four hundred feet would be expended inside a shaft in Trinity-square, which would almost entirely be appropriated. The entrance on the south side would be of a similar description, viz., by means of a shaft with a depth of about seventy feet. Passengers and vehicles, in passing from the gloom of the tunnel to the light of day, would have to turn three-and-a-half times round the northern shaft and nearly three times round the southern one.

If the Londoner object to be corkscrewed down into the bowels of the earth, he has the option of being shot up into the air. A hydraulic lift-bridge is proposed from the Tower to Horselydown-stairs—to be built of three arches, each ninety feet above Trinity high-water mark, to enable the tallest masts of vessels which come to London-bridge to pass under at all times. Lofty as is, or would be, this bridge, the approaches would be level; the traffic being raised and lowered from either end

of it by hydraulic power. On this plan the traffic would be lifted and lowered vertically, whilst in the tunnel it would be conducted spirally. More curious than all these schemes, which point unerringly to the Tower as the spot whereto the now below-bridge traffic should be diverted, is the revival or partial revival of the Bentham scheme recently patented by Mr. Barnett.

His bridge would, towards the centre of the river, branch right and left, forming two separated roadways, and after enclosing a certain area of river surface, these two branches would re-unite and the bridge would resume its original character, that of a single line. The centre portions of the two branches would be movable, to allow vessels to enter and leave the enclosed water space; or, when one branch had its passage closed the other would have its passage open, and vice versa.

Another plan recently submitted to the public combines boldness with originality, aiming at nothing less than the deflection of heavy-road traffic from London-bridge, and the concentration of numerous lines of railway in one spot. The scheme propounded by Mr. E. B. Webb and Mr. J. Bolland is remarkable as abandoning the high-level bridge on the one side, the drawbridge idea and the subway on the other. They propose to disregard the bugbear of interrupted navigation, and to push, in fact, the interruption down the river from London-bridge to the Tower. Their position is, that the space proposed to be cut off occupies the place of ancient Queenhithe—that the necessity for high-masted vessels to approach London-bridge has departed. No commerce would be destroyed by a few vessels, now using the upper water, being moored at a lower part of the river. In fact, the tendency of all vessels is to unload lower down the river, where space is more ample than near London-bridge. Without alluding to dock accommodation, it may suffice to state that the coal ships, which of old unloaded at Queenhithe, now discharge their cargo in Bugsby's-reach. As with the colliers, so with other ships: the lighters would have to travel a little farther, that would be the only innovation.

As the last bridge seaward on all navigable rivers is the first in importance, the proposed Tower-bridge would, as to traffic, become the principal bridge in London. The locality suggested by Messrs. Webb and Bolland is the space which separates the Tower from the St. Katharine's-dock

warehouses; the new bridge would thus cross the river from the foot of Little Tower-hill to Horselydown-stairs on the Surrey side. The bridge itself is proposed to be of "low level"—that is to say, the same height above Trinity high-water mark as the present London-bridge, but its construction would be entirely different. It would necessarily be of great width, to accommodate at least four lines of rails in addition to ample road and footway. But this is not all, the projectors being of opinion that a couple of rows of shops should be built between the rails and the carriage-way—to be removed in case of more space being required for traffic in the course of another half-century. Engineering difficulties there are none in the way of this bold and novel plan, which includes the formation of approaches both for rail and carriage way; bringing the latter into communication on the south with the junction of the Old and New Kent-roads, on the north with the junction of the Commercial-road, Commercial-street, and the Whitechapel-road, by a new road across Goodman's-fields.

This is a truly imperial scheme, and would cost an imperial price, for the wharfingers would require a serious amount of compensation; but perhaps for once, London, backed by the country, may be disposed to do something on a large scale with some slight reference to the wants of posterity. In such a case as this, private enterprise is as completely out of the question as a toll-bridge at the Tower would be. The object is no less than the relief of the whole traffic of East London, now suffering all the agonies of congestion, as any reader of ALL THE YEAR ROUND may discover for himself, if he will only take a pleasant little stroll from the Tower to London-bridge, and over it to Horsely-down.

SOME OF FASHION'S FOOLS.

NATURALLY they will mostly be French; for, somehow, France has almost always been our mistress in this respect. She is nearer to us than Spain or Italy, and German magnificence has generally been clumsy, like modern Berlin fêtes, and, moreover, has never spread very far. Besides, in spite of Mr. Freeman, the Norman conquest, and the Angevin succession which followed, Frenchified our higher ranks and all who aspired to imi-

tate them. No doubt, an English feeling began to be developed even in Henry the Second's reign: for that matter, the rebels who persuaded Waltheof to join their plot against William the Conqueror conveniently professed English sympathies. But, quite up to Edward the Third's time, an English noble was an Englishman in a very different sense, from that in which our hereditary legislators are Englishmen nowadays. He was an Englishman, just as one of his brothers or rivals in arms was a Burgundian, or a Provençal, or a Breton. He, just as much as they, looked to Paris as the centre of the world, the place where the lord-paramount held his court. It is well to remember this, whilst we are passing through our present stage of excessive admiration of all things German, which began when Coleridge and his school brought German philosophy into vogue, and which has been so fostered by political events that it threatens to make us forget the truth of history. Charlemagne was not a Frenchman, Mr. Freeman is quite right there; pray take care always to call him Charles the Great, and (if you will) call his favourite capital Aachen instead of Aix. But for all that, you cannot alter the fact that, from the time when his empire was divided, the western part of it gradually grew in importance, or rather recovered the importance which Gaul had had of old, while Germany sank back into the semi-barbarism, out of which the energy of the great Emperor had for a brief space lifted her. The greatness of France is shown in nothing more than in her complete and rapid assimilation of the Normans. These fierce conquerors became in the third generation mere Frenchmen, speaking French—all except a few at Bayeux and along the peninsula of the Côtentin—full of French ideas, never dreaming, in spite of continual quarrels, of disowning the suzerainty of the Paris over-lord.

No doubt, William the Conqueror claimed to be Edward's heir, and in Domesday and all public records studiously ignored the reign of Harold; but William was a Frenchman for all that, and so was Edward the First, although, when in Palestine just before his father's death, he ostentatiously refused to speak anything but English to the ambassadors of the Soldan. These Angevin kings, indeed, were much more French than their Norman predecessors. Clever they were and unscrupulous, though perhaps lacking in

Norman shrewdness; and short work they made of the disaffection of the little insular nobles, whose estates the Conqueror had so wisely parcelled out, that no one of them could bring half a county at his back. The great English earls, the Ælfrics, the Algars, and Siwards, and Leofrics, had not been replaced by equally powerful feudal lords; there were in England no great crown vassals, like those Dukes of Flanders and Aquitaine and Burgundy, &c., whose turbulent might made the headship of the Paris king rather a matter of complaisance, acknowledged because Paris was the centre of elegance and taste and letters, than of real efficient control. But, though the Angevins were kings every inch of them, strong and masterful, they had a vast amount of that fanfaronade which your true Frenchman throws into everything. Of course, their court was French also, in all its ways; and hence the habit grew up, which we have not yet lost, of looking to France in matters of taste.

There must have been something in the French genius peculiarly given to ornament and effect. The old Gauls had it, and used to tattoo themselves, before they were troubled about much clothing. Their kinsmen, the Scots of Ireland and Scotland, were wonderfully clever in ornamentation; the opus Scoticum, interlaced knot and serpent work, is something marvellous even in the few remnants of it which remain in gold and bronze work and illuminated books; and the workshops of old Gallic enamel, lately dug out at Bibracte and elsewhere, show that the same style of work was practised by the men whom Cæsar conquered. All along, the Gaulish mind showed itself fond of show and parade, and yet, somehow, able to steer clear of vulgarity. Gaul adopted Roman luxuries just as she adopted Roman laws. They say that the English invented shirts, and then the French put ruffles to them; but I shouldn't wonder if it was the other way—the ruffles first, before either French or English had any shirts to their backs. So far quicker did luxury develop than comfort. Indeed, the amount that was spent on brocades, and gold and silver plate, and tapestries, and carving, and jewellery, and robes of state was out of all proportion to the cost of living. A well-to-do Parisian's house nowadays is tasty enough, and full of costly knickknacks. Perhaps the wife has a passion for old china or Japanese curiosities, or the husband is fond of

pictures. But, even so, how poor is the furniture in general—the thinly-veneered rosewood and mahogany, the sham ebony, the wall-paper, the chintz—compared with that of a rich bourgeois in Henry the Fourth's time! Think of the solid ebony, the richly-carved oak, the walls tapestried or covered with embossed and gilded leather, or frescoed so that rooms and passages were like a great illuminated volume. The strangest thing is that house-decoration has always been meanest in England, which has never, perhaps, since the Conqueror's time, seen war of the cruel devastating kind which has always been the rule abroad, for our civil war was remarkably free from the waste and ruin that war usually brings with it, and even our Wars of the Roses spared property, while spilling men's blood-like water. Even in England, however, comparatively simple as our house-fittings always were, houses and furniture and all human belongings have become simpler, less ornate, than in the days when the whole household dined together, the dependents below the salt, and when the dining-hall was strewn with rushes, not because carpets were unused, as we sometimes fancy—there were plenty of them, "double velvet pile," in my lady's bower—but because the mud of the retainers' boots would have ruined any carpet in a week.

In the Middle Ages, however, the French were far ahead of us in fashionable expensiveness. Sumptuary laws were constantly being made, but in vain. Popular preachers were constantly declaiming against costly dress, equally in vain. Nay, the crowds who thronged to hear the preachers so vied with one another in rich apparel, that their appearance left no doubt of the foolishness of preaching. In Paris, in the fourteenth century, there were twenty-six different guilds of ornament-makers. Neither the Hundred Years' War, nor the yet more grievous devastations of the free-companies, and the cruel jacqueries of a maddened peasantry, seemed to make much difference in the way of living.

In 1393, while Richard the Second was wasting his money in England, Charles the Sixth was setting a fashion which the chronicler calls "moult outrageuse," excessive. The first masked ball dates from his reign. The king and five young nobles came in dressed as savages. They had put on surcoats of tarred sackcloth, and had then rolled themselves in tow, so as to seem

all covered with long hair. In they came, dancing and clanking the chains which bound together all except the king. "Sire, we had better keep the torches out of the way," said Messire Ivain de Galles. So said, so done; but, unhappily, in burst the Duke of Orleans with his company, and, of course, his own torch-bearers. "What! savage men?" he cried, "I'll soon singe their beards for them;" and, snatching a torch, he thrust it into the face of one of the chained maskers. In a moment all the five were in a blaze. One broke away and jumped into the rinsing trough, four were burned to death, and the king, who was talking to one of the royal duchesses, was frightened out of his few wits.

Dress in Charles the Seventh's time got more and more costly. Agnes Sorel, one of the first of that long line of discreditable women-politicians with whom France at all times has been cursed, outdid her predecessors by piling upon her head a huge superstructure of wire and buckram, not credible except to those who see it in illuminated books of "hours"—for the fashions got into the prayer-books—and on carved monuments. The French laughed, and wrote unpleasant verses; but before long, all heads with any pretensions about them were surmounted by the same monstrosity. Before long, thanks to Joan of Arc and the spirit that she roused, he who had been rather King of Touraine and Berri, skulking away at quaint little Loches, than King of France, got back to Paris, and, as Agnes actually came in for a share of the credit, her fashions became patriotic as well as what the modern Parisian calls chic.

Under Louis the Eleventh, dress was much more sober. Louis, in fact, seems to have been by no means so bad as he is painted. Even out of our Richard the Third, the whitewashers have managed to make a tolerably decent king, as kings went in those days. Against Richard, however, there are always the murders in the Tower, and Louis is only accused of having killed his brother, a charge of which his latest historian unhesitatingly acquits him, hinting that, if the said brother had been killed, it would have served "the wretched traitor" quite right. One habit in which Louis indulged was—considering the age, and his bringing up—little short of miraculous; he used to give compensation to farmers whose crops were damaged by the royal hunt, aye, and—Michelet has ferreted out the entries and items—to old women whose cats or sheep

were worried by the royal hounds. If his descendants, and the nobles to whom they set the fashion, had kept up this custom, the cry of "War to the château, peace to the thatched cot," would hardly have been so bitter in 1793. Louis, too, actually returned their money to the feudal tenants who, on the rumour of an English invasion—which never took place—had paid in lieu of personal service, and also to the towns which had sent contributions towards the campaign. More wonderful still, he paid his debts. While he was wearing a shocking bad hat, and a suit at which the people laughed, he was raising forced loans to redeem from Burgundy the towns along the Somme. The lenders were lucky enough to get back both interest and principal. Don't believe all the evil that Quentin Durward teaches about Louis; Sir Walter says what, if true at all, was true only of the wise king's latest years, when he was shut up in Plessis-les-Tours, surrounded by pitfalls and caltrops, and subject to that most demoralising of all influences—the constant dread of assassination. Louis deserves whitewashing; and one of his best traits is that, when France wanted money, he steadily refused to waste a penny on his own adornment.

Charles the Eighth changed all that. He brought new fashions from Italy, and carried them to excess; and in the reign of Francis the First, luxury in dress rose higher than ever. We know what was said about the Field of the Cloth of Gold, that many a gay ruffler there carried his ancestral acres on his back. The noblesse were ruined, and then went to court to try to mend their fortunes, only succeeding, as was natural, in making the mischief worse. Then sprang up the breed of poor dandies, waiters upon Providence, well-born Micawbers anxiously expecting some little "place about court" to turn up. They had their makeshifts, not unknown to the modern "swell" who is down on his luck; for instance, Lord Bareacres and Count Out-at-elbows would vie with one another in the fineness of the lace frill protruding from their doublets. You might think those ingenious noblemen were got up in "sarks of the Holland fine," regardless of expense; but a contemporary ballad tells how they wore shirts of sac de toile à moulin—as coarse as a miller's sack—and just stuck a fine Flanders handkerchief through the breast of their coat. Hence they were called fringants, fretu-

quets, words that have lasted, though it needs an archæologist to tell their origin.

In Henry the Second's time, dress grew yet more costly, but it was so graceful, both for men and women, that it is hard to find fault. Very soon, however, naturalness degenerated into license. Catherine de Medicis, at that lovely little château of Chenonceaux, which she forced Diana of Poitiers to give up to her, made a grand banquet, where the waitresses, "noble and virtuous young ladies," says the chronicler, were got up like savage women, their hair flying loose, and their dress, or rather the want of it, going on a long way towards the primitive fig-leaf. Next week, at Plessis-les-Tours, close to the capital of Touraine, there was another banquet, at which the same waitresses figured as pages; the cost of the green silk bought to make them doublets and hosen is still extant.

The next fashion was that to which we nowadays seem to be makingslow and timid approach—the fashion of long trains; serpents, the preachers called them. Queen Elizabeth of Austria made her entry into Paris in 1571, mounted on a "hackney," and with a train twenty ells long, which took six squires to hold it up. Elizabeth Archduchess was one of the nobodies of that sad time. Charles the Ninth's marriage with her was thought by the Huguenots to be a good sign, for her father, Maximilian the Second, was the very reverse of a bigot; but the Massacre of St. Bartholomew followed in less than two years.

Henry the Third, King of Poland, who, when news came of his brother's death, threw up his crown and ran away from Cracow by night, pursued by Polish lancers as far as Moravia, became a greater fool of fashion than any of his predecessors even of the House of Valois. He spent three-and-a-half million francs on the marriage of his minion, the Duke of Joyeuse. He was always planning new styles of dress, and used, moreover, to paint, and to wear plasters on his face at night to improve his complexion; moreover, he slept in gloves, an absurdity which was soon imitated by most of the grand lords and ladies. His hair was red, but he soon lost it through trying various dyes; and, being bald, he wore a little turban. The Duke of Sully laughs at his turban, and at the basket round his neck, full of little lap-dogs. But his great vanity was starch. He actually invented

some new kinds, and the Parisians called him, "starcher in ordinary to Her Majesty." To him belongs the credit of surrounding a man's neck with a stiff frill—the ruff that, before his time, the women had had all to themselves. Henry wore it flattened down, till it looked like a dish. "Calves' head," cried the Parisians, and the phrase became as significant as it was among us at the Restoration.

The League tried to bring in simplicity of attire; but both they and Henry the Fourth notably failed, though the latter had, in his campaigning days, got a real liking for it. About this time, new dyes began to be invented. The Gobelin scarlet was discovered by a man who accidentally let a bit of tin fall into acid, and then broke the bottle among some cochineal. Some of the new dyes had the most ridiculous names: "the dying monkey," "the sick Spaniard," "the dead man come to life again," "the seven deadly sins."

Make a leap now to Louis the Fourteenth's time, passing by the strange epidemic of poisoning, Italian born, but very readily naturalised in France. During this time, people drank out of cups warranted to break when poison was put into them, and eat with knives that would bleed when used to cut poisoned food, and they wore for charms bits of "unicorn's horn," the virtue of which was that it could not endure the presence of anything impure.

In Louis the Fourteenth's day, great folks took to washing. Bathing had been on the decline since Roman times; and the public baths, kept by the barbiers-barbants—a different guild from the surgeon-barbers—had got to be places of such license for both sexes, that in the middle of the sixteenth century they were closed, and great ladies went from week's end to week's end without even washing their hands, using scent instead, like Henry the Third wearing face-plasters. So much unhealthiness was the result, that Louis the Fourteenth told the barbers to reopen their baths. Then the hair-dressers set up next door to them; and people who had been in the habit of getting their hair dressed at home went into a shop. Some of the hair-dressers rapidly rose to fame. *Sieur Champagne*—*sieur*, you know, is short for *seigneur*, as if we should say, *Lord Truefitt*—boasted that he had been sent for by all the crowned heads in Europe; and, when in a merry mood, used to insist on a kiss from the lady whose head he had

half done, or else threatened to throw down his tongs.

Now, too, wigs came in, the king leading the fashion with that monstrous affair in which he is always represented. Jean Baptiste Thiers wrote a book to prove that false hair was contrary to the will of God; but he was no more listened to than were Pierre Juvenay and Jacques Boileau—brother of the poet—when they declaimed against low dresses. Dresses were worn lower and lower, till Madame de Maintenon took to covering her bosom with a black lace fichu. Louis made a good thing out of wigs. There was a wig-tax; and, moreover, he started a new office, that of *contrôleurs de perruques*. "Whenever the king makes an office," said Minister Desmarests, "God provides some fool or other to buy it."

"No other invention," says Professor Newman, "has done more for the comfort of mankind than coach-springs." Beckmann, historian of inventions, knows nothing of their discoverer. "They came in Louis the Fourteenth's time." There had been coaches before—whirlicotes, they were called in England. Henry the Fourth had only one coach. He apologises one day to a friend: "I can't call on you to-day; my wife is using the coach." Under Louis the Fourteenth coaches multiplied; and, the need being great, springs were invented—by the wife, it is said, of a chemist in the St. Antoine suburb. As if by magic, coaches ceased to be the curious rooms upon wheels, with heavy pillars and leather curtains, of which we see pictures; they began to be much what they were till within the last fifty years—lumbering, according to our notions, but grand with gilded leather, and polished metal, and varnished wood. This was one of the saddest times in French history—the Grand Monarque's reign had clouded over, his wars had failed, his peasantry were starving—yet never was there more luxury in Paris. Fancy seventy-one goldsmiths' shops in the island of Notre Dame alone! Many things, besides children's rattles, were made of silver, for which even the richest people are now content with copper or block-tin. Luxury showed itself, too, in other ways. Even a plain citizen like Boileau had his bed covered with red velvet trimmed with silver lace, the bed curtains being of cloth of gold. Boule, too, whom people will call Buhl, as if he had been a German, a famous upholsterer, brought in the inlaying that goes

by his name—brass in mother-of-pearl and ebony.

With the peace of Utrecht English fashions came in. In 1716 some of our ladies appeared at the French court wearing hoops. Very soon every lady in Paris wore a huge hoop. When the Queen went to the theatre, she was quite shut out from public view by the hoops of the two royal princesses who sat one on each side of her. The public grumbled: "What's the use of a queen if we can't see her?" So the question was referred to Fleury, the cardinal prime minister. "Oh, leave those two arm-chairs empty, and let the princesses sit nearer the duchesses." "Very well," said the princesses, "but you must move the duchesses farther off, or when they sit down and their hoops rise, nobody will be able to see us." Then it was the turn of the duchesses; their husbands wrote a pamphlet to show that their wives too must have more room, but the cardinal stopped farther grumbling, after the fashion of the good old times, by having their book burnt by the common hangman.

Another English innovation, the riding-coat (redingote), came in in 1730, and by-and-by the buckskin breeches, which the French dandies wore so tight that they had to be lifted up and dropped into them.

In hair-dressing the French still bore the palm. Dugué, their most fashionable coiffeur, drove a carriage and pair like the first physicians nowadays. The Pompadour was one of his customers. Legros founded a hair-dressing academy, wrote treatises on the art, and kept a number of pretty girls called *prêteuses de têtes*, who walked about the best streets, with their heads trimmed according to his latest devices. Hair-powder was used to such an extent that the scarcity of flour was laid at the coiffeurs' doors.

Under Louis the Sixteenth, dress was to be as simple as it had been extravagant under his predecessor. Unfortunately, in that matter, husband proposes but wife disposes; and Marie Antoinette spent awfully—spending, too, without letting Louis know—and was silly enough to vie with the wretched creatures who had thriven under Madame du Barry, and who were fond of colours with all sorts of coarse and strange names. Then came the first forewarning of the Revolution. Red and blue, the old colours of Paris city, linked by Lafayette with Henry the Fourth's royal white, made the tricolor; and the pale neutral tints with

odd names, which had been so much in vogue, soon got unfashionable. By-the-bye, the most popular brooches were bits of the Bastille set and mounted. A man's dress showed his party: the patriots wore light coats with black waistcoat and trousers; the royalists dressed all in black with a white stock, or else in the livery of Artois green coat with rose-coloured collar. Before long, Minister Roland actually came into his office with strings in his shoes instead of buckles. Poor Louis noticed it, and, with a sigh, silently pointed out the appalling fact to Dumouriez. "Hélas, oui; tout est perdu," was the reply; and, sure enough, very soon after, the red-caps were forcing their way into the Tuileries. The red cap of liberty had a very prosaic origin. Instead of being the "Phrygian bonnet," it is just the galley-slave's headgear. The Swiss of the Châteauroux regiment, sent to the galleys for their share in the Nancy riots, were released, and came into Paris with the red caps still on their heads. "They are victims of despotism," said the people, forgetting the circumstances of the riot; and so the red cap became the favourite wear with the extreme party. The *carmagnole*, another republican garment, is simply a sailor's summer waistcoat, which, in winter, was supplemented with the *houppelande*, a big gray cloak with red collar. Sansculotte, too, tells of a change in dress; the republicans left off the breeches (*culotte*) and took to the trouser (*pantalon*); those who were determined to be in the height of the fashion added a pair of wooden shoes, protesting against the extravagance of the old style by a new style, equally extravagant in another sense. Chaumette wished to force this republican garb on all France; but even the fear of the guillotine could not bring about such a revolution. When the Reign of Terror was over, the costume of both sexes at once became wildly outrageous. The men, called *muscadins*, *incroyables*, *merveilleux* (as they had been called *mgquets* a century earlier), dressed in all sorts of strange ways, and, like the swells in Punch, left out their r's, their favourite oath being *pàole d'homme páfumé* (on the word of a well-scented man). The women were worse; the *merveilleuses* went in for and surpassed the simplicity of classical times; over flesh-coloured bodice and "tights" they threw a short tunic of thinnest muslin and nothing else.

And here we may close our remarks; for the *Magasin des Modes* has been regu-

larly published ever since 1797, and so fashion's follies are more freely put on record than before. A very humiliating record it is. When we think of the amount of energy, and thought, and all that doctors call nerve-force, that is daily wasted in meeting the changes of fashion—the men who are ruined, who are made prematurely old, whose souls are dragged down from high ideals that women may be “in the fashion”—we feel what savages we are after all. Why, a tithe of this nerve-force would suffice for the exploring of Africa or the colonising of Brazil! And fashion, a Frenchman says, is truly a French disease. What a pity it cannot be localised, and what a difference such localisation, even for a year, would make in the rest of the world!

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF “LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,” “AT HER MERCY,”
“HALVES,” &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE COUPÉ.

OUR history must now retrace its steps, for a few months, to the day when Cecil Landon left his wife for Wellborough, on the morning after that eventful picnic at Windsor. He had, as he had seemed to do, in reality forgiven his wife for the deception which she had confessed to having practised on him at the time of their marriage; but the thought of it still rankled in his breast. He was profoundly dissatisfied with her, and also dissatisfied with himself at having been so easily persuaded to forgiveness. He was by no means of the hard material out of which are carved domestic tyrants; but, like most conceited men, he resented exceedingly being made the subject of deception.

The incident of the day before and its probable consequences also annoyed him far more than he would have liked to confess; he shrank from the ridicule which was sure to be evoked by it, even more than from the scandal it would create; for, for that he felt there was no serious ground. His wife, he was confident, had told him the truth at last. But not until it had been wrung from her; not until she had made him a laughing-stock to society, and caused him to commit an offence which, in the eyes of Lady Elizabeth Groves (of whose designs upon Mr. Whympers-Hobson he was well aware), would be unpardonable, and he very much cared, if not for the good

opinion, at least for the good word of Lady Elizabeth Groves. His sagacity even foresaw that Gossip, with its usual blundering malice, would associate the young man's name with that of Ella, and this, if it did not anger him more than all, made him feel more bitter than aught else against his wife. His nature was, for the best of reasons—self-complacency—incapable of jealousy, but the idea that other people should suppose it possible that Cecil Landon's wife could stoop to encourage such a man as Whympers-Hobson was hateful to him, and she herself—though he would not have acknowledged it—came in for a share of the abhorrence. Her pleading words had scarce done ringing in his ears, her appealing looks had scarcely faded from his gaze, but they occupied no place in his memory. It was seeking farther back for the rare causes of offence that she had given to him; they were but two—the falsification of her name, and the change of profession into which she had persuaded him; the latter had been effected at least as much for his sake as for hers; but he did not think of that now. He only reflected that, thanks to her, he was bound upon a disagreeable errand for an indefinite time, and that when he returned from it, it would be, thanks to her, to find himself an exile from certain circles for which he had a liking, and the subject of scandalous comment. The house he had just quitted had no longer the sweet sense of home when his mind dwelt upon it; the wife that he had left alone there had, for the present, lost the attraction for him which hitherto had never failed to draw his heart-strings thither. He was to blame for the most part, and she was to be pitied; and, alas! the more he is to blame, it must needs happen that the more claim will she have upon our pity.

It was with a vexed and gloomy spirit indeed that Cecil Landon drove up to the railway station, and sprang out of his hansom ere it stopped. He was early for the train, which had been hitherto a thing unusual with him (there had been no lingering farewells this time when he left his home), but he felt that motion, action, haste were imperative. He was consumed by a fever of the mind, though it was not stirred by expectation nor cheered by hope; and it drove him not towards rest, but to take external stimulants. His heart was full of bitterness, but his eyes were quick as ever to observe all that was passing about him. His wrath was as the anger of a

child, which vanishes, or changes to some other passion, when any object of attraction presents itself. At the ticket-office, which had only just been opened, one would-be passenger was already before him. It was a lady, and, to judge by her figure, a young one, though her face could not be seen, since she was in earnest conversation with the railway clerk, and it was thrust forward almost into the pigeon-hole.

"What a time these women are in getting their tickets," muttered Cecil to himself: "they have always some question to put which common sense would tell them. What rubbish the people talk who want to give them the franchise, when they have not even the intelligence to understand their Bradshaws."

If this had reference to Ella, it was most unjust, for she was particularly "good" at Bradshaw, and thoroughly mistress of herself and of the route, whenever she had occasion to travel; but then Cecil's frame of mind with respect to her, and—by rapid generalisation—to all women, was just then far from judicial.

"She has been three full minutes already," continued he, half aloud, and the clerk seeing him consult his watch, and glad of the opportunity to dismiss his importunate customer, enquired, "Where for, sir?—You must move on, miss," he added to the young lady, "since the ticket is lost there is no help for it but to pay again."

The young lady uttered a sigh—deeper, one would have thought, than the occasion should have demanded—and turned sorrowfully away.

Even then, Cecil did not see her face; nor, to do him justice, was he influenced by the fact that she was young, or the possibility that she might be pretty; but the sigh touched him, as it would have done had it been uttered by any one of her sex, or indeed of his own. To his keen ear it spoke of poverty—notwithstanding that the pigeon-hole was for first-class passengers—of an inability to pay; and, towards the poor, Cecil's heart was always tender.

"What is the matter with that young lady?" enquired he, as he took her place.

"Oh, she has lost her return ticket—or says so; it's a very old dodge if she hasn't," returned the clerk derisively.

"Where was it she wished to go?"

"To Grantham, just beyond Pullham Junction. She wanted to know whether she could not pay at that end of her

journey, instead of this, which would be a queer start."

"Give me a ticket for Grantham."

"I have stamped yours for Wellborough. You certainly said Wellborough," cried the much-enduring clerk. "If men, as well as women, are not to know their own minds, we railway-clerks will have harder work than ever."

"I know my mind, which is to have both tickets," observed Cecil gravely.

"Oh, I see, you wish to pay for the young lady."

The clerk's face was a picture as he gave out the two tickets. He dared not smile, because Cecil's hand was so dangerously near to his own face; but it turned purple with suppressed amusement. I am afraid he did not give the young man the credit he deserved for his philanthropic intentions. The young lady had withdrawn to the platform, and when Cecil came up to her, was counting the slender contents of a little purse with an air of anxiety as well as melancholy.

"Here is your ticket, madam," said Cecil, in respectful tones.

"Have you found it, sir? oh thank you," said she, looking brightly up, and speaking with earnest gratitude. He thought that gentle face, with its little flush of colour, the fairest object he had ever beheld. There was no positive disloyalty to Ella's beauty in his admiration, for there was no comparison between the two women. Ella was a brunette, whereas the young lady in question was a blonde; there was nothing dark about her, except those long eyelashes under which looked forth those tender eyes of blue; her complexion was exquisite, it had absolutely no fault, except perhaps an excessive delicacy. The bow of her Cupidon lips was straightened for the moment by a smile as she thanked him, but ere the gracious words had left them, became a bow again.

"This is not my ticket, sir," said she with gravity, "mine was a half ticket."

"But you had lost it, the clerk said, so I ventured to supply its place."

He placed it in her hand, lifted his hat, and walked on towards the train, which was waiting by the platform. I have painted him ill, if it is not distinctly understood that Cecil Landon—within certain limits, and with most of us, alas! there is a limit—was a gentleman. He had no intention of presuming upon the service he had rendered; indeed he thought very

little of it; money was not only of no consequence in his own eyes, but he did not recognise its necessary importance in many cases in those of other people. He treated the purchase of the ticket—which, perhaps, had cost him thirty shillings—as though the lady had dropped her glove, and he had picked it up for her.

“But, sir, you mustn't, indeed I can't accept it,” exclaimed a quick and agitated voice, close to his ear. She had run up to him, and even touched his arm to draw his attention, which had been directed to the portmanteau a porter was placing for him under the seat of a carriage.

“But you can't travel without a ticket, madam, and there is the ticket,” said he, smiling, and after the old and attractive fashion too. That touch of her little hand, involuntary as it had been, had moved him strangely.

“But the obligation, sir, is so considerable, and to a complete stranger too.”

“Whatever it is, it is on my side,” replied Cecil, “if you will condescend to accept the service.”

This somewhat high-flown speech evidently flew over the young lady's head. She only saw that something kind was intended, and ere she could acknowledge it the bell began to ring, and the guard to call out: “Take your seats for Ledbridge, Pullham, and Wellborough. Where are you for, miss? Grantham?—then this is the carriage,” and he handed her in to the very coupé in which Cecil had placed his luggage. She looked a little discomposed, but in those days of coupés there were no “ladies' carriages,” and she could scarcely have said: “I do not wish to travel with this gentleman.”

Cecil noticed the look, and observed, with his hand on his portmanteau: “If you would rather be alone——” but the train was actually in motion ere he finished the sentence, so there was no option for him but to jump in, or be left behind.

“I am sure I ought not to be sorry,” said the young lady, simply, as they moved out of the station, “for the opportunity that is thus afforded me of—of—cultivating your further acquaintance; otherwise I should have felt like a downright robber; would you be kind enough, sir, to favour me with your name and address?”

“Oh, certainly!” said Cecil, smiling. “You shall have them both before you reach your journey's end.” There was no reason why he should not have given them

at once, yet something—not, alas! his good genius, nor hers—dissuaded him from it.

If he had revealed it to her, he had an idea (quite groundless, for, as it happened, she knew nothing of London) that she would gather from the street where he lived, and which was not a bachelor's quarter, that he was a married man. And I am afraid there was by this time a certain piquancy for him in the fact that this circumstance was unknown to her.

“I will send you the cheque by to-night's post,” continued the young lady, who had taken out her pocket-book, and sat, pencil in hand, ready for his communication. “Perhaps you will put it down yourself; I shall feel much easier in my mind, and indeed, sir,”—seeing him hesitate—“I must insist upon it.”

Thus adjured, he hastily wrote down a few words, closed the book and returned it to her.

“You are very young, or else must be very rich, to have a cheque-book of your own,” observed he smiling.

“It is certainly not for the latter reason,” returned she, with an answering smile. “The fact is, my sister and I, being alone in the world, have the sole management of our own little affairs; but it is she who is the woman of business, and it is her name, not mine, which appears in our pecuniary transactions.”

“I have no doubt it is a ‘good’ name, as we say in the City,” laughed Cecil; “but still I should like to know that of the other partner of the firm.”

“Since you have given me yours,” said she gravely, “I have no right, nor indeed any reason, to withhold mine: it is Rose Mytton.”

“A very pretty and a very appropriate name,” said Cecil.

“I don't see that,” answered she simply. “It is rather a funny one in the plural. Mr. Welby—that's our vicar—calls Helen and me the pair of mittens. A little joke goes a long way down at Grantham.”

“When I said it was appropriate, I was referring to your christian-name,” observed Cecil.

“Oh, I see, you intend to be complimentary,” and she gave him a grave little bow.

Cecil felt that he had made a mistake—or at least that he had been “forcing the pace” too early, so he hastened to be very matter-of-fact, to erase any unfavourable impression he might have made.

“Good heavens! I never looked after your luggage; did you see it labelled?”

"I have nothing but this," she said, pointing to a black leather bag, which she had carried on her arm while on the platform. "I was only in London for one day; the fact is I came up on some business of my sister's, and stayed the night with some friends of ours, who started for the sea-side this morning. That was what made the loss of my return ticket so very inconvenient. I had not enough money left to pay my fare even by the third class; and no one to apply to for more. So you have really done me a very great service."

"No more than anyone else would have done, who had the good fortune to have the opportunity," said Cecil. "But how curious, and indeed shocking, it seems, that the want of a few shillings in her purse should place a young lady like yourself in a position of positive embarrassment."

"You would be very often shocked at Helen and me, I do assure you," returned Miss Mytton, laughing, "if you are shocked at that. When we sit on our special committee of Ways and Means, at the end of every month, the firm often finds itself 'positively embarrassed.'"

"What, in spite of that cheque-book, and the balance at the banker's, that it presupposes?"

"We sometimes bring it down very low indeed," continued the young lady gaily. "Do you think it will stand against another five pounds," says Helen; because you know the bankers say: 'We expect our customers to keep fifty pounds in hand;' only they are so pleasant and accommodating to Helen and me, that they never make a fuss about it."

"Of course they don't," said Cecil. "They are better pleased—or ought to be—with having the firm of Mytton Sisters on their books, than that of Anybody Brothers, with fifty thousand pounds."

"Well, I am not quite sure of that," laughed Miss Rose; "but at all events they never complain."

"But if you are not the acting member of the firm, how comes it that you come to town on business, instead of the senior partner—for I conclude you are the junior?"

"Yes, I am the junior, though only by a year or two. Well, the fact is, my sister was not quite well, and I insisted upon going to London in her place. She objected very much, and even had the cruelty to suggest that I was not competent to

undertake the expedition. She actually said I should never find my way to town and back; and how nearly that prophecy has come true! She will never trust me to go from home alone again, I expect."

"But I hope the business got transacted all right."

"Oh yes; I think I have managed that. Are you a judge of drawings?"

"I know something about them, in a stiff professional way," said Cecil, with reference to his studies at the Military Academy.

"Oh, you are an engineer perhaps."

"No," said Cecil, blushing; he felt that he could never reveal his true calling to this charming young creature. "I was educated, however, with some such intention."

"Well then you will be able to judge."

From an outside pocket of the leather bag the young lady took a small portfolio, full of sketches, some of which she handed to him. They were for the most part illustrations of rather striking situations—combats, quarrels, the partings and meetings of lovers, and so on.

"They are very vigorous," remarked Cecil, "and so far as my opinion goes, of quite exceptional merit. But the subjects are a little what may be called 'sensational'—don't you think so?"

"Yes, indeed I do," answered the young lady laughing, "and so does the artist. 'My dear,' says Helen to me sometimes quite gravely, 'would you be so good as to let me have a pork-chop for supper?'—I am the housekeeper, you must know, and provide for the establishment—'I must have some terrible dreams to-night, in order to be up to my work for The Raven's Wing to-morrow.' The Raven's Wing is a magazine, to which, among others, my sister supplies the illustrations. It is very exacting in the way of 'sensation.' The editor writes: 'You must do us a good Vampire for the next part;' and, never having seen a vampire, poor Helen has to stimulate her imagination."

Cecil was much tickled with this idea, and laughed as he had not laughed certainly for the last twenty-four hours.

"And all these other pictures, the murders and the combats and the falling down steep precipices, are they all for magazines?"

"Yes, some have been bespoken, but most of them have been drawn, as Helen says, on 'spec'—you would be delighted with Helen, since you are fond of fun—she

wishes to increase her connection with the periodicals, and had made an appointment to show some drawings to a certain editor, when she was taken ill—or at least with a bad sore-throat—and so I kept it for her. I am glad to say that her interests have not suffered by her absence."

"I can easily imagine it, since you were her proxy," said Cecil quietly, and as though stating some mathematical fact. She did not give him this time that reproof of the grave little bow, and he felt, to use an aquatic phrase, that "he was gaining."

Though he kept his eyes still fixed upon the drawings, the blush of pleasure that rose to her pretty cheek did not escape him, nor the nervous plunge her hand made into the portfolio for more pictures.

"The funniest part of the whole affair," said she, "is that Helen herself does not care for figure-drawing. Her own line is landscape, which unhappily is in little or no demand with the magazines. Now that is what I call a pretty picture."

She put into his hand an etching of a small country house. Every detail of it was exquisite, and though small, perfectly distinct, and even elaborate. It showed a low-roofed dwelling, with French windows opening upon a small but well-kept garden. Above it, like some giant sentinel, towered a great chalk hill, here bare, here covered with foliage, and crowned with a forest of beeches.

"What a charming retreat!" cried Cecil. "Am I right in conjecturing it to be the country house of the firm?"

"You have guessed it," replied the young lady delightedly. "It was somebody's hunting-box at one time, and used to be called 'The Box,' but when we took it the vicar insisted on its name being altered; he said it sounded 'horsey,' so we now call it 'The Casket.'"

"And I hope the vicar has christened its inmates 'The Jewels.'"

"What clever guesses you make. He really does call us his jewels."

"I object to that," said Cecil promptly. "He has no right to use the possessive pronoun, has he? You can't be both his jewels at all events." It was curious how interested he felt in this absurd enquiry; and in making quite certain that it was Miss Helen Mytton—if it was either—and not Miss Rose, whom the parson called "his jewel."

"Mr. Welby is a privileged person," she replied laughing, "and calls people what he pleases."

"He has rechristened their cottage; but that is the limit as to change of name he is likely to go with either of the firm?"

"We are neither of us likely to become Mrs. Welby, if you mean that."

"Well, I did mean that," confessed Cecil, with a sigh of relief; "though I feel that it was impertinent in me to express it. Pray forgive me."

"Well, you see, there is still that money owing to you for my ticket," answered Miss Rose archly; "and debtors are obliged to forgive things."

"Then I should like to remain always your creditor," said Cecil naïvely; "that I might make little slips of behaviour, and be so bewitchingly forgiven. Pray thank your sister," added he before her forehead could form a frown, "for the great pleasure her drawings have afforded an ignorant but admiring stranger," and he began to wrap them up again in the tissue paper in which they had been folded.

"Your name is in my pocket-book, though you have not mentioned it," said she softly; "and for my part I shall scarcely consider you as a stranger after your great kindness."

"I am sure I shall not consider you so, after yours," replied Cecil, almost below his breath, though they were quite alone.

He had not only forgotten all about his quarrel with his wife by this time, but almost her very existence. Yet it is fair to say that he would not have done this but for the quarrel. Let me whisper in your ear, ladies: there is no time so dangerous to let a husband go out of your sight, as just after you have had a disagreement with him. The most faithful, the most dutiful, the best of men, are on such occasions, if not prone to disloyalty, exceedingly susceptible of the influences of other women. "If my wife doesn't appreciate me," say these vain and unstable creatures, when any one of the other sex is making herself agreeable to them, though in the most innocent and ordinary way, "here is another—worth a dozen of her to look at—who has better taste." I have written it in the "vulgar tongue," but that is what they feel, every one of them, from an archbishop downwards.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER IX. CATALINA.

It was clear to me that Basil was prejudiced against M. Riel. I liked to think, too, that he was misinformed concerning M. Riel. Could it be that Basil was jealous?

I did not see Catalina often at this time. She was much occupied in assisting her grandfather; she took the warmest interest in the success of his publications. She wrote for them, copied, compiled, and corrected proofs. I believe she even learnt something of the compositor's craft, and could, upon occasion, set up types. I liked her and admired her, and I could not but be impressed by the quiet enthusiasm and resoluteness which characterised her; but I was unsympathetic in regard to her pursuits. I could not bring myself to esteem Mr. Grisdale's newspapers. I was even inclined to agree with Nick that they were "low." There seemed to me no necessity for such violent expression, or for such rancorous opinions as they set forth. Why should Mr. Grisdale be so abusive? What harm had the bishops, for instance, ever done to him that he should write of them so angrily?

Catalina, however, seemed perfectly convinced that Mr. Grisdale was right, and that his publications were of advantage to the community. Indeed, she had quite adopted his sentiments. She, too, talked gravely of The Good Cause, of Progress, of The People. She advocated a revolution. She was in favour of a republican form of government.

It was not to be wondered at, perhaps, seeing the conditions of her life. She had been reared and instructed by her grandfather. She had been his constant companion, and he had gravely impressed upon her the story of the death of Don Leon Lopez de Martinez. And she had been in the habit of meeting many who were refugees by reason of their political convictions.

If Basil was jealous of M. Riel, could it be that I was jealous of Catalina?

I had truly stated to Basil that I did not love M. Riel. And yet, when the thought occurred to me, as it did, that M. Riel might possibly love Catalina, I confess I found it by no means agreeable.

Basil loved Catalina. Nick loved Catalina. Was everybody to love her? Even Mr. Leveridge, who had seen her occasionally, had been stirred to a sort of fervid admiration of her beauty—and I admit frankly that she was very beautiful—and had forthwith expressed a desire to paint a portrait of her. But to Mr. Leveridge every woman was as a subject for a picture—a something to be transferred to canvas. I did not particularly envy her Mr. Leveridge's admiration, nor did the fact that she was loved by both Basil and Nick much disturb me. Those two passions, I thought, would somehow adjust, perhaps disperse, each other. Indeed, it seemed to me that I did not much care who loved her, provided M. Riel did not. Nevertheless, I assured myself again and again, as I had assured Basil, that I did not love M. Riel; that the interest I took in him—and I owned to taking great interest in him—was not in the least like love.

I went to see Catalina. Miss Leveridge's house was dull and dreary, but it was always

particularly neat and clean. She had often, indeed, vexed me by her excess of regard for the cleanliness of her windows, the polish of her tables and chairs, the smoothness of her chintzes, and the prim folding and falling of her curtains. What a contrast was presented by the disorder of Mr. Grisdale's abode in Somer's-town! Doubtless our old house there in our early days had been just as dingy and untidy. Yet there seemed something strange to me now in the sight of soiled window-panes—some broken panes had even been shabbily repaired with brown paper—dusty doorsteps, and rusty railings. When was the street-door last painted, I wondered? Why, the knocker was rusting away; and how faded and worn were the carpets and the wall-papers! What clouds of dust and smoke had gathered upon the ceiling!

Yet with all these grimy and gloomy surroundings there was always a trim, fresh, dainty look about Catalina. Her dresses might be of homely material, but they fitted her lithe, graceful figure to perfection. She made them herself; for skill with her needle was one of her accomplishments. Her glossy black hair was neatly braided; a line of white collar relieved the duskiness of her neck, and neat cuffs framed her slim wrists. Her olive-dark complexion was yet wonderfully clear, with slight tinges of warmer colour under-flushing her cheeks. There was a look of decision about her well-defined brows, that was yet qualified by the tender lines of her mouth.

I found her with a litter of papers before her. She looked thoughtful and tired. She explained that it was one of Mr. Grisdale's busy days with his newspaper. I glanced at her finger-tips in search of ink-stains, which, however, I did not find there.

"You must have some tea," she said, and forthwith she was busy with the cups and saucers.

I could scarcely help observing certain of the papers on the table. It was clear they formed portions of *The Warcry*—the journal to which Basil and M. Reil contributed. Here I saw a scrap headed, "A Warning to Tyrants;" there an article beginning "Universal Suffrage or Universal Vengeance." The ministers of the Crown were denounced as infamous and blood-thirsty, while warm praise was bestowed upon the dignified demeanour of the people. There was a report, too, of certain speeches made at a public meeting in the North of England. These were of a very inflammatory character, bidding

the men of England to be ready and steady; to keep their loins girded and their powder dry; to sharpen their swords and cherish their muskets as the very apple of their eyes, and prepare to do fierce battle for the Right.

"Do these things interest you, Catalina?" I enquired.

"Yes. Why not?" she said, with an air of surprise.

"But these strange demands, these mad speeches?"

"Are they so strange and mad? I declare I don't know. I have heard them so often. Indeed, I seem to have heard little else. Surely they must be right. There is great suffering in the world; there is great inequality. There are some so very rich; there are some so desperately poor. It can't be wrong to wish to remedy these things. You will laugh at me, if I say that those opinions you complain of must be right because my grandfather says they are. But, indeed, that is almost enough for me. You don't know him as I do, of course. But you could never even guess how good and kind he has been to me; how dear he is to me. I should feel it ungrateful, it would seem to me a base thing, to think him wrong, to differ with him about such matters as these"—she pointed to the papers on the table. "I must think that he is the best judge. He has devoted his life to the cause; he has it so much, so very much, at heart. I could not let him go on alone. I cannot deny him my help—for I do help him, if only in a poor mechanical way. Surely it is my duty to help him."

"It's hard sometimes to know what one's duty is," I said; "almost as hard as to accomplish it, when one does know it."

"But it's not hard in this case."

"But it is not only a question of words, of newspaper articles; these mean deeds if they mean anything."

"We use brave words, no doubt. You see our opinions are Red, and, perhaps," she added, with a laugh, "like people who wear rouge, we put it on sometimes more red than we are quite aware of. But, assuredly, we do not desire only to speak strongly. We look forward to strong deeds also; and we are prepared to act when the due season comes. And it will come, it must come. You should hear my grandfather upon that subject."

"But these strong deeds signify rebellion, revolution, bloodshed—"

"Ah! take care, take care," she cried, with a scream. A black-beetle scurried

across the floor. In great alarm Catalina stood upon her chair, and closely gathered her skirts about her ankles. "But don't kill him—please don't kill him. I hate black-beetles and dread them, yet I can't bear to think of their being killed."

The beetle crawled under the fender, and disappeared. Catalina resumed her seat.

"If the revolution is really to come, Catalina, what will you do?"

"I am only a woman," she said, "but women have a part to play even in revolutions."

"They have played sometimes a very odious part."

"You are thinking of the women of the French Revolution? I could not be as they were," she said with a shudder. "I hope not—I am sure not. But, I can make lint for the wounded. I can tend and care for them. If need be, I can mould bullets, I can make cartridges, I can load muskets. But, please don't ask me what I shall do. I shall be near my grandfather, whatever happens. I shall help him, and I shall obey him, and my love shall never quit him. But, do not let us talk of these things. I am for ever hearing of them, and yet when I dare to think of them they frighten me. We are always looking forward to the good time; we may have to go through much before we reach it. Yet our cause does not cease to be a just one because it may involve serious troubles—because it possesses terrors even for its advocates. I may fail, perhaps—I am, indeed, very likely to fail—still I shall try to do what seems to me right. If I am wrong—if we are wrong, I should rather say, for I have no independent thought in the matter—we shall fail, and we shall suffer. It is not likely that we shall escape punishment."

I must own that I envied her the conviction that she had a prescribed duty to discharge—that she had opinions by which she was fairly tied and bound. All the same, I could not not accept the teaching of Mr. Grisdale's newspaper.

"Sometimes I think you are right," I said, "sometimes I think you are wrong."

"Well, yes, we are both right and wrong; but are we not more right than wrong? At least change is needed, and we would bring on, we would hurry on change. Are we not right in that? Ah, if you knew how many poor there are, and how keenly they suffer, but a little way from here, only in the next street! I have been to their homes and I know. It makes my

heart sick to see them. The stunted children, the wretched parents—fever and famine on every side—want and disease everywhere—who can wonder that sin follows hard upon these? No help comes to them—they live and die uncared for, unknown. They are at war with society. But starvation has put arms into their hands. I shock you—I must not talk like this. It is too much like The Warcry. Well, but I have affected you—I have half convinced you. Let us say no more about it now. You will have some more tea?"

We discussed less serious topics. Had she seen Basil lately? Yes, only a night or two back. And Nick? Nick called sometimes, but not so often as he used to. He was very busy in the City now.

Did she know M. Riel?

Oh yes, M. Riel was a friend of her grandfather's, a refugee who wrote in his newspaper.

She was perfectly unmoved. The mention of these names brought no increase of colour to her cheeks. She was without preference apparently. Basil, and Nick, and M. Riel were alike to her. She was indifferent to them all equally.

Mr. Grisdale entered hurriedly. He threw down his hat, and rubbed his forehead with an air of irritation and perplexity.

"The Attorney-General has been at his dirty work again. There is an end of The Warcry. It is charged with sedition. Never mind. It shall reappear—as—I hardly know what—The Pike? Too piscatorial. There might be mistakes about its objects. The Bombshell? Too military. The Hand Grenade? The Flambeau? The Gunpowder Magazine? The Destroying Angel? The Regenerator? The Seventh Vial? The Watchword? that might do perhaps. The Watchword—an organ of Liberty and Change!"

"What does that mean, Mr. Grisdale?" I asked. I pointed to certain words scrawled in red chalk over the mantelpiece. I had observed the same inscription in M. Riel's studio. "Crédeville, voleur!"

Mr. Grisdale smiled. It was some time before he answered.

CHAPTER X. THE GRISDALES.

"CRÉDEVILLE, VOLEUR!" Mr. Grisdale repeated. "It is an idle cry. It was written there by an idle hand belonging to a foreign friend of ours. Crédeville, voleur! What does it mean? My dear young lady, I have not the slightest idea what it means.

It appeared suddenly on the walls of Paris; the freak of a rapin, the frolic of a gamin, who knows? It was caught up as such things are caught up. It was bandied about, it passed from mouth to mouth, from hand to hand; it will be found chalked everywhere, carved upon the sides of the Great Pyramid, and very likely written in the largest capitals upon the Great Wall of China. Does anyone know what it means? has it any meaning? Perhaps not. But it is counted a joke to cry 'Crédeville, voleur!' and then to laugh; and, happily, a joke of that sort lies well within the capacity of everybody; one can hardly be facetious on easier terms. Crédeville, voleur! Well, it has effected something. It has alarmed the governing classes; it has perplexed the police; it has made Louis Philippe uneasy on his throne. Signifying nothing, it has been held to signify everything; and the very sagacious have discovered in it the watchword of revolt, the signal for revolution. It is absurd; but we on this side of the Channel have our follies of the same class. There is always with us some ridiculous cry of the streets which voice after voice takes up with and shouts aloud. That no one knows the meaning or the origin of it is not a reason for not shouting it. Just now, each ragged little London boy asks the other, 'Who stole the donkey?' Well, an answer rings from Paris, 'Crédeville, voleur!' It may not be the right answer, but it will do, it will serve. Only, if Crédeville did steal a donkey, he did not steal all the donkeys. We've plenty of them left."

"Somehow," Mr. Grisdale resumed presently, "the farçeur is always with us, and, of course, too much with us. He brings a leaven of unworthiness to everything in which he takes part. What mischief is done in the world by the jesters, and the men who are only half in earnest! Sometimes I am tempted to think that I am the only one who is wholly and really in earnest. But that is folly and conceit. And perhaps a jest now and then gives a pleasant seasoning to existence—helps us to bear our burdens, just as music helps soldiers on the march. But life is a serious matter all the same, and those who would forward the good cause, and strive to benefit their fellow-creatures, have engaged in a grave task. I own that I have not in these times much heart or stomach for jesting. I wish M. Riel could have kept his hand still. Why scribble 'Crédeville, voleur!' on my wall?"

It was M. Riel's writing then. Mr. Grisdale mounted on a chair, and laboured to rub out the inscription with his coat sleeve.

"A Frenchman needs must be frivolous, I suppose," he continued. "He is effervescent, like his own champagne. But if there is froth at the top, there is sound wine below, or there should be. One is not, perhaps, a very good judge of a Frenchman. His earnestness is not our earnestness; his jests are not our jests. He has the same end in view, very likely, but he does not go quite the same way to work. Yet there have been very grand Frenchmen, and they have gone far, very far indeed—they have achieved great deeds. M. Riel may be different to what we think him. He may be really capable of forwarding the good cause, although he does tarry to scribble 'Crédeville, voleur!' upon my wall."

So Mr. Grisdale, also, as it appeared, distrusted, underrated M. Riel.

I said that I knew M. Riel—that he was engaged to assist Mr. Leveridge. At once Mr. Grisdale passed from the subject of M. Riel, and spoke of Mr. Leveridge and his art.

"A great painter," he said, "but he paints small matters. Does he never weary of his gods and goddesses, eternal in their nudity, if in nothing else? I am not squeamish; flesh does not shock me; but life is not to be viewed merely as a scene at a swimming-bath; the undraped are in a woful minority; it is time they put on their clothes. You know the cartoon of Pisa? The Soldiers Bathing in the Arno of Michael Angelo—a great work. The soldiers start to their clothes upon the summons of the trumpet. In their eagerness to obey, they rend their stockings; they shout, they gesticulate, they turn this way and that. One of them, unseen by his comrades, sinks beneath the surface, and is borne away by the stream. A wonderful scene of stir, and excitement, and energy—a true picture of life. There is room—plenty of room—for a really great painting. For dancing nymphs and piping fauns, for the perpetual goddesses always rising from the sea, or going to the bath, I confess they don't please me. I think the time has passed for them. Or, if the undraped must be painted, let us have a David to paint them. I mean Jacques Louis David, the painter of the Revolution. He was a real enthusiast—even to a fanatical extent. He should not

have cried, 'Blood! more blood!' as he ground his vermilion; it was too much. By way of amends, I suppose, he afterwards condescended to portray Napoleon in his Imperial robes. Still the greatness of David is not to be disputed. I should like to see more of the David manner in modern art. And we need that art should become a more vital thing amongst us; that it should illustrate, and enforce, and embody, as it were, political opinion. Why should not Mr. Leveridge paint, 'The Heartlessness of Despotism,' let us say; or, 'The Evils of Monarchy: Nero fiddling while Rome burns.' I would have the monster limned with exceeding force, the background a blaze of fire, amidst which should be seen groups of screaming people in the direst distress. Surely that would be a fine subject."

"For Vauxhall-gardens on a firework night," I could not resist saying.

"You're laughing at me. But I'm perfectly serious. Or, if he objected to Nero, let him paint a grand allegorical subject, 'Election by Universal Suffrage.' Above, I would have portrayed the Spirit of Liberty spreading wide wings, and bearing aloft a ballot-box. Mothers should be seen holding up their infants, that it may be the first thing they shall see. Groups of aged folk shall be engaged in fervent thanksgiving that they have survived to behold a ballot-box. Below, a happy and contented people, singing songs of praise, shall be flocking in their thousands to record their votes. It should be a scene of the Golden Age—the real Golden Age that is to be—when right shall prevail over might, and men shall be equals and brothers under the benignant government of a commonwealth in which all shall take part: a commonwealth without a lord protector, or one of which every man shall be a lord protector."

No more was said concerning M. Riel; and Mr. Grisdale's sentiments upon art did not greatly interest me. His idea of applying painting to political objects, seemed to me absurd, as indeed did much of his conversation, when devoted to the opinions advanced by his newspaper. Yet Catalina, I noticed, listened to him in perfect faith, without the suspicion of a smile upon her lips. I was inclined to agree with the judgment he pronounced upon Mr. Leveridge's paintings, while yet prepared to recognise their artistic worth. There was something of folly in his persistent reproductions of Venus and Juno, and

the rest. And yet I could not but admit that he had faith in himself and his practice; he believed that he was fulfilling his mission, and rendering service to art and the public, even in adding to his already long list of nymphs, graces, and goddesses. It was perhaps difficult to understand his feelings upon the subject; and certainly he could himself render no very clear explanation. "The fact is," he would say with a laugh, "I am a sort of art-cannibal when human flesh is concerned."

Basil had told me once, that I did not thoroughly understand or appreciate the pathos of Mr. Leveridge's case. Throughout his life he had been prompt to bestow his love; he had received none in exchange. No doubt it was hard. For that ignoble form might, nevertheless, contain a very noble love. Why should all lay stress upon his "personal disadvantages?" They did not really qualify his power of loving, or his real worth of character. Can there be no lovers but with straight noses, shapely limbs, and curly hair? May not the heart of a Romeo throb within the frame of a Caliban? It is not only a woman's question, however apt we may be to let our hearts follow our eyes—to love where we like to look. For what man could love a Juliet with the face of a Sycorax?

My mother had declined Mr. Leveridge's suit. I was sufficiently my mother's daughter to sympathise with her, in her rejection of so uncomely a lover. Yet, he had been then young, or comparatively young. Now, in his age, he proffered me the love she had found it impossible to requite. What could I do? I did not want his love. It was out of date. It belonged, in truth, to a remote period—a past generation. There was only this difference—he was richer than he had been. Was that to have weight with me?

When he wooed my mother, he had been fortuneless and fameless—a struggling painter, who had executed a promising work or two, but from whom prosperity as yet stood far removed. He was young, although not so very young; but as ill-looking, it was said of him, as he was now. Certainly his personal appearance could at no time have been of an advantageous sort. It was probable that the passing years had brought him improvement of manner, and greater adroitness of speech; he had entered society in right of his abilities, and contact with the

polished had no doubt rubbed away something of his original rudeness. For he was, it appeared, of very humble origin; he came of simple peasant parents settled in the West of England. Left an orphan, he had been cared for by a grandfather, a miller in a small way, who was also proprietor of a baker's shop. Entirely by his own efforts, by the strength of his will, and the cunning of his right hand, he had forced his way to fortune. Nevertheless, he had been but a shy and awkward suitor, unable to express himself very completely, barren of words, inarticulate in his confusion and diffidence. My mother had found him even ludicrous; I could not be surprised, although I felt there was injustice in that view of him. Really, there was something pitiful in the waste of so much true love.

For I could not doubt that he had truly loved her. It was said of him, indeed, that he had loved none other since her death, that she had been to him as the only woman in the world. He had loved her so, that he had readily forgiven her a certain cruelty which had marked her rejection of him. Surely his long-enduring affection was well entitled to respect. I always felt that, had I but read in a book, or been told by someone the story of Mr. Leveridge's love, I should almost have loved him myself for his fidelity and devotion. But, knowing and seeing him, this was somehow not possible to me. And at the thought of his love for me, the prospect of his speedily suing for my hand, my heart seemed to leap back in my bosom as though striving to escape his reach. Then came the thought of his likeness to Punch; and an inclination to laugh at him affected me, as it had affected my mother before me. A sort of pendulum motion characterised my musings in regard to him. I now approached him—I now drew away from him. I grew giddy at last with this quick and constant jerking to and fro of my thoughts.

It was wrong to think of his money. But could I not think of it? It seemed to form part of his love—to be inseparable from it. Does not an old husband mean a rich husband? Would not a suitor, stricken in years, and oppressed with poverty, generally be accounted contemptible—ridiculous? What girl in my place could have thought of Mr. Leveridge's love otherwise than I did? It was a love I could not accept. But—bait it with money—and how then?

For that I needed money, I need not

say. It had been the special lack of our family always. Ever since I could remember anything, I could remember our pressing want of money. What things I would do, I often said to myself, did I but possess the means. But it was not for myself I asked to be rich. I longed to help Basil and Nick; and generally to extricate all three of us from the slough of poverty and difficulty into which, by no particular error of our own, we seemed to have fallen so completely.

Before I quitted Mr. Gridale's, his brother crept into the room, for he did not enter boldly, but with noiseless movements, after a very timid fashion. This was Basil's friend, who had taught him music, the performer on the French horn in the orchestra of Sadler's Wells. He was rather shabby, but there was a certain dreamy dignity about him. He was very deferential to Lucius Gridale, following in this the example of Catalina. He seemed to listen with exceeding regard to the long and excited speeches of Lucius; yet it occurred to me that this was done mechanically—that although he gazed so earnestly at the lips of Lucius, he was not occupied really with the words falling from them.

Lucius noticed this himself, at last. Some question he had asked remained unanswered, unnoticed.

"You were not attending to me, Junius," he said, calmly and good-naturedly, as though he had already found an excuse for his brother's state of abstraction.

"Pardon me, Lucius," said the musician, with a start. "I was not attending. It's a failing of mine, and it grows on me; at the sound of anyone speaking my thoughts depart from the speaker. I think of something else always. It comes of sitting so long in the orchestra, I suppose. One learns patience there. It is impossible to be always listening to what they say on the stage. It's enough to know the cues for the band; and one gets to know by a sort of instinct when the music's to come in. But for what the actors talk about, who is to care for that? One has to sit through it night after night, you know. The same words, spoken in the same tone, precisely at the same moment, night after night. It becomes to me as the buzzing of bees, or the murmuring of the sea. I start when it stops; but its continuance has a lulling effect upon me. I'm a dreamer, I suppose; yet I am always happy and peaceful in

the orchestra with my French horn in my arms."

"I thought the season was over, Junius?"

"Well, yes; the regular season is. But we're having a turn at an irregular season, as theatres will, you know; a company of amateurs, or little better. A Mr. Toomer Hooton takes the lead."

"I know him; that is, I've met him," said Lucius. "Can he act?"

"He says so," replied Junius, as though that was quite conclusive, "and he thinks so; and I suppose he's persuaded many people to be of the same opinion, or he would not be playing leading business even with an amateur company: would he, do you think? He stamps too much—that's my opinion. I found him what I call a disturbing performer; and he doesn't spare the orchestra. He's a terrible way of coming close to us, acting at us, and soliloquising over the foot-lights—so that we shan't lose a syllable of his speeches—as though we'd paid for our seats, and wanted to see and hear everything—which we don't. Yes, they applaud him; an audience of friends and pupils. Then he plays Shakespeare, and you can't well hiss Shakespeare, you know. Not but what Shakespeare finds them out—these actors. He's a sort of commander-in-chief, it seems to me. They manage to pass muster with the other dramatists; but when they come to Shakespeare—well, he's one too many for them. They don't have it all their own way then; he helps the audience to find them out—shows what a very little there is inside them. All the same, it's really a sight to see Mr. Hooton with his ostrich feathers, and bugles, and black velvet. But why do they always dress Hamlet up like a hearse? One thing; there's nothing of the mute about him."

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN SLADE.

WE are bidden to believe that the Newgate Calendar once made favourite reading for our British public. Taste has improved since that time, and such bald monotony of horrors would scarcely interest now even those young people, whose literature is represented to be in parlous state. There exists, however, a judicial record more ghastly, and at the same time more dull, than the annals of London crime. This is the report of cases tried before the Vigilantes of Montana, that committee,

self-appointed, which undertook to replace a feeble and corrupt administration in the mining camps of the Far West.

A certain variety is found in the Newgate Calendar, but the Vigilantes dealt with only two forms of guilt—highway robbery and murder. We see, in general, a straightforward simplicity about the crime, which robs it of half its atrocity at the first glance. The murder is done in daylight, coram populo. The villain is always called by some nickname, or an affectionate diminutive. Neither judge, jury, nor reporter has particular ill-feeling against him. Those even of his victims who happen to survive express indignant sympathy with his hard fate. Horrors related in this tone do not make one shudder like our foul and midnight deeds. But if one keep one's mind upon the actual facts, neglecting the quaintnesses of speech and the light-heartedness of all parties at the trial, it is seen that our judges have sentenced very few villains, so consummate as those whom Lynch law suppressed. It was a rule of the committee to accept no evidence of offences done outside its immediate jurisdiction. Montana was a refuge for desperadoes who had made other places too hot for them, and the Vigilantes established a police system which warned each community of a ruffian's arrival. This information, however, was no more than a warning. The rowdy started with a "clean slate" in his new digging, and past offences were never so much as alluded to. Bearing this in mind, it is awful to hear of twelve murders charged in two years against one man, eight confessed by another, and so on.

Many interesting points of character and custom arise, as one studies this dry history, but I am in haste to reach the extraordinary case of Captain J. A. Slade, one of the very few which differ from the regulation model of such things.

The captain had talents, education, and business abilities which marked him out for success, and success he won in all his ventures. Amongst people by whom liberality is carried to the point of silliness, his hand was readiest and freest, among wits he was wittiest, amongst energetic men the most active. I have no account of Slade's personal appearance, though his handsome wife is described incidentally, but I should picture him as a big blonde man, with laughing blue eyes and a kindly mouth. His face, I should say, would be reddened with drink, and his voice hoarse.

His eyes should have a wandering brightness, which might warn a doctor of mischief unsuspected in the brain. For it is very evident that poor Slade, shrewd and clever as he might be, was mad—deranged, perhaps, by bad whisky and passions unbridled.

It is understood that he left his native Illinois in flight before the Sheriff, Johnson, who pursued him four hundred miles. Having quarrelled with a man in the street, upon grounds unknown, he threw a big pebble and killed him on the spot. Arriving at Virginia City, he obtained employment from the Overland Stage Company, in which his unusual talent for "business" raised him at once to high position. At the same time, Slade's social charms won the friendship of every class. The steady and the prosperous liked him, whilst by the poor, honest or otherwise, he was simply adored. No whisper of unlawful dealings in property ever arose against Slade. He was simply a mad murderer, of the best intentions; and the moral code at Virginia City was, and possibly is, very lenient to mere bloodshed. It will be seen that his condemnation was an accident. Strangers only could give Slade his due, whilst the Vigilantes of his own township walked sobbing away.

The first introduction of this maniac to Virginia City told the Vigilantes, that a desperado of a new description had arrived among them. The stage-post at Julesberg, on the Platte river, was kept by a morose and unpopular man, singularly unfitted for his difficult position. A three-cornered quarrel was always waging at Julesberg between the stage officials, the inhabitants, and passing trains of emigrants. Each party accused the others of stealing cattle, and it seems probable that all were guilty. Jules, the station-master, behaved in such a lawless way—not only to his enemies, but to the company itself—that his dismissal was resolved on, and Slade was named for the post. There had been other quarrels between these men before the new station-master arrived to take possession. He travelled by the coach. Jules, wild with spite, "sequestered" the team, refusing to allow it to proceed. Words grew hotter and hotter, until the dispossessed man fired a charge of buckshot at Slade, who was unarmed. Though he escaped with life, some of the pellets remained in his body till fate overtook him.

It is in evidence that Slade "went down the road till he recovered of his wound."

Jules also departed, boasting everywhere of his cowardly triumph. No one made even a pretence of interfering, and the township speculated, with calm curiosity, as to which would prove the better man when they met on equal terms. This event never took place, if I rightly understand the tale; for one of Slade's devoted clients marked down his enemy, and the avenger hurried to the spot. I prefer to accept a version of the story which declares that Slade covered him with his pistol, saying, "Jules, I'm going to kill you!" that the other answered, "Well, I suppose I am gone up! You've got me now!" Whereupon he fell dead. There is another story, far more hideous, and irreconcilable, as I prefer to think, with Slade's recorded characteristics. This alleges that he tied Jules fast, and shot him "by degrees. He also cut off his ears and carried them in his vest pocket for a long time." Frankly, I cannot believe this of the man. And public opinion would have reprobated cruelty of this sort, whereas Slade's popularity mounted higher and higher.

Holding an important position in the community, and distinguished alike for shrewdness and resolve, he was naturally invited to join the Vigilantes, when murderers and thieves had made honest men's lives intolerable at Virginia City. What part he took in the grand judicial raids about Christmas time, '62-'63, will never be known. We may suppose that he threw himself into the movement with a furious zeal that alarmed his comrades. His new-born hatred of criminals led him into dreadful crime. One day, visiting some emigrants, he learned that their stock had vanished, whether strayed or stolen was not clear even to them. Slade, however, entertained no doubt at all. Boiling with indignation, he galloped to a neighbouring "ranche," opened the door, and shot "miscellaneous," killing three men and wounding the fourth. Whether they had so much as seen the cattle is still a matter of dispute.

Murders of this sort, perpetrated, as they would say, without an evil motive, did not come under the cognisance of the Vigilantes. It seems that a man might have depopulated the neighbourhood, if he only took pains to make a quarrel before shooting, and to keep his hands off property. Slade appears to have abused this privilege as no man ever did before or since. His life is a record of shootings, stabbings, and assaults. When sober, indeed, Slade was the kindest, most genial

of men; when drunk, the madness came out, and his pranks, unrestrained by any moral sense, were those of a playful tiger. A crowd of admiring dependents always followed him, ready to join his maddest follies and to battle for him to the death. Their favourite amusement was to "take the town." Slade gave the signal for a spree by mounting himself and two followers on one horse, and galloping through the streets, shooting in all directions, and yelling Indian war-cries. At the very first sound, shopkeepers and decent people closed their doors, put out the lights, and got their arms ready for emergencies. Very often Slade and his friends rode into a store full-gallop through the window, and played "old gooseberry" inside. But his liberality in accepting the estimate of damage made his visits, not wholly unwelcome to some parties.

The Vigilantes considered their work done, after the execution of five monstrous ruffians on January 14, 1864. No gang of road-agents, or highwaymen, as we should call them, remained, nor any group of men who murdered for a living. They therefore dissolved their anonymous committee, leaving in its place, a "people's court," to which offenders might be summoned openly. Though uncommissioned by the government, it kept a judge, sheriff, and regular officers, whose proceedings were formal and solemn. For various offences Slade was prosecuted in this court, and he always treated its officials with respect until the last escapade. At the same time, his former friends of the Vigilantes warned him that a new state of things had arisen. The old order was changed, they said, and bloody roystering could be allowed no more than ferocious plunder. Slade promised to amend, as we might be sure he would, and again showed his virtue by pummelling almost to death a poor wretch suspected of some moral fault.

But the day of fate arrived. Slade had been drunk and "cutting up," all night before. He and the devoted phalanx which clung to him—less for money than for love, we hear—had made the town a "perfect hell." In the morning, J. M. Fox, the sheriff of that people's court we have mentioned, met the scarcely-sober ruffian, and boldly took him into custody. His clients tumultuously followed into court. There the sheriff began to read his warrant, which Slade snatched from him, tore into bits, and trampled on. A proclama-

tion, this, of war, such as no man in his senses could have made. It was so understood by all parties. Click, click, Slade's thronging friends got their revolvers ready; the constables looked to Fox for orders. He, whose courage stood unquestioned, did not hesitate a moment, but withdrew quietly. The old committee met at once. Their own delegated court had been defied successfully, and they knew well that a fight had begun for life or death. If Slade and his followers were allowed to feel their triumph, not a member of the Vigilantes would be allowed to live. Their former comrade knew them all, and they know him. Since war had arisen, he was much too intelligent to be merciful, and understood too well the ferocious necessities of his position. But, at the same time, nobody proposed Slade's execution. We have it on the word of one of the committee, that such a suggestion would have been negatived indignantly. These honest and resolute citizens admired, and some loved, the man whose existence among them had become impossible.

A sentence of perpetual banishment would doubtless have been delivered. But, in the meanwhile, a messenger had been sent to the sub-committee at Nevada, for the Vigilantes of Virginia City could scarcely hope to meet the opposition of Slade's friends, even to this minor punishment. At Nevada they had not been exposed to the hero's fascination. It was told to them only, that their chosen sheriff had been defied, their court insulted. Six hundred miners formed into column, and marched to Virginia City, all armed to the teeth.

Meantime, Slade's real friends were not idle. Very quaintly we are told how a leading member of the committee went to seek him, and told the doomed man, "in the quiet, earnest manner of one who feels the importance of what he is saying: 'Slade, get your horse at once and go home, or there will be h—— to pay!' The other started and asked, 'What do you mean?'

"You have no right to ask what I mean. Get your horse at once, and remember what I tell you.'"

After a moment's consideration, Slade called for his horse, and actually mounted. But a sympathising friend brought a cup of comfort, which killed him as surely as poison. For, after drinking, Slade galloped up and down the street, shouting insults to the principal Vigilantes. But

he did not forget a peril which none could measure more accurately than himself. The gods had forsaken him, nevertheless, and the very recollection of his danger urged him to an act of monstrous folly. Seeking out the judge of the people's court, he took him prisoner, as a hostage for his own safety, threatening him even with a cocked pistol.

During this time the miners were marching up from Nevada. In answer to some who expressed sympathy for Slade, the immense majority declared that they were tired of his pranks, that they had not left their work for nothing. The Vigilantes who had summoned these allies saw that they would bring quite another tone to the deliberations. Being mounted, he rode ahead of the column, and found the executive committee of Virginia counselling together behind a waggon, "at the rear of a store on Main-street, where the Ohlinghouse stone building now stands." To them he hastily announced that the Nevada men "meant business anyhow," that since they had been summoned from their claims, "they would not stand in the street to be shot down by Slade's friends; but that they would take and hang him." This news made a terrible stir, for, besides the friendly feeling of nearly all the Vigilantes, it seemed probable that nothing less than war would ensue. But the very principle of popular authority was at stake, and the committee passed a hurried resolution to the effect that, if the body of miners demanded Slade's execution, it must be left in their hands. With which news the Vigilante galloped back, full speed.

Slade heard it on the instant, and knew his death was decreed. He apologised to the judge, saying, "that he would take it all back." But wisdom came too late. The head of the column swung round the corner of Wallace-street at quick-step, and halted in front of C. S. Pfout's store, where Slade was, with the judge. The "execution officer" of the committee stepped inside, and told him the miners' resolve. In most cases of Lynch law a trial was held, with chosen counsel on each side and a jury: but since the Vigilantes recognised no forms or precedents, going only upon common sense and common justice, they dispensed with these ceremonies where the prisoner's guilt stood patent. In this case, also, there was not a moment to lose. If Slade's friends got time to advise and collect, they would certainly attempt a rescue by main force. Amongst

the crowd of executioners were many who would certainly not fight against, if they did not join, them. The committee itself had dispersed in sorrow. But Slade did not make a struggle for it. He gave way at once, begging only to see his wife before he died. She was a woman of great beauty and fascination, devotedly attached to her terrible husband. A messenger galloped at headlong speed to Slade's ranche, twelve miles away, where the lady was dwelling. The most accomplished horsemwoman of the country, it was hoped she would arrive in time to stir into glowing heat the rage of her husband's followers. But this danger the others recognised, and at once made their preparations for the appointed doom. They dared not take their prisoner up the street. Just opposite to Pfout's store was a "corral," or cattle-pen, the gate-posts of which were strong and high. Across the top they laid a beam, attached to it a rope, and set a box on end below. Then Slade was marched across the street, surrounded by the best-armed and most numerous force that ever has gathered in Montana.

The leading citizens of the town begged with tears for the prisoner's life, but the miners were inexorable. One threw his arms round Slade, and swore that they should kill him before they touched his friend. But a hundred guns were levelled instantly, and he fled. The stern avengers pursued, brought him back, and compelled him to witness the justice of the people; nor did he then escape without a solemn promise of obedience in future.

All being ready, the command was given: "Men! do your duty!" The guard faced about, and six hundred rifles were presented at the maddened and bewildered crowd. The box was pulled away, and Slade finished his wild career. All had long been over when his wife galloped up. Her grief was terrible to see—such as made those stern executioners almost doubt whether a man so mourned could have deserved his fate. He did so, beyond dispute; and if it be the aim of punishment to deter others from offence, never was retribution justified more completely. Murderers and highwaymen of low degree had been already visited with their deserts; Slade's fate warned another class that brutal rowdiness would no more be suffered, on the plea that its outrages were committed without malice. But the traveller in those districts where he swagged and bullied will do best, even now,

to keep his opinion to himself about Slade's fate. So long as one of his old subordinates survive, says Professor Dimsdale, "any insult offered to his memory would be fearfully and quickly avenged." For this reason I have thought the case of Captain Slade worthy of note.

UNDER RUSSIAN ESCORT.

"No, no, thank you! Never mind me! I can find my way well enough to the Nobles' Club on foot, and I'll wait for you there, if you like, Ladislas, after you have seen the ladies safely home."

So saying, I wrapped my furred coat more closely around me, and, lifting my hat in parting salutation to the occupants of the carriage, turned away. The blackness of the night, as I traversed the wide, ill-lighted streets, seemed all the darker by contrast with the bright, warm theatre from which I had just emerged. The crisp snow crackled beneath my feet, and a few drops of premonitory sleet lashed my face as I set out, and gave warning of a coming storm, while the cold was intense: more bitter as it seemed to me than any which I had experienced during the two winters I had spent in the Russian capital. My own name was Hugh Forster, and I had just completed a two years' probation in the counting-house of the wealthy St. Petersburg firm, of which my father was the chief London partner, and was now on my return home. I had, however, accepted an invitation from a young Polish noble, with whom I was on intimate terms, to visit him at Warsaw on my homeward route, and to act as what in England is familiarly known as "best man" on the occasion of his wedding. The name of this young Pole was Count Ladislas Poniatowski; the marriage was to take place on the morrow; and I had just accompanied the bride and bridegroom elect, with the old Princess Sapieha, aunt to my friend, and mother to Mademoiselle Marie, to the theatre, where an unusually good performance had attracted half Warsaw.

The carriage-lamps flashed past me as the long line of equipages drove rapidly off, moving over the snow with that swift, silent motion, which always appears so strange and ghostly to a traveller familiar with the rattle of wheels over a stone pavement, and the sleet began to fall more thickly. Suddenly it occurred to me that I was followed. Two tall figures, muffled

up with even more precaution than the sharp cold dictated, appeared to dog my steps, regulating their pace by mine, and keeping always at the same distance from me, whatsoever my rate of progression. Thinking I might be mistaken, I sauntered so that the tall men might have a chance of passing me. Those behind me also diminished their speed. I stepped out briskly, but in vain. My pursuers were not to be shaken off.

It did not occur to me that my pertinacious followers were thieves. Street robberies, once unheard of, are still rare within the Russian dominions. I was more inclined to believe that this pursuit was a mere freak of some half-intoxicated idlers, and, knowing the magical effect of politeness on the excitable Sarmatian nature, I turned so as to front the two men, and, with ceremonious civility, raised my hat.

"My lords," I said in the best Polish I could muster—every wearer of a cloth coat is "my lord" in Warsaw or Cracow—"I fear you have mistaken—"

"No mistake at all!" interrupted the taller of the two, speaking in French. "We know you, monsieur. Call them, Imkoff!"

His companion raised his fingers to his mouth, and gave a long, shrill whistle. It was answered instantly, and then came the sound of hurrying feet and the clash of weapons, and I was surrounded and seized by several men, some of whom were evidently police, while the others were soldiers in gray watch-coats.

"Gag him if he calls for help!" commanded the first speaker, opening his own mantle, and showing the uniform and medalled breast of a Russian major. "Where loiters the sledge?"

As he spoke, my ear caught the jingle of Valdai bells, and a kibitka drawn by three horses came swiftly up. What wild horsemen, with their fur caps and sheepskin pelisses, a long lance tucked under each right arm, were those who rode to left and right of it? Cossacks, surely.

"In the emperor's name!" said the major, putting his gloved hand on my shoulder, and pushing me towards the sledge.

Stupefied for a moment, I now found my tongue, and vigorously remonstrated, telling my captors that I was an Englishman, a peaceful traveller, and guiltless of any offence. My plea was received with utter incredulity.

"We are not your dupes, count," said

the officer who had been called Imkoff. "You had better give your parole not to attempt resistance, or force us to use violence. In the long journey which——"

"Are you mad, or by what right——" began I, boiling with passion, and making a desperate effort to shake myself free, but, though I dealt a few heavy blows, I was soon overpowered by superior numbers, my wrists were manacled, and I was flung into the kibitka, with a policeman at my side.

"Bon voyage!" sneered the major as I was dragged away. "Hotter blood than his has cooled, I warrant you, between Siberia and this."

Siberia! The dreadful word sent a chill through my veins, and almost caused me to become insensible to the rapid motion through the air, for the carriage had now started, and at such a pace that the Cossacks of the escort were compelled to keep their wiry little nags at a hand-gallop. As we flew through the deserted streets, and long after the suburbs were cleared and the lights of Warsaw were lost to sight, I continued to ponder over this strange event, and to puzzle myself by vain efforts to guess why I, an Englishman, quite free from political complications of any sort, had been thus suddenly consigned to exile. I had heard of such arrests, but never of a foreigner, still less of a British subject, as their victim.

"This is Stanislawow," said a voice that I had heard before, speaking in French, as the carriage drew up at the door of a low-roofed posthouse, and a fresh relay of horses were harnessed and put to. "And now, count, if you will take my advice, and promise to abstain from useless resistance, I shall be happy to give orders for the removal of that chain around your wrists. Come, come, sir, I make all allowance for your excitement at the outset of the affair, and do not desire to cause you needless annoyance. Should you refuse, your irons must remain on until the governor of Minsk——"

"Minsk!" I repeated, half-stupefied.

The junior of the two officers who had arrested me, and who stood beside his reeking horse, smiled.

"It is the nearest fortified place which you will pass," he said; "for I need not tell you, Count Ladislas, that we are anxious to get you safe across the Bug, and out of Poland. Will you give your parole?"

And then flashed upon me, all at once, the key to the enigma that had perplexed me. I had been arrested in the place of my friend and entertainer, whom I suspected, rather than knew, to be mixed up in one of those wide-spreading conspiracies in which Poles are so often concerned, and whose heart I was aware was better than his head. As the glare of the torches fell upon us I could even guess the cause of the mistake, for in the hurry of leaving the theatre I had put on the count's loose overcoat of rich sables instead of my own, while in height and figure we were much alike. I had the presence of mind to repress the indignant protest as to my nationality which was on my lips.

"I will give my parole, since you ask it," I said, concealing my face as if to hide my emotion, and the chain which fettered my hands was at once removed.

"It will no longer, count, be necessary that an officer should accompany you," said Lieutenant Imkoff, civilly. "Will you drink some brandy before starting? The night is cold, and the stage a long one."

I shook my head, and made no articulate reply, glad as I should have been of the proposed dram of coarse corn brandy, and chilled as I was by the unusual exposure to the keen night wind. But I feared to show my face, lest the mistake should be found out too soon for my friend's safety. The driver clatched the reins, while a grim Cossack corporal took his seat beside me, in the place lately occupied by the Warsaw police-agent. The other troopers were in their saddles.

"Forward, there! Push on, men!" cried the lieutenant, in Russian, and off we set, amidst howling wind and whirling snowflakes.

It was not until Stanislawow was left behind, and I and my wild guards were far on the road, that I began to reflect that, in providing for the security of Count Ladislas, I had perhaps seriously compromised my own. My stratagem had succeeded. My first captors were convinced that it was the rich young Polish landowner whom they had despatched on the dismal journey to Siberia; and in all likelihood the marriage next morning would take place without interruption, and the newly-wedded pair start for Italy, unsuspecting of the danger which had threatened their happiness with shipwreck at the very outset of life's voyage. Could I but keep up the deception for another twenty-four

hours, Ladislas and his bride would be safe across the frontier.

But what would become of me, or how would the Russian authorities regard the author of their discomfiture? True, I had been arrested in sheer ignorance of the blunder which promised to be so profitable to my friend; but I had had a fair chance of declaring who I was, and had chosen wilfully, it might be said, to mislead the imperial police. I had heard—most residents in Russia have heard—ugly stories as to what can be done in Muscovy, when it is no longer needful to hide the hand of steel with the glove of velvet. Yet I resolved to play out my part so long as I deemed it indispensable to the safety of Count Ladislas, and manfully addressed myself to confront the hardships of the long and arduous journey that lay before me.

That terrible night, and the dark and stormy day that followed it—I think of them yet as of some hideous dream; of the snow, the cutting blasts, the toil to force a way through the drifts, the black pine-woods, the mounted escort, exchanged, at every second stage, for fresh Cossacks, and the intensity of the cold, which so benumbed my limbs that, when Minsk was reached, I could not stand, and had to be carried into the presence of the governor, the frozen effigy of a man. Feebly I made my protest. I was Hugh Forster, a British subject. I had broken no law, infringed no rule. I claimed my liberty, and, after a most severe cross-examination and a detention of three days, I obtained it, but only in a qualified form, being sent back, under escort, to Warsaw, and thence, after a rigorous course of questioning, conducted to the frontier.

“Lucky for you, Mr. Forster,” said the superior officer of police, who had kept me in his charge, as I stepped into the railway carriage, with my through ticket to London between my fingers, “that you are a British subject.”

I thought so too, but augured well for the safety of Count Poniatowski from the very fact of the irritation which the authorities displayed; and indeed, a year afterwards I had the pleasure of receiving the hearty thanks of my friend and his beautiful wife, on the occasion of their visit to England. There had been, I understood, much dismay, and no small apprehensions, when I had been missing at the marriage ceremony, but fortunately

bride and bridegroom were out of Russia before the mistake was discovered, and it was not difficult for the count, who henceforth abjured politics, to make his peace with the czar. I have never been in Russia since.

TINY TOPSY-TURVYDOM.

“Là! là! et là! Donne-moi ton testament! Ohé! Houp! Là-à-à!” and a diminutive morsel in tights and spangles is perched, head downwards, upon the glittering “testament”—Franco-acrobatese for “tête”—of his muscular parent, smiling serenely upon the ring of gas-jets which ornaments the centre of the circus, and waving his tiny “chapiteau” in topsy-turvy triumph over the world at large. When I tell you that among the applauding spectators are my brother Jack, aged five, and myself, just home from Rugby for the Christmas holidays, I shall, of course, have no need to add that breakfast has not long been cleared next morning before Jack and I have hustled the dining-table out of the way, dragged the big bearskin rug into the middle of the room, and are energetically reproducing, or endeavouring to reproduce, the delightful feats of Signor Jonesi and his talented son. Unfortunately, these exercises do not come off quite so smoothly as on the previous evening. Perhaps Jack is a little heavier than “le piccolo Jonesi;” perhaps I am not quite so strong or so skilful as the signor. Perhaps that sort of thing requires a little previous practice. At all events the result at which we promptly arrive is grief, serious and decisive, and a howl goes up which speedily brings mother, and nurse, and half the household beside to find me with my shirt-front split down to the waist, and Jack lying roaring on the floor with a broken arm, and an entirely new phrenological development on his unlucky “testament,” which has come to the ground with a bang which only the interposition of the big bearskin has probably prevented from being conclusive. That evening, when my father comes home, it is my turn to suffer, though not in the region of the “testament;” and there is an end to our acrobatic performances for evermore.

Which clearly proves that we were never intended by nature for “the profession.” Your true-born acrobat—and an acrobat,

like a poet or a cook, is born, not made—cares no more for breaking a limb or two, than a modern housemaid for smashing a plate of missis's favourite old blue china. The last time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. George Conquest he had just put out his knee for, if I remember rightly, the eighteenth time. A little while before he had "missed his tip" and come down from among the sky-borders some thirty feet or so, on to the stage. This, however, was a really serious accident, from the effects of which he was laid up a whole day. But he got through his night's performance first, of course. That is acrobatic law of strictest Medo-Persian kind. A feat may be failed in, but it must not be abandoned. Once attempted it has to be done somehow, cost what it may. I don't quite know how it would be if the performer's neck were actually broken in the attempt, but I am inclined to think the rule would hold good even then. And, on the whole, I fancy this Spartan rule a good one. I have heard it objected to, as hard upon the spectators as well as the performer; but, in point of fact, it is, so far as it goes, distinctly to the advantage of both. If your ambitious young acrobat were allowed to abandon as beyond his strength a feat once publicly attempted, he would be always publicly attempting feats a trifle beyond his powers, and always harrowing his tender-hearted audience's feelings by coming to grief accordingly. As it is, he takes particular care to attempt in public nothing that he is not quite sure of being able to compass. Accidents only happen, as a rule, at practice. They happen there, though, sometimes pretty seriously. Only the other day, for instance, that bright little miniature Grimaldi, of the "children's pantomime," very nearly brought his professional—not to say earthly—career to an abrupt termination. Rehearsal was over, and according to all laws our young gentleman ought to have been on his way home. But some other boy in the company had boasted of a feat beyond Grimaldi Minimus's power to perform, and it was not to be supposed that Grimaldi Minimus should leave the theatre without performing it. Even a stage-manager's eye must close sometimes, and in about four or five minutes down comes poor Grimaldi Minimus upon the stage, altogether wrong end foremost, to spend the next three weeks or so in hospital with a very sufficient concussion of the brain. He

has mastered the trick, I understand, since he came out again.

You have seen the children's pantomime of course? If you haven't, go and see it directly. It is quite the prettiest and most artistically fanciful thing since those good old times—Consule Planché, my sancy Eton nephew calls them—when wit still was, and burlesque and breakdowns were not. Most of us, I take it, have arrived more or less at the period of enjoying our pantomimes at second-hand, and are pretty well used by this time to seating ourselves in the back corner of the box, and finding our amusement in the still appreciative faces of our own little Katies and Bessies, as that funny dog of a clown beguiles the poor old pantaloon into laying hold of the hot end of the poker, or follows glittering harlequin through the top panes of the post-office window only to be immediately bundled out again through the panel of the door, ignominiously berated by the placard "Returned unpaid." That any sort of belief in Fairyland should survive the shock of having once seen a transformation scene "worked," and of having assisted at the fixing on of the fairies' wings, the pinning up of their aerial draperies, and the safe strapping of their ethereal forms to the prosaic "irons" to which they have clambered by grace of a pair of most decided kitchen-steps, would be a wild idea indeed; whilst as for the actors—well, the most melancholy dog I ever knew in my life was a clown, a good clown too. It was reserved for Mr. Chatterton's ingenuity to hit upon a combination which should direct the attention of paterfamilias once more from the audience to the stage, and make the performers themselves the merriest and most appreciative little people in the house.

Bless their little hearts! I believe that if the management and the Lord Chamberlain would only allow it, they would like nothing better than to have the curtain up again directly supper was over, and play it all over at least once more before going to bed. If any one of them were asked what is the most mysterious feature in the economy of the universe, he would assuredly reply, the day being twenty-four hours long when a pantomime only plays two. Not indeed that the superfluous twenty-two hours are altogether dissevered from the one absorbing interest by any means; as the seniors of the young enthusiasts' families will tell you—not

always without a groan. If the ten-year-old mite in the tiny pink tights, that must surely have been woven expressly by some cunning contriver of doll's gear, is kept strictly by a hard-hearted stage-manager to the precise five minutes in which she is licensed to exercise her pliant little limbs in pironettes and entrechats upon the stage, depend upon it she indemnifies herself by many a good hour's practice over the head of that unlucky middle-aged gentleman on the floor below, who every Saturday evening gives wrathful intimation of his determination to stand the nuisance no longer, and every Sunday afternoon relents again, and once more takes the small première danseuse for their never-failing excursion to Highgate or Hampstead, or sometimes even far-off Richmond or Kew, where he does his Machiavelian best to abate the nuisance and its perpetrator together for evermore by his reckless administration of cakes, and gingerbeer, and shrimps, and sugar-plums, and sweet unwholesomenesses of every kind. This limping yokel, who has been clumping about the stage with a grin imperatively suggestive of stolen turnips and mighty cubes of fat bacon cut down with clasp-knife upon thumb, subsides for a moment as he is called up to be presented, into a modest, and, in truth, rather shy damsel of, let us say, a dozen "summers." But she has hardly fairly made her escape round the wing, before she is clumping again as though the clay of a hundred stiff furrows were on her iron-shod heels. When she comes to "treasury" to-morrow she will squint horribly at the manager, and grin solemnly from ear to ear as she knuckles her smoothly-parted hair with a "Thankee, zur;" and if that awful personage smiles—as he probably will, being quite the proud father of his numerous and eccentric young family—will go home as pleased as if she had drawn a 'round' from a crowded house. Let us only trust that she will not have to go through Covent-garden Market. I have the profoundest confidence in her moral integrity, but that she should be capable in her present frame of mind of passing a basket of turnips without stealing at least one to cut up with a huge clasp-knife, and munch as she goes, is a belief I do not entertain.

But the true head-quarters of Tiny Topsy-turvydom is your music-hall. A not unremarkable institution in itself, by the way, and one which of late years has

attained a very remarkable development. The latest example of the kind, indeed, is not only fitted in every respect in the style and with the appliances of a first-class theatre, but has one novel and most admirable feature altogether peculiar to itself.

No doubt the spirited proprietor of the Canterbury Hall was far from having been the first to observe the striking resemblance between a theatrical audience and a stew of larks or rabbits simmering—not by any means too slowly—for the supper of some mighty Fee-Faw-Fum. But he was the first to draw from that observation the singularly happy thought of constructing his own particular stew-pan with a moveable lid. Inspired by this admirable idea, he has roofed in a considerable portion of his "auditorium" with a gigantic glass dish-cover, and at stated intervals the expectant Fee-Faw-Fum removes this cover and looks in, to see how his stew is getting on. Let us hope that the olfactory nerves of the worthy-giant are agreeably titillated by the operation. If they only benefit by it a hundredth part as much as do those of the human larks and rabbits within, he must be amply repaid for his trouble.

On the stage, as we enter, Tiny Topsy-turvydom is in full swing. A Lilliputian trapeze occupies the centre, and from it a five-year old morsel of humanity is hanging by its heels, wafting graceful kisses to an enraptured audience; whilst a yet smaller morsel—just turned three, this one, as we learn subsequently—leans with folded arms against the proscenium, eagerly calculating the number of tricks his elder brother has yet to go through before he will be privileged, in his turn, to risk his tiny neck.

"Poor little darlings!" sighs a soft-hearted young mother in the stalls behind us; "I'm afraid they must be terribly whipped before they can be brought to it."

Whipped! Well, yes; on reflection I won't say but what the daring young monkeys may get their little jackets dusted now and then. But let the soft-hearted young mother comfort herself from any fear lest this portion of her evening's entertainment should have been due to any such woful agency. Take my word for it, if the trapeze ever has called in the assistance of the rod, it has been to get the little pickles away from it, not to urge them on.

Presently we make interest with the manager for an introduction, and passing, under his safe conduct, the jealously-guarded door of communication, make our way to the first entrance, to find another scene from Topsy-turvydom being enacted, and the smaller of the two mites standing proudly on his mother's shoulders as she works her perilous way—an acrobatic Sisyphus—up and down a long see-saw plank, mounted on a rolling globe. It is Brat Number One's turn now to lean against the proscenium with folded arms, mutely envious; and I fancy that I can detect in his small visage more than the ordinary discontent bred ever by inaction in ambitious minds. And by-and-by, when the family group have "thrown their kisses" for the last time to the applauding audience, and retire gracefully, but a trifle out of breath, to the shelter of the wing, I find that my conjecture is correct. According to the laws of due precedence, that proud position on mother's shoulders should to-night have belonged to Brat Number One; but that young gentleman has been naughty to-day—has persisted against all entreaty in practising at unholy hours of the morning, and in the airy costume appropriate to slumber, a new feat which has suddenly occurred to his infantile mind, and has pitched, head first, from the tiny trapeze, which hangs over the parental couch, right into the parental diaphragm. Which unauthorised descent has been appropriately punished by exclusion from the pet "ascension" feat this evening, and *hinc illæ lacrymæ*.

Privately, and when mother is not by to be scandalised, I express my sympathy with the small misdemeanant, and am rewarded with the confidential confession of an ambition which somewhat startles me. I have heard of children crying for the moon; but this precocious acro-brat seems, so far as I can make out, to be professing a strong desire to "dump trou de 'tars!" I venture to express a doubt as to the feasibility of the operation, and the mite regards me for a moment with unconcealed contempt, as a creature of very poor gymnastic capabilities indeed. It is not without difficulty that I manage to make clear to him the astounding fact, that a great big man, over six feet high, actually does not know what are the "stars" to which he is referring. At last, however, he realises it, looks cautiously round, to make sure that mother

and stage-manager and all other natural enemies of aspiring youth are looking another way, and seizing me by the skirt, incontinently drags me off to the mezzanine floor below the stage.

Now at last I realise his meaning. The ballet has begun, and a couple of highly-spangled demons are flying up and down through the star-traps, which, in my mite's eyes, form the only astronomical phenomena at all worthy of contemplation. As we approach, a demon descends rapidly headforemost through the stage, to be duly caught by a couple of handy carpenters, and promptly set upon his feet on the small square platform, which works up and down between its four strong supports close alongside. This platform is hung on heavy counterweights, so calculated as to exactly balance the weight of the platform itself with the man upon it, over whose head is one of my small friend's star-traps, a circular hole in the stage just large enough for him to pass through, and covered in with small triangular boards which open upwards on hinges, to fall to again directly he has passed. Eight strong men hold the lifting tackles at each corner, and with one powerful hoist, send the adventurous acrobat flying through the star, and sixteen or eighteen feet into the air above.

Of a surety, the gentleman in the spangles is not the only demon on the mezzanine to-night; for, without a word of warning, my tiny friend, possessed with the wild desire of "dumping trou de 'tars," releases my skirt, and, pushing in between the carpenters' legs, actually scrambles halfway on to the platform.

"Come out of that, you young warmint!" shouts one of the men; and he and I jerk the young monkey back into safety again, just as the platform flies upward with a bang which seems to shake the very stage. Without a word, the baffled aspirant, deeply indignant at having been balked in his gallant attempt to get himself flattened into a pancake, marches off, leaving me to explain my share in the transaction as best I may.

But we have not done with him yet. Some mischief that boy is bound to get into to-night. The affront put upon him in the matter of the "ascension trick" must be wiped off somehow. I am bound to say that, if getting into mischief will wipe it off, he soon wipes it off effectually. The performance is over by this time, and I am learning, not without interest, some

of the peculiar ways of acrobatic infancy, when a small cry is heard from the back of the stage.

"Mother! mother! mother! I'm doing to tattle!"

Now, to judge from the sounds themselves, the caller is not tumbling by any means. On the contrary, each successive appeal comes most distinctly from a higher elevation than the preceding one. But we do not rush to the rescue any the less promptly for that, and, in another moment, we find that the unfortunate young adventurer is truly in very imminent danger of tumbling, and tumbling to very deadly purpose. In the absolute necessity which has been pressing upon him to do something that he should not do, he has, it seems, been practising his gymnastic exercises upon some portion of the scenery, which suddenly, and without his at first perceiving it, has been hoisted away by the flymen right among the sky-borders. At the same time—as luck will have it—the stage has opened beneath him for the descent of some other portion of the scenery, and there he hangs with a clear drop beneath him of something like fifty or sixty feet, right to the bottom of the cellar.

For the moment it seems as though nothing could save him. The mother is white as ashes, but perfectly collected, and, in a wonderfully steady voice, calls out to the boy to hold on, and get his leg over the bar if he can. The stage-manager shouts peremptory directions to lower out the scene, and close the cut. But it is only too clear that, before either can be done, the poor little chap's strength will have given out, and I confess to an inward sensation as of being about half-way across the Channel on a lively night, when suddenly a happy thought occurs to someone. In a moment a huge ulster coat is off its wearer's back and stretched across the chasm, firmly grasped in a dozen eager hands. The next, the adventurous young gymnast comes plump into it, and is safe. By the skin of his little teeth though. Alas! for the big ulster. It is of sturdy cloth, but not quite calculated for service of this kind, and rends promptly halfway from skirt to collar. But it has held on long enough to break the fall, and give the mother time to snatch her too ambitious young hopeful from the gulf, that is even now only partially closed. And so we bid each other good-night, and make the best of our way to the stage-door. And, as I pass through it in the rear of the gym-

nastic family, I hear a little voice just in front of me repeating in perfectly unconquered tones:

"Want to dump trou de 'tars!"

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII. A COLLISION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE conversation in the coupé, which has occupied but a few pages in its recital, did in fact fill up, and very agreeably to both parties, the whole journey between London and Pullham Junction. Next to playing whist and reading fiction, there is nothing which makes time pass so quickly as making love; and though it would be unfair to accuse Cecil Landon of having quite gone to that length with his charming companion, he had certainly given the reins to his very respectable powers of pleasing.

Grantham was the first station upon the branch line to Middleton, which was Cecil's starting-point to Wellborough; so far only were they now to travel together, and he unaffectedly expressed his sorrow that they were so soon to part company.

"I am sorry too," answered his companion frankly; "I have to thank you, for much more, I am sure, than the original obligation you conferred upon me."

He did not hear her words, though he understood that she meant to express something kind. His mind was occupied with the thought: "Why should I not see her again? Grantham is not so very far from Wellborough by railway. Why should I not ride over there, and renew my acquaintance?" He knew why he should not, very well. He was aware that such a course of conduct would be disgraceful to himself, dangerous to her, and traitorous to his wife. He was to a great extent a creature of his own impulses—whether they were bad or good—but not wholly so. If he had little or nothing of what is called "principle," he had some conscience; and his conscience was now making a last effort; rallying all her feeble powers to save the man from himself and ruin—and she succeeded.

This victory was not achieved by the noblest means. He did not say: "This temptation is base, and therefore I will withstand it." He was not even actuated by the reflection, how ill he would be acting towards the woman who, however

she might have angered him—whatever might be his quarrel with her—he was well convinced was still devoted to him. His reason for acting right was sheer pity for his companion. It would be an “infernal shame”—that was how his thought shaped itself—to continue his acquaintance with this innocent girl, without confessing to her that he was a married man. Yet if he should confess it, he felt that their companionship would have lost its charm for both. In her pocket-book he had only written his initials, with a post-office address in London appended to them; and he now resolved not to reveal himself, but to part from her when the time arrived—but a few minutes hence—forever. If this were one of those good resolutions with which the Minton of the Lower Regions is said to form its floor in mosaic—here a glittering temptation withstood, but in the end prevailing; here the fair blossom of a good deed which never comes to fruit—Cecil at least could urge that Fate itself was opposed to its accomplishment. As in the Trojan War the gods and goddesses were human combatants, so it does sometimes seem that some external Power, adverse to their good, opposes struggling mortals.

In the natural order of things, as set down in the time-table, the Middleton train would have gone right on from Pullham Junction, at which it had now arrived, and would have reached Grantham in ten minutes. But as ill-luck would have it, the up-train—which was due at the Junction, and, after the passage of which, the Middleton-branch train should have crossed the line and proceeded on its way—was behind its time. The telegraph was not then used as it is now, to inform the driver of a waiting train how long it has to wait, but matters were left in such cases to the judgment of the station-masters. At first the Pullham official detained the branch train, upon the ground that, as the express was expected every instant, there would be no time to cross the rails; but presently, getting impatient, and foreseeing that evil hateful to station-masters, a “block” in his domain, he gave the signal to move on. It was a perilous order, and more so of course than when he had shrunk from it before; and everyone was conscious of it except the people most concerned—the passengers—but it was obeyed. As the long line of carriages moved on, the pointsman whose duty it was to turn them on to the

Middleton line caught sight of the express, and losing his head at the imminence of the danger, turned the train on to the main line. Cecil, who, filled with grave thoughts, kept his eyes averted from his companion, was looking out of window, and marked the action. He saw the terror in the man’s face, even before he threw up his arms and uttered some unheard ejaculation, and guessed at once what had occurred. Thrusting his head and shoulders out of the carriage, he could see the express coming—still a long way off, but swift and sure as Fate, to meet them.

“Rose,” he said, unconsciously addressing the girl by her christian-name, “there is going to be an accident; there is not a moment to be lost. You must jump out.” And he opened the carriage-door.

“An accident!—jump out!” she murmured, aghast with fear. “I can never do it.”

The voices of men calling wildly mingled with the shrieks of the engine, as it screamed forth its passionate warning to its approaching brother.

“Then I will jump with you,” said Cecil. He took her unresistingly in his arms; and as he did so, even in that moment of supreme peril, pressed her tenderly to his breast. “You will be safe with me,” he murmured—though he was far from thinking so—as he stood with her upon the carriage-step. Her long brown hair had come unfastened and the fierce wind blew it about his face, so that he could scarcely see; but, on the whole, he judged the spot to be favourable for his venture.

The train was running in a cutting, and the bank rose high and green before him without stones. He leaped out, taking care to jump well forward; there was a rushing through the air, the shock of a dead-weight fall, and then a roar and crash, as though the very world were breaking up.

“Are you hurt?” was Cecil’s eager enquiry as, stanned and bruised, but not, as he imagined, seriously injured, he leant over his still prostrate companion.

“No—that is a little,” she murmured; “my arm is hurt. But do not mind me. Good heavens, look at the train!”

The train, or rather both trains, had come together with a shock which, though greatly mitigated by the efforts of their respective drivers ere they leaped from their posts, had made a wreck of the foremost carriages, the fragments of which strewed the line. The air was rent with

shrieks, and groans, and appalling cries for aid.

"Run, run," cried Rose, "and give what help you can. I shall do very well till you come back."

It was not easy for Cecil to run, for he was very stiff and bruised; but he made what haste he could to the scene of the catastrophe. As it happened, the majority of the passengers were more frightened than hurt; and, as the accident had occurred so near the station, there were soon plenty of persons on the spot to give assistance to the wounded. Feeling that his help could be dispensed with, Cecil therefore soon returned to his fair companion. She sat up to receive his report; but it was evident from her pale drawn face that she was in great pain.

"You must see a doctor, Rose, at once," said he. Circumstances had already placed them on terms of familiarity such as it might have taken weeks to bring out in an ordinary way. "There are two surgeons with the train."

He helped her to her feet, and they slowly moved along together. Presently they passed by their coupé, which had been near the engine, and seemed to have been literally smashed to pieces.

"But for you, I should have been in that," said she with a shudder, and a sudden clinging of her unwounded arm. "How much I owe you! and yet I do not even know the name of my preserver."

"Call me Henry," whispered he—"Henry Landon."

His christian-names were Cecil Henry, it may be remembered, though the latter was never used by those who knew him. They obtained the attention of a doctor, who at once pronounced Miss Mytton's arm to be broken; it was a simple fracture, he said; and in a few minutes he had bound it up, and she was sitting in the waiting-room of the station. It was not possible to make up two trains out of the débris left by the collision, and carriages had to be sent for elsewhere.

"Do you feel easier now?" enquired Cecil of his charge, in tones that were now perhaps pardonably tender.

"Yes, as to the mere pain; but I am so distressed about my sister. If Helen should hear there had been an accident before we get to Grantham, she will be half-distracted."

"How far is it to Grantham?"

"It is only seven miles by road."

"Then let us take a carriage at once. Of course I shall see you to your door."

She thanked him warmly, and without any pretence of rejecting his offer; her nerves had been so shaken, that she looked forward with positive horror to trusting herself again to the railway. This plan of Cecil's would bring her home much earlier than if she waited for the train; and moreover, she really felt unequal to pursue her journey by either rail or road, alone. He therefore procured an open fly, and started with his fair companion; it is not surprising that the spectators of their departure should have deemed them man and wife. It was known that they had leaped together out of the train, and hence the highly-coloured account of their adventure which appeared in the newspapers the next morning, wherein "the young husband" figured as a hero, and which poor Ella and her friend perused at breakfast-time. Cecil and Rose did not talk much upon the journey, each being occupied with their own reflections, which were of a widely different kind. The former was conscious that he was in a position of great danger, from which he could not summon the courage to extricate himself by the only proper means. Fate had settled that he should be where he was, and without absolutely resolving to lay all that might come of it on Fate's shoulders, he felt inclined to temporise, nor did he appreciate the extreme difficulty of that course of conduct. He had found out there was an inn at Grantham where he could sleep, and had given orders to the driver to drop his portmanteau there upon the way to "The Casket."

When this was done, Rose observed, quickly: "You will dine with us, Mr. Landon, of course, to-night."

"Indeed, I fear you will not be well enough to dine," said he; "you look as though you were in great pain."

"No indeed," replied she, "my arm gives me but little uneasiness. I am anxious about Helen, that is all; when she finds the train behind its time she will be frightened about me, even if the news—oh, there is the vicar!"

The fly at this moment overtook a gentleman in clerical attire, who, considering his very considerable bulk, was walking at a most meritorious rate of speed; his hat was in one hand and a pocket-handkerchief in the other, with which he repeatedly wiped his brow.

"Thank goodness!" cried he fervently,

to Rose. "You are come at last! This is the third time I have been to the railway-station, bringing a fresh white lie every time to poor Helen to account for your absence. The station-master was so very reticent that I felt sure there had been some accident."

"So there was, Mr. Welby; and but for this gentleman's kind aid I should not be alive to tell you about it." She introduced the two men; the vicar got into the carriage, and shook hands with Cecil warmly.

"You will be welcome at Grantham, I promise you, sir. I hope you will dine and take a bed at the Vicarage."

"Indeed, Mr. Welby," said Rose, "Mr. Landon must dine with us—that is if you will keep him company."

"Of course I will," said the vicar; "only I am afraid you will be very fatigued after your journey, and scarcely equal to entertaining folks at dinner."

"It is not a question of fatigue," said Cecil gravely. "Miss Mytton has had a serious accident; her arm is broken."

"Good heavens!" cried the vicar. "A broken arm! This will kill Helen."

"The point is whether it will kill me," exclaimed Rose, laughing. "It is, however, only a very small bone, the doctor said, and it is fortunately my left arm."

"But how on earth did it happen?"

"Well, I'm afraid I did it," said Cecil with an air of contrition.

"You did it!" echoed the vicar.

"In saving my life," put in Rose gravely. "Foreseeing that a collision was about to occur, Mr. Landon jumped with me from the carriage—which I had not the courage to do by myself—and in the fall this mischief happened."

"Dear me," cried the vicar, "how deplorable! It will give Helen quite a shock!"

The outside of "The Casket"—that is, the front which faced the road, and was indeed actually upon it—was very plain and unpretending. It was just a two-storied cottage, surrounded with a little verandah, and looked as though it were directly at the foot of the giant hill that towered behind it, though, as we have learnt, there was a garden of considerable size between them.

As the fly stopped, a young lady ran out bareheaded to meet it. One might have been sure at once that Rose and she were sisters, the family likeness being very strong; but Helen looked much the older. She was pretty without doubt, but neither so pretty as Rose, nor of the same intel-

lectual type. Her face was thinner and more thoughtful. She moved with grace, but more slowly than her sister; and pleased and excited as she evidently was, there was an air of sedateness, almost of restraint about her, which contrasted with the other's natural gaiety.

The fact was, notwithstanding her nervous haste, she had caught sight of Cecil. He noticed this, and said to himself, not without a shudder of fear: "A watch-dog." Rose noticed it also, and for the first time that day her face was suffused with a guilty flush. Not that she was conscious of having committed any imprudence, but because she felt her sister's look as the expressed suspicion of her having done so. Perhaps this caused her to be more earnest and grateful in the explanation, which she at once gave to Helen, of Cecil's presence. He hastened to hint that, now he had seen Miss Rose Mytton in the safe custody of her friends, his duty was done; and even made a feint of re-entering the fly.

Rose looked at Helen imploringly, but, before she could speak, the vicar intervened with a plaintive air:

"Well, I have been asked to dine here on your account, Mr. Landon; so if you go away like this my invitation will be cancelled."

"I hope Mr. Landon will do us the honour of dining with us," observed Helen. Her voice was soft and low, like her sister's, but had a certain dignity rarely found in so young a woman. To Cecil's ear it almost seemed to repel—to sound like the growl of the watch-dog.

"I should be very pleased to accept your invitation, Miss Mytton, if you are quite sure my presence would not be inconvenient. But your sister has met with an accident. Her arm is hurt, and perhaps repose and quiet—"

"An accident? Your arm hurt? Why, now I see it is in a sling. Pray come upstairs," and she carried her sister off at once, without bestowing any further notice upon her visitors.

"Come in, sir," said the vicar coolly, leading the way into the house; "I told you she would be put out at anything having happened to dear Miss Rose."

"I don't wonder at it," said Cecil.

"No; and you would be still less surprised if you knew her. Miss Helen absolutely lives for her sister; she is her *raison d'être*."

"And a very good reason too," answered Cecil, mechanically imitating the vicar's

pronunciation of the phrase, which was not Parisian.

"Ah, you admire her, doubtless. Indeed everybody does. Rose is 'the rose of all the rose-garden of girls,' as Helen says, and Helen is always right. That comes from Tennyson, you know. She has him at her fingers' ends."

"What, Miss Rose?"

"No, no, Miss Helen; you should see her illustration of the May Queen:

And that good man the clergyman has told me words of peace.

I sat for it in my canonicals."

"I should not have thought that had been necessary," said Cecil.

"So Miss Helen said, and made me take them off again," returned the other dryly.

"Is not this a lovely spot?"

They had passed through the little house and into the garden, where everything breathed of spring. In the blue sky the lark was singing his evening hymn, and in the woods that crested the white cliff above them, a thousand throats seemed to take up the joyous melody. The air was fragrant with flowers, and that fresh scent which every living growth, and even the earth itself, gives forth at that season. There were not many plots of flowers, though what were there were full of blossom; but there were clusters of shrubs here and there, and one or two drooping trees, with walks about them so disposed as to give an idea of extent—whereas the whole ground the garden covered was very small. It was, in truth, as the vicar had observed, a lovely spot; nor was the scene less fair when you looked towards the cottage, with its two bright little sitting-rooms open to view, and a luxuriant creeper festooning it everywhere, so that the spaces for the door and windows seemed to be cut out of it.

"I call it a perfect Eden," continued Mr. Welby, observing with pleasure the admiration expressed in Cecil's face; "only without an Adam and without a serpent."

Cecil laughed, but not quite naturally. The vicar's parallel had gone farther with his companion, than the reverend gentleman had calculated upon.

"You have never been in this district before, I suppose, Mr. Landon?" observed the vicar presently.

"Not at Grantham, no; but I know the country farther south, down Wellborough way."

"To be sure, I thought your name was familiar to me. You live at Wellborough, do you not, or have some connections there?"

Here was a chance for Cecil to tell the truth about himself, easily, naturally, and afterwards to have it broken for him by another—after he had left the place, perhaps—to Rose. He did not, however, seize the golden opportunity; he turned his back upon it, sharply, but desiginedly.

"No; I never lived at Wellborough. My family and I are Londoners."

This was true in a sense, of course; but in his sense it was a lie. From the moment he uttered it Cecil's destiny was sealed.

"Grantham must seem a great change to you after London," continued the unconscious vicar. "Although we have a railway-station, we live quite out of the world here; and as for our hostesses, I don't suppose they leave the village, except to go to Pullham at farthest, once in six months. Miss Rose's journey to town was unprecedented."

This intelligence was welcome to Cecil; not for any reason which he could have distinctly stated, but in a vague and general sort of way. Grantham would not only be a "great change" for him after London, but a very agreeable contrast if he should happen to come that way again. The young ladies were quiet, stay-at-home folks, as little given, in all probability, to curiosity, as to gadding about. Why should he not be occasionally entertained by them, as a friend, without revealing to them his family affairs, which, after all, did not concern them?

"Here is Miss Mytton, doubtless with a bulletin," exclaimed the vicar, as Helen came towards them from the cottage.

"Well, how is the patient?"

"Not so well as she thinks herself," returned the young lady gravely. "Nevertheless she has insisted upon coming downstairs." And she looked at Cecil, as he thought, reproachfully.

"I hope that is not upon—upon our account," said he, with a glance at the vicar.

"Well, she seems to fear that it would seem ungracious in her to be absent from the drawing-room—for the dinner-table is out of the question—though, in my opinion, she has an ample excuse. However, the matter is settled in accordance with her wish. In the meantime she bids me remind you, Mr. Landon—as she fears your solicitude upon her account may have caused you to forget the anxieties of others—that our post goes out shortly. If you wish to communicate with your friends—as to the accident on the railway I mean," she added, for Cecil stared as

well as blushed, "you will find writing materials in the drawing-room."

It was no wonder that her words had called the colour into Cecil's face, for he had for the time almost forgotten Ella's existence; nor had it struck him that she would hear of the accident through the papers.

"Your sister is very kind and thoughtful," said he. "I think I should like to write just a line."

She took him into the drawing-room, and left him with pen, ink, and paper. His first idea really was to write to Ella, but he now decided not to do so. He felt a hesitation in addressing her as wife, partly on account of his own feelings as respected her, but chiefly in connection with his present position. It would be an act of hypocrisy, and a disagreeable one; and he felt deception difficult enough, even when it ministered to his pleasure. Moreover, it was almost certain that the address of his letter would be perused by someone about the cottage on its way to the post-bag; and the words "Mrs. Landon" would tell everything. The post-mark "Grantham" too, on the envelope, would naturally have to be accounted for at home. Upon the whole, he decided upon telegraphing to Ella the next day upon his way to Wellborough, which, as we have seen, he put into effect. Meanwhile, he wrote to a certain friend of his in London—not a very scrupulous one—to ask him to take in any letters that might be sent to his address directed to him—Landon. He had not any positive plan in his mind, but if it should be necessary for him to leave some direction behind him, why should he not leave that? It was surely not absolutely incumbent upon a man to tell where he lived, or how he lived, or whether he was married or single, without being asked the question—or, in all cases, even if he were asked?

Just as he had finished his note, which was brief enough—though, as he well knew, it would have plenty of significance for his correspondent—Rose entered the room.

Her left arm still rested in a sling, but she no longer looked pale and anxious; indeed, at the sight of him, her face wore a pretty flush of colour.

"I hope you are not imprudent in coming down so soon?" said Cecil tenderly.

"Not at all," returned she gaily, "I don't believe my arm is broken. The doctor said, you know, it was only a small bone. I can't help myself to food, of course, but Helen has promised to cut it up

for me; and I could not deny myself the pleasure of dining with you, after all your kindness. I am glad to see my sister has reminded you of your duty to your friends in time," she added, pointing to the note he had just finished, "otherwise that would be another trouble on your shoulders, for which I should have to blame myself."

"My friends in town would have got over it, no doubt," answered Cecil, laughing.

The laugh, even more than the words, was false and shameful; it was the basest thing—and he knew it—that he had yet permitted himself to say; for the impression he wished to produce, and did produce, upon his companion was that there was no one much interested in his well-being in town, or anywhere else—except it might be at Grantham.

"You are doing your friends an injustice, Mr. Landon, I am sure," said Rose earnestly. "One who is so kind to a stranger must certainly have won the hearts of those who know him."

"You are mistaken, Miss Rose, indeed, but especially so in calling yourself a stranger. You do not seem so to me, I do assure you."

Here the French window was suddenly darkened by Helen's figure; it would have been plain to them both that she must needs have heard his last remark, even if her face had looked less grave.

Cecil, wolf though he felt himself fast becoming, hung his head in a very sheepish manner, but Rose, with woman's readiness, spoke up at once.

"Mr. Landon thinks, after what he and I have gone through together to-day, Helen, that it is hard that I should consider him as a stranger, and yet, would you believe it, all the address he vouchsafed to write down in my pocket-book was, 'C. H. L., Post Office,' in some street in London."

"Nay, that was at the beginning of our acquaintance, Miss Rose," observed Cecil, "and, as the affair between us was merely a pecuniary one, I thought it would savour of impertinence to force, as it were, my personal acquaintanceship upon you."

"Your reticence, in my opinion, did you credit, Mr. Landon," said Helen quietly.

"It did him great credit, I have no doubt," remarked the vicar at the window.

"What is it that Mr. Landon has been doing, Miss Helen, to meet commendation, which, with you, is never misplaced?"

"Is that why you so seldom get it, Mr. Welby?" said Rose, laughing.

"Perhaps so," answered the vicar lugubriously. "But what business has a young lady with a broken arm to come down to dinner? You, Miss Helen, who have seen the extent of her calamity, don't you think it imprudent—?"

"Helen has seen, and fought, and been conquered," interrupted Rose imperiously; "and it is settled I am to dine, Mr. Welby. And here is dinner, and here am I."

Indeed, the dinner was announced almost immediately, and the little party adjourned to the next room, where Rose was accommodated on the sofa, with a little table all to herself, but within reach of the conversation. She did not take much part in it; but when Cecil spoke, a keen observer would have perceived that her interest was always awakened; when the others talked—or rather, when Mr. Welby did so, for he took the lion's share of the conversation—she would also sometimes exchange with Cecil a glance of humorous intelligence; for the vicar was "great fun," and the greater because he was not always aware of it. Like most divines who are worth much, he was something of a humorist, and a capital narrator of such matters as fell within his own experience. But, on the other hand, his devotion to Helen manifested itself in a manner so pronounced, as, to say the least of it—especially as it was quite unreciprocated—was inconsistent with common sense. There was no doubt as to which of the jewels in "The Casket" would have been his jewel, if he could have obtained possession of it. Her opinions in general were his opinions, and even her "views" upon theological matters, though by no means orthodox, were treated by him in a very different way than would have been the case if they had come from the lips of another. The squire of the village, it seemed, was a very Low Churchman, and the vicar—he could do it with a clear conscience, being himself "high and dry"—made very merry at his expense, obviously for Helen's delectation.

"I got our Calvinistic friend this morning," said he, "into a cleft stick, and pinched him. Everybody is to be burnt, you know, for ever and ever, who disagrees with the squire; and to-day he went into particularities, which are really very funny, since the squire himself would not hurt a fly."

"You tell me, you, whose light blue eyes
Grow tender over drowning flies,
You tell me Doubt is devil-born,"

quoted Helen.

"Ah, just so," said the vicar, "only his eyes are not light blue, are they?"

"I did not mean to be so literal," said Helen.

"Of course you didn't. You're too sensible; but the squire did. He was very strong upon every individual limb, since they had all offended, being burnt continually."

"Unless the man becomes regenerate," said I.

"Of course," he admitted.

"Very good; then suppose a very wicked person loses his leg, or his arm, in a railway accident," added the vicar, with a sly look at Rose, "and afterwards becomes regenerate, what becomes of the unregenerate leg? You never saw a man so puzzled in your life. He said he'd 'consult his books,' like an old fortune-teller, and think about it."

"This is a free country, Mr. Welby," observed Rose; "and everybody has a right to his opinion."

"When it is not at variance with those of the church, Miss Rose," replied the vicar, reprovingly.

"But one can't help having opinions, whether they are those of the church or not," suggested Helen.

"Well, of course not; no," said the vicar. "I was thinking rather of the free expression of them."

"But if we have opinions which we do not dare express, we are wicked or cowardly," argued Helen.

"That is true, Miss Helen," answered the vicar. "There can, therefore, be no harm, for example, in Mr. Landon giving his views upon a matter upon which you hold such a very strong opinion—the barreta question."

"Now pray don't let us go into that," said Helen appealingly.

"But you must let Mr. Landon speak," urged Rose wickedly.

"Well, upon my word," said Cecil, who had not the faintest idea what the "barreta question" was, "there is a good deal to be said on both sides."

"A very sensible observation," remarked the vicar.

"But one which, I am afraid, evinces a lack of moral courage," observed Helen.

"I am afraid I am rather deficient in that commodity," confessed Cecil modestly; and, indeed, he had never felt himself so destitute of it, as since he had come to Grantham.

"Mr. Landon has, fortunately, courage of another kind," remarked Rose quietly; "the sort that enables one to jump from a

railway train with a fellow-creature who has none at all."

"Among Mr. Welby's parishioners, there are probably fifty men who would have done just the same," observed Cecil.

"In the case of Miss Rose, or Miss Helen, I think there may be; because everybody adores them both," replied the vicar, with his eyes fixed on the latter young lady; "but as to heroes, there is only one in the parish who can claim to be one by virtue of his profession."

"Who on earth is that?" enquired Miss Helen.

"Old Jacob Wright. When I first came to Grantham I enquired whether there were any old soldiers in the village, and was referred to Jacob as its only veteran. So I called at his cottage, and put some questions as to his military career.

"How long ago was it since you left the army?" I asked.

"Better than thirty years, sir," was his reply.

"Then you could not have been a soldier very long."

"No, not very, sir."

"Were you in the cavalry or the infantry?"

"I was in the foot, sir; the Forty-second Foot."

"A gallant regiment. Did you see much service in it?"

"No, sir."

"Did you go abroad with it?"

"No, sir."

"Well, now, tell me what you did do."

"Well, thirty years ago, sir, I was at Middleton Fair with some other young chaps, and we got a-drinking, and somehow or another, a recruiting-sergeant as was there got hold of me, and I was enlisted."

"Well, what then?"

"Why, you see, sir, it was a Saturday night, and all the next day I was in the army reg'lar—a Forty-second man. But o' Monday morning, my old mother, as I lived with, she came to hear on it, and was a'most out of her wits, and she took her savings out of an old stocking, and came and bought me off. And then I was a free man again."

"That's the story of our only veteran," concluded Mr. Welby. All his hearers thought it an excellent story, especially

Cecil, who foresaw that he would have no difficulty in getting on with the vicar; yet Helen took occasion to observe that the "veteran" was an old humbug, and that false pretence was to her mind the most odious of vices. "Don't you agree with me, Mr. Landon?"

It was, doubtless, an accidental appeal; but it was with considerable embarrassment that Cecil gave in his adhesion.

He was aware that there was in Grantham at that moment at least as great an impostor as Jacob Wright. Every look and word that Rose bestowed upon him, reminded him of the fact, and, what was worse, when Helen spoke, his guilty mind suggested that she had her suspicions.

The evening passed away, upon the whole, enjoyably; the good manners of the two hostesses and the good-humour of the vicar would, under other circumstances, have placed him thoroughly at ease, and, even as it was, he felt himself at home at "The Casket." On the other hand, at the door of his heart, which he had shut, as it were, in her very face, Conscience still beat with an importunate hand; he heard her, even when Rose was speaking to him in tones which he well knew, for all the prudence of her words, were meant for tenderness; and when he had parted from her and her sister, and the vicar's last "Good-night" had died away on the evening air, and he was taking his way home alone to his inn, the voice of self-reproach grew very loud. It was idle then for him to repeat to himself—and for himself—as he had done in company, that he was merely playing his part as a chance visitor, here to-day and gone to-morrow; that he had made himself as agreeable as he could to his late companion, as it behoved a gentleman to do, and that was all. The very echo of his footsteps, in their monotonous fall, seemed to say, "You lie, you lie;" nay, every beat of his passionate heart said likewise. He knew that he had made love to Rose Mytton, as much as seeming honest love within so short a space could have been made. He was ashamed and bitter against himself; but even his very penitence was shameful. For he thought not of the wrong he was doing to his own true wife; but only of the pain that might befall, because of him, the woman he could never call his own.

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BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER XI. MR. LEVERIDGE'S SENTIMENTS.

MR. LEVERIDGE was favouring me with his opinion in regard to Mr. Gridale. "He is a clever man, I don't doubt; and he may be a good man—I won't question that. But I call him a dangerous man. I don't mind so much what he describes as his political convictions, although I think them of a violent and destructive character. But I have heard him say very disagreeable things of the Royal Academy. Only the other day he declared that, if he could have his way in the matter—happily he can't—he would throw it open! Was there ever anything so monstrous? Fancy throwing open the Royal Academy! Why, what would become of the academicians? What would become of the Life School and the models? What should I do for a study from the figure? To throw it open would be the same thing as to throw it down. Of course he cannot be expected to look at the thing from our point of view: he's not an artist. The Academy is the mother of artists. That is how they think of her. They could no more dream of injuring her than of wounding their own natural mothers."

"Mr. Gridale said the Academy was composed of old women," I observed, rather mischievously.

"That is not precisely my meaning. But, depend upon it, nothing is sacred to the man who assails the Royal Academy."

He then spoke of M. Riel—in reply, I must own, to enquiries of mine upon the subject.

"Yes, I have set him to work. He does credit to your recommendation—so far. But—there is always a 'but,' you know—he is not fond of work, I think. He's wonderfully correct of eye and firm of hand, and, when he likes, can work with great rapidity. He tires soon, however. At any rate, he leaves off. I wouldn't call him idle, although it would certainly be idleness in another man. I lose sight of him for days together, but he comes back at last, just when I have decided that he will not return—that he has given me up in disgust. He works until he has earned a little money; then he is content to do nothing until his money is all gone; then he will resume his brush. It seems to me that it is only upon the compulsion of poverty that he will do anything."

"He is poor, of course. He makes no secret of that."

"My dear young lady, there is no making a secret of poverty. It will out, as though it were a crime. Yet it is not a crime, Heaven knows, or how many criminals there would be in the world! At the same time, we are not obliged to hold that poverty is absolutely a virtue. M. Riel is poor, as you say; but need he be quite so poor? He might be rather more industrious."

"He is much preoccupied."

"Yes, I have noticed that; I have even taxed him with it. I asked him if he were in love."

"And he said?"

"He denied it, of course," said Mr. Leveridge, with a laugh. "Men always deny a charge of that sort. I should deny it, if anyone were to say such a thing of me. It is allowable to shuffle in such a case."

I remained silent for some minutes.

"I think allowance should be made for M. Riel's position in this country," I said at length.

"Very likely. We 'all need that allowance should be made for us, when the time comes for passing judgment upon us. But I don't want to be the judge of this poor young Frenchman; I seek only to help him. He needs money; well, I try to put him in the way of earning money. Can I do more? I might give him money, but I don't suppose he would accept it."

"Of course not."

"It's a difficult thing to offer a man money—I mean a man like that."

"A gentleman like that. It would be an insult to offer him money."

"Perhaps so."

The tone in which he said this I thought objectionable.

"I don't think you like M. Riel. I fear you don't quite do him justice."

"I like him well enough, be sure of that. I'd like him more if I could, and if he would let me. But—as I said before, there is always a 'but'—his art seems to him a poor thing, a secondary thing; and that is not how an artist should consider his art."

"He works to earn his living. Surely that is why people usually work."

"Yes, that is true. But the means by which we earn bread are not necessarily despicable—may, indeed, be well worthy of respect. An artist need not consider himself merely as a tradesman or a journeyman; he is entitled to think even nobly of his occupation. He, at any rate, should not condemn it. Let him leave that to others."

"M. Riel," I said, "is hardly to be blamed for judging humbly of his abilities. He frankly avows that he is an artist of inferior quality. I admire his modesty and his candour. There is enough of pretence in the world, of incompetence, and conceit."

"Yes, he disparages himself not less than his art. He is apathetic and ambitionless, it would seem. He shelters himself in a supreme indifference. He may not be without care, but apparently he is without hope. I think it preferable that a man should know what to do with his life, and should set some store upon it. In M. Riel's eyes the present is nothing, and the future not worth troubling oneself about. What the past has been to him, he knows best; but nothing very cheering, I should suppose."

"He has suffered in the past, probably; and he suffers now, driven from his home to pick up a subsistence in a foreign

country. I, for one, cannot but pity him, for I hold him well deserving of pity, and of such little help as I can proffer him or obtain for him."

"Forgive me, my dear young lady; I had forgotten for the moment that he was your protégé. I should not have spoken so freely about him. I will pity and help him too. And certainly he interests me. And he's very handsome; but you know that, of course."

"I think him handsome," I said curtly, as though the thing was not worth considering.

"There's no doubt about it. His head is singularly fine. In some lights he's really superb: an Antinous who has paled somewhat, and lost flesh from leading a town life and smoking tobacco. Yes, and there's a becoming shadow of sorrow or disappointment upon his face; or is it merely discontent? But I envy him his good looks and his youth. I'm always envious of good looks and youth. The one I did once possess—though it did not seem to me then so valuable as now it does; but the other, never. The ugly do not receive their fair share of compassion. Of course, there are ugly people wholly unconscious of the fact of their ugliness—who may even believe themselves to be beautiful. I'm not speaking of them. They are happy enough—provided always they never find out their mistake. But the ugly to whom the fact of their ugliness is thoroughly well known, surely they merit commiseration. How hard it is for them to feel themselves despised, because of a thing they cannot possibly help! For people will think it the fault of the ugly that they are ugly, and blame and scorn them for it. Of course they had no choice in the matter; we'd all be good-looking if we could. I know I would. My ugliness has been the bane of my existence. You see I've an eye for beauty; yet when I look in the glass! Do you think there is compensation in store for those afflicted with ugliness? There should be a separate, and special, and superior heaven for them. It would not be picturesque, but it would be just. You admire this handsome Frenchman?"

"Yes, I admire M. Riel."

"You love him, perhaps?"

"Mr. Leveridge!"

"I have no right to ask that; I know it—I feel it. Pray pardon me."

"You have been so kind—we owe you so much——"

"Please don't speak of it. Don't thank

me. I don't want you to be grateful. I hate gratitude, so far as you are concerned."

"No, you would hate me if I were really ungrateful."

"I could not hate you—and you could not be really ungrateful."

"I will answer your question. I do not love M. Riel."

"You are sure?"

"I am quite sure."

As I spoke I put forth my hand mechanically. To my surprise, Mr. Leveridge took it and pressed it, tenderly, but with rather an embarrassed air.

"Now what am I to understand by that?" I could hear him mutter.

"What strange creatures women are!" he said presently.

Meantime he would not release my hand, although I made some effort to free it from his grasp.

"Are they so strange?" I asked, scarce knowing what to say.

"I think so—I've found them so. It is so hard to read their thoughts—to find the way to their hearts. Does this M. Riel love you?" he asked abruptly in an altered tone.

"I cannot tell you. It is more than I know."

"But as you think?"

"I think he does not love me. I think there is no question of love between M. Riel and myself."

"But, as you say, it is more than you know. Ah, Doris, you are so beautiful, who can help loving you! I'll tell you something. The real Loadstone Rock was a beautiful woman—like you. Approaching her, men felt all the bands and bars, locks and bolts of their hearts give way—all that kept them together, and made them compact and resolute creatures—until they fell at her feet, her abject and helpless slaves."

"And what did she do? Did she spare and succour them, or did she oppress and maltreat them?"

"That's more than I can tell you. But I've an impression that woman is a despot and a tyrant, and inclined to use men cruelly."

"Ah, Mr. Leveridge, you have painted so many sirens—with beauty in abundance—and yet a fair supply of dead men's bones in the foreground! But all women cannot be like that."

"Well, we'll hope not. You, at any rate, do not charm only to destroy. Ah,

Doris, this little hand of yours, some day, will make someone very happy."

Thereupon he began kissing my hand with some vehemence.

"Please don't, Mr. Leveridge," I said.

I was most anxious to terminate our conversation. I was much perplexed by Mr. Leveridge's conduct. It was plain to me—or almost plain—that he contemplated dropping upon his knees. I was in danger of a formal proposal, and my alarm was very great. For what was I to do if Mr. Leveridge made a formal demand of my hand?

"I hear a footstep," I said, and I darted away from him.

I took refuge in the drawing-room, which was empty; but presently I was joined by Miss Leveridge. My cheeks burned somewhat, but I deemed my peril over, for I had heard the street-door close, and I knew that Mr. Leveridge had departed. He usually left us early in the evening to attend the Life School of the Academy.

Miss Leveridge appeared to be much agitated. She was nerving herself to address me.

"Don't break poor Dick's heart," she said tremulously, with almost a spasmodic manner. "Whatever you do, don't break his heart."

"Indeed," I said, as calmly as I could, "I have no desire to break his heart."

"No, no. But don't trifle with him, that's what I mean. He has been trifled with enough. Your mother led him a pretty dance. My dear, don't you follow her example. Treat him better than she did; for indeed he deserves it. He is one of the best of men. There isn't a kinder creature living."

"Indeed, Miss Leveridge, I have the greatest respect for your brother."

"Ah, my dear, but he wants more than that—much more than that. Can you give it him, that's the question? My dear, if you only knew how much he loves you!"

CHAPTER XII. A BIRTHDAY-PARTY.

MR. LEVERIDGE was wont to celebrate his birthday. He received a select party of his friends in his studio looking upon the Thames, and entertained them there after a simple, kindly, homely fashion. Mrs. Crisp, in her best cap, was very active upon the occasion, and supplied the guests liberally with tea and coffee, cakes and muffins. At a later hour an ample supper

was served; bowls of lobster salad were handed about, artistically arranged as to colour, the tender greens of the young lettuce-leaves contrasting finely with the coral of the lobster and the purple-red of the sliced beetroot; and Mr. Leveridge's health was toasted in pink champagne.

Miss Leveridge made an effort to be present at these festivities, taking care, however, to inform the world that her health was precarious, and that the circumstances were very trying to her. She duly arrived, however, in a cab at the appointed hour, bearing in her lap an imposing head-dress neatly pinned up in tissue-paper. Certain concessions, it was understood, were made to Miss Leveridge's prejudices. The studio was set in order; many of what she held to be objectionable canvases disappeared for the time, or were turned with their faces to the wall. The ranks of the Venuses underwent decimation.

Miss Leveridge and Mrs. Crisp addressed each other after an icily polite manner. Their "Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am," their curtseys and congees, seemed tinged with irony and acidity. Mrs. Crisp evidently deemed Miss Leveridge a very poor creature, and was disposed to think her delicate health very much matter of affectation. Miss Leveridge feebly tossed her chin when she spoke of Mrs. Crisp, and really wondered how her brother could possibly have gone on so long with a housekeeper who seemed so to misunderstand her position, and to be so very unsuited to it. The ladies did not like each other.

Mr. Leveridge did not observe, or he pretended not to observe, the hostilities carried on in a subdued and subtle manner between his sister and his housekeeper. He was a good-natured man, and a nebulous atmosphere of amiability seemed to halo him. Seen through this haze, everything presented itself to him in a good-natured form, until he became almost incredulous of the existence of ill-nature.

We mounted a narrow staircase leading from the studio to the roof. Here we found the garden among the chimney-stacks that had so delighted Basil in the days of his infancy, when he had lost his way in the neighbourhood of Battle-bridge, and been borne to a place of safety by Mr. Leveridge. It was a summer evening, and the western sky was glowing warmly still; bright crimson clouds, edged with orange and gold, floated along the

horizon, or ranged themselves in defined bars as though for a term safely imprisoning the sun in the dominion of night; the moon, a lovely silver crescent, was rising with meek beauty upon an opaline sky, of which the red, melting through saffron and blue, dimmed into a pallid green, until wholly lost at last in the cold grays of the mists of evening. The river flowed obscurely under the veil of night, but allowed here and there to be discerned upon its shivering, tremulous surface the long blurred shadows of moored barges, or of outstretched piers and wharf-heads. Already the lamps were lighted on the bridges, and sparks of flame in sundry places told of lanterns or signal-lights upon the river side. Here glowed the ruddy casement of some small tavern that seemed nestling, like a water-fowl, upon the very edge of the stream; here the light came flowing and flashing from a score of factory windows, producing elongated reflections that wavered and fluttered, like leaves in the wind, as the waters curdled and crumpled into wavelets.

The canary birds were roosting in their covered cages; the magpie and the black-bird were at peace; the rabbit-hutches were shut for the night, the timid tenants having closed their soft benign eyes in sleep amid a fragrant litter of half-eaten cabbage-leaves; the zoological marvels that had so charmed poor Basil were no longer visible. The little trellis-work arbour, trailed over with creeping plants, still found its nook among the chimneys; it was lit up by a tiny oil lamp with a crimson glass, that diffused a pleasant blush among the flowers in its neighbourhood.

"We'd have had fireworks," said Mr. Leveridge, "only I was afraid of alarming people, and bringing the fire-engines about the premises. I like to do things thoroughly, even if it's only keeping my own birthday. It's pleasant up here, isn't it? But night is always beautiful, wonderful, mysterious; and I love the river. There's really a look of Venice about the scene to-night. The Thames is not nearly prized enough. It's considered cockneyfied to admire it; but what does that matter if it's really admirable?—as it is. Why, Turner says, and with justice—and there's no man more competent to pronounce an opinion—that there's finer scenery on the banks of the Thames than on any river in Italy. I quite agree with him. Besides, I like to watch the ebb and flow of the river.

It's edifying, you know, if you consider it from a proper point of view. With the river for one's text, one can muse, and moralise, and philosophise in a very improving sort of way. Don't you think so? But we don't always have such delightfully calm and balmy evenings as this. You should be here sometimes when the wind blows; for we have our storms upon the Thames, even to an alarming extent. You'd think you were in a lighthouse, when the wind comes screaming and tearing like a mad creature round that corner. I've known it rend away the coping-stone, and then it roars down the chimneys until it blows the fires out. The floor is set rocking under your feet, and the house seems really to reel and totter in the gale. But even those are fine times, although they may be attended by a certain inconvenience. And then we obtain here such noble studies of skies and sunset and moonrise. It is the very place for an artist. And yet I can drop down in a moment, from the clouds, as it were, into the streets. I leave the heavens to traverse the earth in search of my gods and goddesses. I find them generally without much difficulty, and they are content to sit to me upon very moderate terms. But, of course, absolute perfection of form is very rare, and perfection of form is what I aim at. One must copy what one sees; but it is necessary to generalise; one is not bound to see every defect of line or colour. Be faithful to nature, but without servility; allow a little margin for poetry and sentiment. That seems to me the duty of the painter who would do honour to his calling."

These concluding observations were addressed not so much to me as to a little group of students from the Royal Academy, whom Mr. Leveridge had greatly pleased by inviting to his birthday-party. They seemed, indeed, a trifle overcome by their sense of the obligation that had been conferred upon them. They clung together as though dire mischance was likely to ensue upon their separation. They spoke to no one, but to each other, and to Mr. Leveridge when he addressed them, and then they replied together in the same breath, after the manner of a small chorus. They were pale, shy, dusty-looking youths, students of art and of nothing else, as it seemed. They conversed in mutters and prisoned their hands in their pockets, as though fearful lest they should abuse their freedom. Now and then they

collected round one of Mr. Leveridge's pictures, gazing at it with most admiring eyes; they examined the canvas from various points of view—now peering into it closely, and now tilting themselves back to survey it at a distance; and they interchanged vague suggestions and information concerning tone and glazing, scumbling and medium, and such matters, employing these as the watchwords of their craft.

"The best and safest medium is brains," said Mr. Leveridge, appearing suddenly in their midst and disturbing their discussion. "There is really no secret in the thing. It's all very simple. Cold-drawn linseed oil with a teaspoonful of mastic varnish, and, perhaps, a dash of spirits of turpentine—you can't have anything better. And much can be done with very few colours. Effect is secured by opposition of light and shade, warm and cold colour. Naples yellow, Indian red, Antwerp blue, raw umber, a little vermilion and lake, with blue-black and flake-white—you really need no more than those. That was my palette when I painted my Venus Anadyomene, which has been generally considered a very pretty piece of colouring."

I have no doubt the students enjoyed themselves greatly, but they did not contribute much to the enjoyment of others; they were perhaps, for their perfect comfort, too much overawed by their conviction of the superiority of Mr. Leveridge—they were as pupils in the presence of their professor. My last glimpse of them revealed them still close together, huddled under the shadow of a stack of chimneys, indulging in furtive whiffs of tobacco and engaged in murmurous discussion as to how they should paint the moonlight effect before them, deciding that indigo and asphaltum, with a glaze of something warm, would probably suffice. They had made excellent suppers.

Basil looked pale and wearied, I thought, and I noticed that he frowned and bit his lips. What had vexed him? Had Catalina been unkind to him, or treated him with more than her wonted coldness? Or did he object to the presence of M. Riel? For, of course, M. Riel was there. He had been occupied in the studio until the last moment of daylight; Mr. Leveridge could not but invite him to remain.

Nick, who came late from the City, frankly avowed that he did not like M. Riel, for the excellent reason that he disapproved of foreigners altogether, and

especially Frenchmen, holding them to be the natural enemies of England. He thought it foolish and even rather wicked, in the light of a tempting of Providence, to invite Frenchmen to English hearths and homes. They had no business there, they would only effect mischief there, he said; they should always be kept at arm's length, and be taught their proper place—one of signal inferiority—at every possible opportunity. He was quite surprised that Mr. Leveridge should have brought a common French workman—for such he judged M. Riel to be—into the society of English men and women.

I used often to wonder how Nick contrived to be so very stupid. It seemed so much easier to be rather more enlightened. His idea of a Frenchman belonged to a remote period of darkness, was made up of the densest prejudices, was founded upon the grossest ignorance. I plainly told him that it was really childish of him to talk as he did about M. Riel.

"You may say what you like, Doris," he replied, quite calmly; "you always did set up for being ever so much wiser than anybody else. But it doesn't signify. I hate the French, I always did and I always shall, and I don't care who knows it. Whenever I see a Frenchman, I feel the strongest desire to give him a hiding. You know it was the French that cut off the head of poor Marie Antoinette; and, you know, they think a lot of Voltaire, who, I've been told, was a very bad sort of man. Altogether, I've the poorest opinion of the French. You take my advice, and don't have anything to do with them. As for this M. Riel, give him a wide berth. I saw you speaking to him the other day; but I wouldn't do it again, if I were you. If he takes the liberty of addressing you, just you turn on your heel and walk away from him, as though you did not hear him."

"Absurd! I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Yes; that's just like you, Doris. You were always headstrong and obstinate. But let me tell you that you ought to respect my opinion, and do pretty much as I advise you. I'm the head of the family now. I'm older than you, and both you and Basil ought to look up to me, and consider my wishes, and consult with me, before you take any steps of importance. You're too fond, both of you, of acting upon your own responsibility. That's not the way to keep together and

help each other along. I think we three might have managed better than we have. Fancy Basil playing in the orchestra of a minor theatre, and writing in the newspapers, and trying to pick up a living in such low ways as that! I've no patience with him. I could have got him a very nice situation at a wholesale stationer's in the City; and he had an offer of really an excellent opening in the Manchester warehouse line of business; but he wouldn't hear of it. It's really very provoking."

"We can't be all like you, Nick, you see."

"Of course not," he said simply. "Still it's possible for you and Basil to have some sense, I suppose."

"You must not be too hard upon us, Nick. We're very inferior creatures."

"You know you don't think so. And it's my belief you only say that out of pertness. However, I don't care. I know what my duty is, and I intend to do it. I shall always bear you in mind, and help you whenever I get a chance. And Basil too."

"You are very kind, Nick."

I felt that he was at once ridiculous and respectable.

"I mean to be kind. I don't pretend that it's in my power to do much for you at present; but, by-and-by, things may improve with me."

"You're getting on then, Nick?"

"I hope to get on. However, that's not the question now. What I ask of you is, that you will have nothing to do with that Frenchman—or indeed, with any Frenchman."

"I think you are very much mistaken about M. Riel."

"That may be. But you do as I tell you."

"I am not going to do anything absurd, Nick, to please you or anybody else. M. Riel is a French gentleman who has taken refuge in this country."

"You see he must be bad if they've turned him out of France."

I could not resist laughing, although I was really vexed.

"You don't understand these things, Nick," I said.

"Well, I call it rather cool your talking to me like that."

"M. Riel is one of Mr. Leveridge's friends."

"One of his workmen, you mean."

"And he's the friend of Mr. Grisdale."

"Well, I can't deny that," Nick admitted, rather grudgingly. "And I can't help it, or else I would. But the fact is, Mr. Grisdale isn't very particular about things of that sort. He isn't half particular enough, in fact. He knows all kinds of people. He makes a point, it seems to me, of knowing people. And he'll shake hands with any and everybody, and invite them to tea in Somers-town. I do believe he'd shake hands with a chimney-sweep, without even looking to see that his hands were clean; or being in a hurry to wash his own hands afterwards. It's not surprising, therefore, that he's civil to that Frenchman."

"He's more than civil to him, it seems to me. And I don't think that Catalina objects to M. Riel."

"It's not to be supposed that Catalina cares about him in the least."

"Yet she must see him often enough."

"Well, yes. He's very often at her grandfather's; she can't well avoid seeing him."

"And you really think that she is wholly indifferent on the subject of M. Riel?"

At this moment, I noted that Catalina was engaged in close conversation with M. Riel. He was leaning upon the back of her chair, and was bowing his head to whisper in her ear, as it seemed.

She was dressed in black, with a fall of lace almost like a mantilla, gathered about her neck and shoulders. Her hair was very smooth upon her forehead; she wore jet earrings, and a red rose in her bosom. She looked animated and foreign—yet scarcely, I think, so pretty as usual.

Nick's face flushed. "I should like to wring his neck," he muttered fiercely as he left me.

Presently M. Riel resigned his position by the side of Catalina. Was he coming to me? He had not addressed to me a word all the evening. No, he had been secured by Mr. Grisdale; safely carried off, and immersed forthwith in what was doubtless a political conversation of great interest.

I did not enjoy the evening much. I drew near to Basil. But he was not at all in a communicative humour. He answered in a monosyllabic way, and left at an early hour.

There were other friends of Mr. Leveridge's present. They were artists for the most part—members of the Royal Academy, indeed—elderly, prosperous-looking men, accompanied in some instances by

their wives. I thought them all very dull but they expressed the warmest admiration of Mr. Leveridge and his works, and were evidently very intimate with him. He greeted them with the utmost cordiality, and they interchanged numerous jokes—or what seemed to be jokes—covert allusions, and unintelligible observations, which I found by no means amusing, mainly, perhaps, because I could understand very little of what was said.

"My dear, I must have you sit beside me at supper—on my left hand," said Mr. Leveridge as he led me to the table; and he looked at me in a very significant way, smiling benignly, and with very bright eyes, as he pressed my hand tightly.

I did not know what he meant. Yet I thought I knew, and I shivered. I felt my heart beating violently and irregularly. I knew that I was turning pale. My appetite fled from me straightway. I loathed the sight of the supper-table. I could scarcely be persuaded to lift the pretty pink champagne to my lips.

Mr. Leveridge was obsequious in bidding us good-night. He came all the way downstairs to hand his sister and myself into our cab. He detained my hand; he supported my wrist very needlessly. I was trembling violently.

"My own darling!" he whispered.

And he thrust a ring upon the third finger of my left hand.

DINNERS À LA RUSSE.

IN his Confessions of a Drunkard, Charles Lamb has dwelt with eloquent pathos upon the manner in which, to the morbid imagination, the most innocent of literary allusions may act as so many fatally irresistible seductions to some form or other of vicious excess, and, in his *Biographia Literaria*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge has a passage apropos of much the same perverted association of ideas. "I should," writes Elia, "repel my readers, were I to tell them what tobacco has been to me: the daily service which I have paid, the slavery which I have vowed to it. How, when I have resolved to quit it, it has put in personal claims, and made the demands of a friend upon me. How the reading of it casually in a book—as where Adams takes his whiff in the chimney-corner of some inn in Joseph Andrews, or Piscator, in the *Complete Angler*, breaks his fast upon a morning pipe in that delicate room, Pesca-

toribus Sacrum—has in a moment broken down the resistance of weeks." Coleridge's observations, which need not here be quoted, are rather confined to the encouragement and sanction of immoderate cups, which he detects in the precedents of our older writers. An artificial thirst is, perhaps, apt to be engendered by such lines as those of Keats—

Oh for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cooled a long time in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth.

And it is almost certain, that no glass of Bass's or Allsopp's ale was ever so grateful to the material palate, as the amber home-brewed which we have quaffed in imagination with the same Piscator of whom Charles Lamb writes, and his patient, tractable disciple, when, after having stood with them by the flowery banks of the Lea, watching their floats bobbing in the stream, and seeing the perch deftly landed on the shore, we have repaired in their company to the house of some hospitable friend, and contemplate the limpid beverage as it splashes musically, till a glorious head of sparkling foam is gathered in the long spiral goblets. The River Lea may be seen any day now; but the banks of the Lea are scarcely flowery; the neighbourhood is hardly rural; such finny inhabitants as the stream may contain are barely edible; while as for the hospitable friend whom we may claim in the vicinity, the refreshment which he would offer us would be pretty certain to be something more elaborate than the crust and ale, which, in the days of Izaak Walton, were enough and ample in the eyes both of recipient and donor.

The "preface" to the wine-list of an enterprising firm of universal purveyors informs us that, "among the mechanics of Manchester, claret is in everyday use, while, in London, the artisan now stops at a wine-shop to ask for a glass of sherry or port." After what one heard not so long ago of the habitual fare of Staffordshire colliers, there is nothing to be surprised at in this statement. It may be readily conceded that light wines are better for Manchester mechanics and London artisans, than petroleum whisky and doctored gin. The hygienic aspects of this innovation in popular diet may be passed by now. All that we would say about it is that, if it has to any large extent been adopted, it may significantly remind us of the influences which are at work among those, who

are some degrees above the labouring classes in the social scale. The complete angler and his friend would find that biscuits and sherry had generally taken the place of plain bread and beer as articles of refreshment, deemed suitable for the casual visitor by the friend on whom he might happen to call. In England of late years there has been an amount of infidelity displayed to the national beverage—"that most wholesome and pleasant drink," as Burton in his *Anatomy* calls it, "since the hop that rarefies it hath an especial virtue against melancholy"—which has not been perceptible in anything like the same degree in Scotland and Ireland. From John o' Groat's to the Firth of Forth, from Lough Swilly to Cork, whisky holds its own. It is an article in the popular faith. It has its place on every dinner-table, high or low. Whatever be the reason, sufficient or insufficient, beer is a discrowned deity in England. That innumerable hogsheads of it are annually consumed in England, is perfectly true. But the fact remains that, with those who were once proud of him as the type of their prosperity, and the emblem of their manhood, John Barleycorn is not considered presentable on state occasions; and that, unless a special request to the contrary be made, the well-filled jug with the coronal of beaded bubbles, will be found superseded by the decanter filled with the conventional sherry.

This is but a single instance—accurately typical, however—of a much wider and deeper social change which has gradually accomplished itself in England. What Greece was to ancient Rome, that France has been, and is, to modern Britain. The old Italian playwrights—Plautus, Terence, and the rest of them—borrowed alike plot and dialogue from Hellenic dramatists. There is an identically similar relation between the stages of London and Paris. It is the same with our fashions and our menus, the costumes of our womankind, and the manner and fare of our dinner-parties. As for this last item of social mimicry, that which holds good of every other form of imitation is true of it also. The effect of the copy depends entirely on its degree of closeness to the original. A good dinner, whatever its principle or pattern, is a good thing. In this context the ancient maxim, "Know thyself," must be supplemented by the further exhortation, "Know thy kitchen and thy cook." In the matter of dinners, it may be said our exemplar is not Gallic, but Russian.

But the dinner à la Russe comes to us direct from Paris, just as much of the distinctive criticism of Germany has been presented to us in England under the garb of the French tongue; and it is with the dinner à la Russe that we have now chiefly to do. Well conducted, with no deficiency in any of those accessories which are virtually essentials, this is a mode of entertainment in the highest degree satisfactory. It promotes conversation, it leaves the host at leisure—unoccupied by the carving of joints, unpossessed by any fears lest the guest into whose hands some particular dish has fallen shall fail to do it due justice—to stimulate discourse, and benignantly to eye the festive scene. A modern dinner-table, in those houses where these repasts are managed as they should be, is an extremely pretty sight. There is, perhaps, a tendency to an excess of floral decoration. The ferns and evergreens, which border on either side the stream of plate-glass that runs round the table, may be somewhat over-luxuriant in their growth; the dainty little receptacles in which the single flowers are placed may rest upon a perilously insecure foundation; the importations from the contiguous conservatory, which are enthroned in solid silver centre-pieces, may intercept the view of opposite neighbours; there may be bigoted Conservative convives who would like to see, when the period for the *pièce de résistance* arrives, the substance in its original integrity from which the particular morsels conveyed to them were detached, just as they would like to see their faces reflected in the brilliantly-polished mahogany, when dessert makes its appearance. But the advantages and conveniences of the well-served dinner à la Russe altogether exceed the weight of any objections, which may be urged against it on the score of general principle or personal taste. The simple statement that carving is an art, and that this is an age in which the art of carving is not systematically taught as it was in the cookery schools of Imperial Rome, really ought to be conclusive. Can anything be more horrible to the mind of the well-regulated diner than the spectacle of a woodcock entrusted to the tender mercies of a bashful youth, who, if he had studied the anatomy of that delicious bird, would still be without the presence of mind to display his knowledge; or a near-sighted gentleman hacking, with well-meant but murderous energy, a haunch of venison?

If the dinner à la Russe did nothing more than relieve the lady of the house of the question which a conventional courtesy suggests, and to which the instinct of a kindly appreciation dictates an affirmative answer, "May I assist you?" it would have achieved not a little.

There is a real danger at the present day lest certain hospitable dinner-givers should forget that, before a dinner à la Russe can be successfully attempted, there are definite conditions which must be satisfied. Better, a thousand times, the unpretending banquet, the simple joint, unaccompanied save by "trimmings," hot, succulent, done to a turn, and comfort therewith, than the four courses and a dessert; dishes of elaborate nomenclature, but questionable composition; cold plates and tepid morsels. If *carte blanche* be given to some great metropolitan entrepreneur, it is a different matter. The ordinary resources of the establishment are in such a case multiplied by an unknown power. The tale of "the little dinner at Timmins's" is told over again. The stranger and the alien invade the premises; Sarah and Jane are sent to the right-about; master and mistress cannot call their house their own; and the table groans beneath the weight of plate borrowed for the occasion; while strange waiters hand round unaccustomed dainties and dishes, at the very names of which the customary domestic force of the establishment is lost in bewilderment. This is an expensive, but it is an effective and rational mode of giving the dinner à la Russe, in those families where the normal capacities are not equal to the inevitable strain of such an entertainment. The plan does, indeed, involve a foreign occupation of the Englishman's castle, as complete, in its way, as if a detachment of Prussian Uhlans were billeted beneath his roof; but the result is so far satisfactory that the cooking is undeniable, and the relays of plates are hot. It is, of course, not an exercise of domestic hospitality. There is nothing about such a feast of the homely welcome, which adds so choice a flavour to the plainest viand. The banquet is confessedly artificial and exotic from beginning to end. Neither the host nor hostess would pretend that their friends were tasting of fare produced by the unaided resources of the family kitchen. The dinner is a state ceremonial, accomplished by adventitious agency. The sole merit which it has, or may have, if the

plan here suggested be followed, is that of completeness.

Is it an unwarrantable liberty to seek to impress upon those households who are now addressed, that the dinner à la Russe is an institution that admits of no compromise—that there is no *tertium quid* between the dinner, conducted on the ordinary principles of English home-life, and a dinner such as that just described, if success is to be secured? A dinner of soup, fish, a single entrée, a joint, followed by some variety of game—the dishes in each instance being placed upon the table—is within the reach of many households that are unable to compass the banquet à la Russe, and is a repast to which no English man or woman need hesitate to ask his or her friends to sit down. It may be served, in perfect condition, without any increase of the usual strength of the establishment, and it will be consumed with a relish which its rival entertainment could not provoke. All natures have their peculiar prejudices and idiosyncrasies. It is a social prejudice of most Englishmen to like to see that which they are destined to eat before them.

But the servant who can roast a saddle of mutton to perfection—who can manage the gravy-soup and the turbot, and who can also be relied upon for a couple of made dishes—loses her head if called upon to prepare a dinner, where the sequence of articles in the *ménu* is regulated by notions to which she is a stranger. From the beginning to end, the affair is destined to be a failure. The lady of the house may have given the clearest instructions, as to the mode in which the courses are to make their appearance; the greengrocer from round the corner may have been told, again and again, at what season he is to produce the various wines. It is no good. Confusion and chaos are sure to reign. The *hors-d'œuvre* become mysteriously mixed up with the dessert and the floral decorations; the oblivious waiter and waitress are hopelessly puzzled; the cook cannot, for the life of her, remember the proper sequence of the various dishes. The guests at the table can hear, but too plainly, the sharp discussion between the perplexed domestics on each of these matters. The mistress of the house, at the head of the table, blushes scarlet; a cold, clammy dew starts forth on the forehead of the master, as he discovers that the greengrocer has warmed the sherry and iced the claret; and happy will it be

if the lady of the house is not summoned from her seat, to speak to the cook outside the door. Under these agonising conditions social enjoyment is a bitter mockery, and efforts at careless conversation a hollow pretence. The feverish weariness of the situation communicates itself to the guests. There are awkward pauses, terrible hitches, blank looks, suspicious glances, as plates with atomic helpings on them are passing round. If the son of Pelops had known the fare which his brother's solicitude had provided for him, he could have scarcely eyed the food more askance. Everyone secretly wishes to enquire as to the composition of what is placed before him. The whole business is not a delight but a painful ordeal, for the simple reason that the essential conditions of all satisfactory and social eating are not forthcoming; the plates want warmth, and the atmosphere is without ease.

The dinner "in the Russian fashion" is, as we have said, an adaptation from the French; but it is an adaptation in which, while the shadow is grasped, the substance is missed. We have the name, and nothing but the name. That we should be anxious to profit by the example of our French neighbours is reasonable enough. There is much to learn from them, especially in all that appertains to the art of cooking. Economy, comfort, how to give an appetising flavour to unattractive materials; how to give to simple fare a fascination and a nourishing quality not its own; how, in a word, to make the most of the beasts of the field, the fruits of the earth, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the water, both salt and fresh—these are all of them points in which a close and patient imitation of French ways would do us much good. But the habit of attempting elaborate French dishes, and of serving them up on a system borrowed from France, and impracticable in England unless the appliances of France are forthcoming, is a fashionable superstition and anomaly, of which the sooner we rid ourselves the better.

EARLY WORKERS.

AT JUTE.

A VAST jute-mill lies low, in Stratford; its pointing chimneys, its flat, broad sheds, bound all in together, out of the poverty and squalor, by the covering arms of a grave brick wall. It is kept self-enveloped this way; it is self-gathered, self-contained;

amongst gloomy canals as it is, and Essex marshes, and unoccupied land-pieces, and faint crescents of saddened houses, curving round upon wastes of slosh and ugliness, till they are lost in railway-depôts, as depressing, and as swampy, and as ugly, as themselves. To say that the roads round about the jute-mill are mud-coloured, is only to speak of their very essence and very nature; so are the dwellings mud-coloured; so is the water mud-coloured; so does the air have so much of mud-colour to suck in and be imbued with, it must be a rare thing, surely, to be blessed with the full glory and utility of a sun-warmed sky. Yet, pass through the jute-mill gates, by the kind courtesy of the owners, and everything is changed. Nestling on the neat slate roofs of the engine-sheds and loom-sheds, there are rows of soft gray, and white, and pale pink-tinted pigeons; under the windows of the neat brick pile forming the business-offices, there is a small geranium-set garden; the ground is swept free from litter; the office-windows are brightly polished; the wooden doors leading into the sheds move unimpeded, being well cleared and tended, and neatly garnished with clean-washed sills.

Now, the effect of all this care and method upon the Early Workers—girls—resorting to the mill, must be immense. They number some two hundred, rough little people as they are. They are, many of them, so young—perhaps only ten years old—that they are still under Government educational law as “half-timers.” They belong to the class—Bohemians, Arabs, little seedling-criminals—who would otherwise be lazing, “loafing,” and in various manners finding acquaintance with the gutter, eluding, cunningly and dextrously, the emissaries of due organisation and the board school; and, since it is fated by their poverty that they must work, that they are enabled to work under such favourable circumstances is matter of warm congratulation.

What they do, is to shift. Each little girl is called a shifter; she is one of a band, or “squad,” technically, with some sixteen others who do the shifting to one frame with her. It is no desperate undertaking. To Early Workers at jute, to shift is just to change full jute-reels for empty reels, to keep on changing full jute-reels for empty reels, to have nothing else to do but to change full jute-reels for empty reels, from early Monday morning till—medium hours

—on Saturday afternoons. A jute-reel or “bobbin” twirls round magically three thousand times a minute, just as a cotton bobbin would twirl, or a bobbin for linen, or wool, or silk; the jute-thread or “rove” attached rapidly fills the bobbin; and, the instant it is filled, it has to be shifted up and off, and to have shifted down and on, in its exact place, an empty bobbin that is again to twirl round three thousand times a minute, and to be filled and shifted in equally rapid turn. Small “half-time” fingers have to be drilled into excellent despatch and celerity, to be worth their wage at this. Dulness, sleepiness, stupidity, would soon see their owners shifted themselves—outside the jute-mill door, and mill-life ended. And it must be so. Nothing could be done with stuck eyes and gaping mouths; the children must be swift, and speedy, and sharp, and incessant, just as the machinery they stand amongst is swift, and speedy, and sharp, and incessant, or the one force would not act in with the other force, and the whole affair would be useless. And that the children, in this particular jute-mill, do come up to their requirements in the main, is interestingly manifest the moment the roar and rattle of the machines they shift for is encountered, and the active little shifters themselves are seen.

They are in and about the spinning-frames like a little ragged-headed horde. Each one has a rough bag in front of her (provided by her employers), hung either by a band round her small throat, or from her young waist—the same being most like the dilapidated nose-bag of a little pony; each one has another symbol of her shifting duty, in the shape of a kind of much-battered, half-hoop stick, dangling at her side. A “squad” may be standing, perhaps, in a cluster; having leisure for the shadow of a moment, and taking the time to use those skilled eyes of theirs with double inquisitiveness, since hearing, the other dear occupation, is, by the roar and rattle, under fatal prohibition. Standing thus, suddenly—lowly, yet shrilly—a long whistle floats through the clatter; and—the ragged little horde is gone. Phe-e-e-w! the whistle sounds still; helped by the wild bang, bang, bang, bang of a bobbin against the polished metal of a spinning-frame. The little shifters are spurred on by it, they are momentarily in full discipline, down the stiff avenues of jute-bobbins, having work for their expert fingers, getting through with it; and then—they are

slipping in and out of the rest of the workers into the squad cluster again, their shifting over, and a momentary leisure theirs, till shifting-duty has once more had time to come. It is swift, of the swiftest. To count a couple of score during the operation would be the highest number possible. For all of which as many as ten operations have been effected; each one recollected, each one put in proper order, or the putting could not have been completed, and the shifting would have been in vain. An enumeration of these shall be given. They are, to lift up a thin, flat "eye-board," level with the children's heads, so as to release the "rove," or thread; to change the position of some pear-shaped leaden weights, stooping down to do it; to remove the "rove," now that the lifted "eye-board" has let it be released; to click the stick (after snatching it from where it hangs at the side) along the heads of the bobbins and their holders, knocking up a set of screws; to unhook the "flyers" encompassing the bobbins—enlarged steel-spurs, they might be, or a giant set of inverted letters U; to shift off the laden bobbins, and hold them in the left arm; to shift on the new bobbins, caught up out of their handy place in the hung bag; to replace the "flyers" and give them a spinning touch; to drop down the lifted eye-board back to where it was; to re-pass the "roves," or jute-threads, into the slits upon the eye-board that hold them in their place. A long account in the writing and the reading, but a most short and shot-like execution. The number of bobbins to each child is six, too; that must not be forgotten. That makes six full bobbins, six empty; six flyers taken off, six returned; six weights to one side, six to the reverse; six roves removed, six once more set on. Then each child knows her assigned place; knows, that is, the particular flyer covering the six bobbins she is to shift along the long frame; otherwise a flight of little shifters would be at one spot, like birds swooped down upon a sprinkle of grain, and work could never properly proceed. To make each child prepared, also, for the next whistle that is to set her astir, she has to drop the six full bobbins she has just shifted into a huge open wooden bin, she has to pick out six new empty bobbins from an odd-shaped buffalo-hide old box or pail, always kept standing ready by the frame. And she has but a flash of time for this, the same as she has had but (about) two

flashes of time for her work; and there comes the sound of the gong and whistle again, to beat her to quarters; she is obedient, instantly, and is off with her squad, threading in and out of the other "hands" to reach the frame from which the reveille comes.

A whistle is the wand or throb that sets this young human machinery in motion, it has been said. Yes; and as a consequence there must be somebody or something who whistles, and who shall now have short and simple introduction. She is a girl, too, but verging on to being a woman, and eighteen years old perhaps, and she has so much jute-skill and knowledge about her that she is able to be mistress over twelve spinning-frames, over twelve girls, a little younger than herself, called spinners; over a group of other girls, younger yet, called piecers; over seventeen of the still younger and still rougher little women, who are her squad of shifters. She has a title; it is "spinning-mistress;" she bears its symbol or insignia, her whistle, hung by a fine steel chain about her neck, and a full bobbin of jute-rove. She wears this bobbin strung on a string, and slung round her waist; by which means she can twist it in front, to unwind the rove from it so as to "piece," or she can give it a dextrous jerk away, which lets it hang behind her back, and gives her the air as if she carried a small spirit-keg, and were a coquettish French vivandière. Her duties are onerous, as may be surmised. Having twelve spinning-frames to overlook, each one from sixteen to twenty feet in length, and containing about a hundred bobbins; having also her small army of spinners and piecers, and her unkempt and vivid little shifters in their ever-expectant squad, she is bound to be a very Argus in the matter of watchfulness, and to have her whistle almost always to her lips. Supposing number one of her twelve frames is going perfectly, with its spinner and her accompanying piecer on the alert to join or "piece" the rove as it breaks—so that the three thousand revolutions a minute may have something to revolve, and may not merely pirouette bobbins about for a series of minutes resultlessly—why then, possibly, number two of her twelve frames will have just revolved itself full, and her action must be taken on the moment, prompt. It is, to decide that that particular frame shall be stopped; to whistle, as a sign that the spinner shall stop it; to whistle still on continuously, with the aid

of her Norma-like gong, as a sign to the little shifters to flock down upon her and shift the filled bobbins away. This shifting is the work of the smallest space of time, as has been described—it is wanted, it is doing, it is over. The instant it is completed the spinner is bidden to set the machinery going again; the piecer to be ready to piece the rove; and then, as sharply as may be, the third of the twelve frames requires readjusting; the fourth and fifth follow in smart succession—all the dozen have consecutive supervision, and the spinning-mistress is landed at number one, to begin the round again. The geography of her domain has been well attended to, to enable her to best do this. Her twelve frames are in close juxtaposition—that is, so that she does not hinder the mistresses of the other divisions of frames, by traversing their “lines,” or is not hindered herself; and her little shifters lose no time by running long distances hither and thither, but are kept within a few feet of the spot where they will be required. Other things, also, assist to keep this excellent organisation at its highest power. Boys come down the wide aisle formed by the double row of frames, at stated intervals, to clear out the bins of filled bobbins, and to throw fresh relays of empty bobbins into the ever-emptying buffalo-hide pails. Then the “waste” or fluff—being fibre in collected particles, that will separate itself from the jute-rove as it flies through each spindle, to settle on every surface it can reach, clothing, uncovered heads, all—is ordered to be gathered constantly from all places where it is available for gathering, and to be put into bags hung on to the frames; by which means the air is kept cleared as much as possible, with no more allowed to float about in it than is absolutely not to be avoided. And the discipline with which all this is done—a discipline imperative in factories, and with which visitors must be new pretty well familiar—is another point that cannot fail to have most salutary influence upon new-caught Early Workers. At home, the poor, small people have next to no order, or rule, or method and law, of hours and restriction. The tongue reigns rampant, with the fist to follow, if the tongue secures no control. At play, in that never-failing playground, the street, the poor, small people have even less of order, of rule, of method, and its restriction, as regards their individual choice of coming and going, of doing or omitting, of begin-

ning or coming to an end; and the simple effect of the precision of machinery, of its invariability, of its persistence, of its steady, regular, unerring, and incessant action, must be like the effect of entrance into an utterly foreign world. It may daze, there is that to be admitted; it may bewilder; but when sufficient use has come to enable the mind to sort out one thing from another, and to give each recognition, it is hard to believe that ease, and energy, and regularity, and “go,” can ever be again altogether discarded, with the reign of dilatoriness, and discomfort, and want of method, and disorder, tolerated in their place. Of course, statistics could prove if “mill-hands” in their homes do really possess neatness, accuracy, handiness, in any marked excess over their neighbours devoted to desultory callings; but even if such statistics should show that both sets possess attributes very much the same, it may only mean that at present effect has been hindered by circumstance from following upon cause, and there may still be every hope that, in time, proper harvest will come from proper sowing, and all things be satisfactorily adjusted. At any rate, it is accepted that it is immensely beneficial to character to be forced to get to a place punctually, to do appointed work thoroughly, to do it to time, to nicety, to an ordained code; and it would be absurd to suppose that, because these demands have reached perfection, they are suddenly to change their nature, and to break through and fail. And then, to try to account for all this excellent earnestness, attention, and automatic discharge of duty, commended as existing in spinning-mills, has the idea ever come that it may positively be due in a great measure to the very rattle and clatter of the machinery that seem, at first consciousness, such fatal and distressing drawbacks? It may well be so, however, no matter if the thought is novel or is not. In small communities of workpeople, with spare overlooking, and no particular rules, there can come a running outpour of “chaff,” familiarity, ribaldry, when it reaches the far end. But where incessant—and regulated and necessary—noise prevents the nickname being repeated, or even to arise, gives no chance for the jibe or taunt, annihilates the jest and the counter-charge of repartee, although pleasant things and pleasantries of the best sort are in the same way prevented, the grudge belonging to the nickname is kept away too, the little

spites and retaliations hot words engender have no cause ever to appear, and disorder goes, and loitering goes, and profane language goes, having no spur to it, no incentive, and no invitation. And so it is in this way that it arrives in the end to be good for Early Workers at jute, that they are forced to do their work in silence. They are called by the whistle, and are saved the angry shout. They are quickened by the gong, and hear nothing that at last might open to the oath. Their spinning-mistresses may have the voices of Malibran, Rachel, Lind—what avails? Their spinning-mistresses may have, on the other hand, the tongues of scorpions, the throats that croak, the vocabulary that appals at times, and ever dins—once more, how far is a jot of it availing? Not a human sound can be heard in its integrity, amidst that cannonade of machinery; it is the reign of the piston, lever, valve, plate, cog-wheel, cylinder; and the little Early Worker, like all the world, submits to the monarch in possession, and gets benefit from his indisputable sway.

A word now as to the wages coming to these two hundred little girls in this vast mill, at jute. Those very young shifters, the half-timers—which means that Government enforces their attendance at school once a day, or they could not be admitted into the mill at all—get two shillings and threepence weekly, with their school-fees paid for them and their school-books. They are objects of much kind management and care. In order to give each one of them acquaintance with the subjects taught in schools of mornings, as well as acquaintance with the subjects taught in the afternoons, the girls' mill-work is methodically alternated, those who arrive at six o'clock one day being those who arrive at a quarter-past twelve the next; and, in order to be informed whether this allotted morning or afternoon is really spent within school-precincts as arranged, the schoolmaster sends in to the mill two reports daily, with which the children's names are properly examined and checked. When a little half-time shifter gets more years upon her, and Government can no longer enforce her attendance at school, she rises to the grade of a full-time shifter, and her wages are full, also, and amount to four shillings and sixpence. She is supposed to have acquired so much power of punctuality, too, and so much ability to choose between wrong and right, that she has the privilege of augmenting her four

shillings and sixpence "set," as it is called, by the bounty of sixpence every week extra, if she is always early, and always satisfactorily diligent. Having been a full-time shifter a sufficient period, she can, if a vacancy occurs, rise to be a piecer, when her wages will be seven shillings and sixpence per week, with the augmentation of sixpence bounty, just as before. A step higher than piecer is spinner; when a girl, who may then be sixteen years old, gets "set" weekly earnings of half-a-guinea, with the chance of a better bounty of a shilling. Finally, the highest grade in this one department at jute is spinning-mistress, in which responsible position the set wages are twelve shillings and threepence weekly, with the chance possessed alike by each young woman of making it by bounty as much as five shillings more. It is a rapid ratio of increase this, as far as concerns the additional allowance; and there is a wise reason for it. Piecework is the true system of payment—broadly speaking—for all manner of manual labour done. But piecework payment is impossible in mills, in some of the earliest processes executed by the youngest hands. The small people produce nothing, in an absolute sense, of themselves; they only twist, or turn, or shift, or replace, at the instigation of somebody else. By the time, however, jute-work has reached as high as the spinning-mistress, it has assumed a form where personal character does influence it; to the extent at least, that there can be good rove or bad rove, little rove or abundant rove, in proportion as the mistress is watchful, skilled, and energetic. Yet, as many other things besides individual attention affect the production of the rove—the habitual slowness, for instance, of some of the mistress's forty little underlings, before such slowness has been able to be definitely detected—a set wage is agreed upon as a fair equivalent for time, and then the bounty follows to help that out; the same being less or more, according to the quantity of completed "stuff" made from the rove that leaves each mistress's set of spindles. This may seem a far-away result on which to base calculations. Reflection will show, though, that the number of filled bobbins would never do to reckon from as a substitute. A fraudulent mistress could stop a frame when a layer or two more rove could still be spun; and this, by the inevitable multiplication of the standing army of bobbins (the stoppage of one being the stoppage of all), would amount

very swiftly to a significant sum. Neither, to counteract this, would it do to institute a plan of picking out a bobbin here and there, to measure or weigh the rove upon it. That would be obstructive to the last degree, and in many ways impracticable. There remains, therefore, only that comprehensive and searching system of results that has been adopted; and that this possesses the requisite elements for success is proved by its capacity for development, and the admirable way in which it works.

Now, half-time Early Workers at jute, being little creatures the baby-side of thirteen years old, do not have bad pay, as has been seen, for their early working. Supposing there are three half-time earners in a family, as there well might be, they would not only have their education free, but they would take home between them at a week's end, as much as six shillings and ninepence good money. Not that this is recorded as an argument in favour of the general employment of young children. In these columns there is not likely to be advocacy of the kind. Where facts exist, however, it is of small use thinking their existence can be hidden by passing them by; and, as it is the poverty of many working parents that compels them to add to their stock of food, by sending their little children out to earn, it is just as well to know what the earnings come to, and how much justification therein the working parents have. But, to be back again to less painful thoughts, with regard to the Early Workers at this jute-mill described, the little people have a serious reduction from the pay named. By the Medean and Persic laws of the factory that pays, each child is mulcted of a farthing each week, as a contribution to the local Dispensary—a capital way of insinuating amidst these small children the principle of self-support; of showing them that, as times will be absolutely certain to come when, in the language of the poor themselves, they will be "sick and sore," and will want a haven to lie safe in, so the surest mode to find this haven open and equipped is, to do a certain part towards paying for it from the earliest beginning. It is not the amount, it is the instilling of the fact, that is important. For it is a mean life that makes no effort to wrest itself out of the shackles of poverty, but is content to take one day as that one day's termination, and to give no look be-

yond; and there should be no smile at so much as this being based on the puny contribution of a farthing. It is not the amount, as has been remarked; but, even if it were, a farthing a week, fanciful as it may sound, is a penny a month, a shilling a year; and, as all classes of workers at this mill have to make the same payment, and some seven hundred are employed, that reaches thirty-five pounds yearly, and is a fair and helping sum.

One Early Worker, of the matriculated or full-time sort, diligently plying his task, gave an appealing example of the need of medical aid and the liability even of the young to stand in need of it. He had lost a hand, poor little chap! and there he was with an intelligent hook in the place of it, as nimble as Captain Cuttle, and as serenely content. He was emptying out a sack-load of new bobbins, just come from Scotland, made of Scotch fir; and his hook held the sack's mouth open, whilst he lifted out the bobbins with his hand, occasionally leaving off to chalk up his score upon the mill-wall; and, abridged as his powers must ever be, it was well that everything with him was as pacifying as it was. Happily, there is little chance of accident at the mill, for machinery is closely railed off and guarded as legally required; but if any small girl, who is an Early Worker there, should be a sufferer, it is pleasant to think she will be as well cared for as had been her confrère, with his hook upon his bobbin-sack, and pigeons wheeling about in happy flight above his head.

A DIMINUTIVE DEPENDENCY.

IN the year 1506 a well-furnished fleet of sixteen sail, commissioned to strengthen the dominion of Portugal in Asia and Africa, came upon a group of three islands some fifteen hundred miles west of the Cape, to which, by way of registering his discovery, the Portuguese admiral gave his own name of Tristan d'Acunha. A hundred and thirty-seven years later the islands were explored by the Dutch, an example followed by the French in 1767, but neither were tempted to take possession. The principal island of the group afterwards became a rendezvous for American whalers, and was occupied by them down to 1810, when they appear to have abandoned it; for in 1811 the population

of Tristan d'Acunha, all told, consisted of an American, a half-caste Portuguese, and a native of Minorca. The American, Jonathan Lambert, invested himself with the sovereignty of what had hitherto been No-man's Land by the style and title of Prince of Tristan d'Acunha, and Lord of Nightingale and Inaccessible Islands. By the formal instrument proclaiming the commencement of his reign, the self-made prince gave himself and his heirs the right to give or sell his dominions to whomsoever they thought fit, and bound his subjects to receive all comers upon the principles of hospitality and good-fellowship, and supply them, for due consideration, with anything within the resources of his territories. These were limited enough. The native productions of the three islands were of no marketable value, but Lambert and his two subjects managed to raise fair crops of cabbages, turnips, carrots, parsnips, beet, onions, lettuces, radishes, parsley, and potatoes. They were not so fortunate in the way of live-stock, losing most of their turkeys and all their ducks; but their pigs thrived tolerably, and their goats catered for themselves with good results.

Prince Jonathan's reign was not of long duration. He disappeared in May, 1812, and was never heard of more. Whether he took French leave of his dominions, was drowned in crossing to one of the smaller islands, or was put out of the way by his subjects, is matter for speculation. Those he left behind him suffered much from the depredations of American privateers, and things generally went ill with them; and when, in consequence of Napoleon's imprisonment at St. Helena, the British Government deemed it advisable to despatch a small force from the Cape to take formal possession of Tristan d'Acunha, the Portuguese slipped away, and the new-comers found no one to dispute their right of occupation save Thomas the Minorcan. He was soon hail-fellow with the soldiers, and a constant customer at the canteen. Where he got the money he spent so freely was a mystery. In his drunken moments—and he rarely had sober ones—Thomas talked about hidden treasure, and promised that the man who pleased him most should learn where it lay. He died too suddenly to keep his promise; and although many sought for the golden hoard, nothing was found except an old wooden-bottomed kettle full of rags.

Upon the death of Napoleon, and the withdrawal of the garrison from Tristan d'Acunha, Corporal Glass, an old soldier with a young wife, obtained permission to remain on the island; and that he might start comfortably, his officers gave him a bull, a cow, and a few sheep, and made over to him such of their belongings as they did not care to carry away. Not long afterwards, two sailors belonging to the St. Helena squadron, taken with the ex-corporal's mode of life, determined, when paid off, to lay in a stock of useful articles and join the "governor." In due time they reached England and received their pay, but, unable to resist temptation, the tars went on the spree, and forgot all about Tristan d'Acunha until their pockets were empty. They then set off for the Admiralty to ask "my lords" to give them a free passage to the island. Luckily for the old salts, Admiral Cockburn recognised one of them—Taylor—as a shipmate, and they soon found themselves on board a man-of-war bound for the Cape. Glass received them cordially, and building themselves a house, which they dubbed Bachelors' Hall, the pair joggled on happily together in their strangely-selected home.

In 1824, Mr. Earle, a passenger on board a South American schooner, landed on the island for a day or two's sketching, and being left in the lurch by the treacherous skipper, had to wait six months for a chance of getting away again, and so passed one half-year of his life without seeing a sad look on a human face. Certainly there were not many faces about. Half-a-dozen houses, built of wreck timber, and thatched with grass, sufficed to shelter the entire population. Taylor, the man-of-war's man, was still to the fore at Bachelors' Hall, but his partner had departed, not this life, but the island, and he had found a new messmate in Old Dick, a dapper little Londoner washed ashore from a wreck, who had been waterman, fisherman, seaman, and dragoon. Two more ocean waifs saved from an Indiaman, a young sailor, named White, and a half-caste Portuguese girl from Bombay, had made a match of it, and, with Mr. and Mrs. Glass, made up the tale of adult settlers. The so-called governor was a fine, good-humoured Roxburgh man, who, Scot-like, cherished in his heart the land he had left for ever. Undertaking to convert Earle's cloak into a complete suit, he was such an unconscionable time about the job, that that

gentleman feared he should be reduced to Adamite garb. At last the governor said: "It's no use holding out any longer, I have had your bonnie cloak out several times, and the scissors in my hand; but it's the first tartan that ever came to Tristan d'Acunha, and I cannot find it in my heart to cut it to pieces." He was comforted by being presented with the tartan, on condition that he furnished its owner with a pair of trousers of some sort, and a few days later, Mr. Earle's lower limbs were decorously clad in a pair of inexpressibles with fronts of sail-cloth, and backs of goatskin.

The island ladies did not give the visitor much chance of cultivating an acquaintance; they were too busy in the cook-house, and tending their large families of healthy, robust youngsters. Sometimes they joined the gentlemen round the fire at Government-house, when the evening hours sped swiftly by, as song and yarn went merrily round without the aid of the cheering glass. That was not the only thing debarred them, or that they debarred themselves. Bread they never saw, and, although they owned a fair stock of cattle and sheep, were content to live upon milk and potatoes, with a bit of celery-flavoured goat-flesh, seaweed-flavoured pork, or a little fish by way of a change. They had no difficulty in raising poultry; the difficulty lay in keeping the birds, after they were raised, out of the clutches of the wild descendants of some cats that had taken to bush life; bold, cunning, fierce creatures, so well able to hold their own, that one withstood four stout dogs for nearly an hour ere it yielded them the victory.

When the bishopric of Cape Town was constituted, Tristan d'Acunha was included in the new diocese, and, in 1866, Bishop Gray went there to strengthen the hands of the Rev. W. F. Taylor, who had devoted himself to supplying the spiritual and educational wants of the little community. Glass had died two or three years before, and Peter Green, a native of Rotterdam, wrecked on the island in 1836, filled his place. A few months prior to the bishop's arrival, one-fourth of the inhabitants had left for the United States, reducing the population to seventy-five persons; owning among them two hundred head of cattle, three hundred sheep, a hundred or so pigs, and some five hundred head of poultry. Many of these were also inclined to try their fortune elsewhere, and, upon

the transference of the island in the following year to the bishopric of St. Helena, bringing about the withdrawal of Mr. Taylor to Cape Town, more than half of the people went with their beloved pastor.

Nominally part and parcel of the British Empire, the existence of Tristan d'Acunha was until very lately ignored by the Colonial Office, and its people left to manage their affairs without any regularly-appointed authority. Lord Carnarvon, thinking this condition of things undesirable, bestirred himself in the matter, and, in October, 1875, H.M.S. Diamond was despatched on a mission of enquiry, and to Captain Bosanquet's official report we owe the latest intelligence respecting this odd little dependency.

Distance by no means lends enchantment to the view in the case of Tristan d'Acunha, for its outward aspect is anything but inviting, even to the eyes of land-hungry mariners. The island rises precipitously from the sea in a continuous chain of lava heights, between two and three thousand feet high, furrowed by water-courses and ravines, and clothed with scrub and dwarf pine, while above this rocky surf-beaten barrier frowns a black peak seven thousand feet in height. On the north-western extremity is a fine tract of undulating land sloping to the cliffs, and at the northern end of this tract, hard by the anchorage, is the settlement. The soil here is rich, and a floating belt of kelp seaweed supplies all that is wanting to keep it in good condition; but it cannot be turned to much agricultural account, owing to the cruel winds that sweep across it with such extraordinary violence, that the inhabitants have been compelled to replace their timber dwellings by cottages built of stone blocks four or five feet square, dove-tailed into each other, mortar being unobtainable. Sir W. Thomson says it was curious to see the people building their cottages. They got two or three large spars—salvage from unlucky ships—and, "laying them up against the wall at a low angle, had them carefully greased, and, by a method known to have been used in Assyria, and even in Egypt, they gradually moved on rollers and slid up the blocks to the top of the wall, when they were fixed in their places." Within two miles of the settlement is a sloping grass plain, several thousand acres in extent, serving as grazing ground for some four hundred head

of cattle, and more sheep. Small plots of this tract are fenced off for the cultivation of vegetables, and sheltered spots, formed by depressions in the ground, are planted with fruit trees. Wheat cannot be grown, the island being infested with mice—thanks, probably, to the crusade against the cats having ended in their extermination. Seals and goats, formerly superabundant, are now rare; indeed, the latter have disappeared altogether, although some are still to be caught upon Nightingale Island, which might much more appropriately be called Penguin Island. Covered with tussack grass, forming a dense jungle, Nightingale Island affords anything but easy travelling. Long avenues run between the "tussacks," along which it is impossible to pass for a single yard without crushing penguins' nests hidden under the long grass, or trampling young birds to death, while the old ones, having no fear of man, draw blood from an intruder's legs with their long, sharp beaks. When the Challenger visited the island the penguins occupied from one to eight acres of it. "At certain times perhaps a thousand would come out from the various lanes, and walk down to the sea and squat in it. The moment they were in the water they acted just as if they were fishes. The gray groove in their backs was occasionally seen above the surface, but it was scarcely possible to imagine they were birds; they looked like gray mullets. Having fished for awhile, they returned to their nests by a regular path, which was beaten as flat as a sheep-walk. The whole was carried out by a regular system, the birds going to the sea by one path, and returning by another. Sometimes they would stand and have a talk, then all of a sudden they would stand at attention, and each proceed to its particular nest."

In the old time of fifty years ago, the islanders raised their live stock and vegetables principally for trading purposes; but vessels of any sort so seldom visit the place now, that they have no means of disposing of surplus produce, and are hard put to it to obtain such necessaries as blankets, clothes, and flour, and such luxuries as tea, coffee, and tobacco; so while there is land enough and stock enough for a much larger number of people, the limited population find it difficult to live comfortably, and enjoy nothing like so pleasant a life as did the original settlers. Captain Bosanquet took a census

of the inhabitants on the 12th of October, 1875, when there were on the island fourteen families, consisting of forty-nine males and thirty-one females, of whom seventy-one were native-born. The oldest inhabitants were Thomas Glass, a son of Governor Glass, Mary Green, who came from St. Helena in 1827, and a couple of old widows, the relicts of old man-of-war's men—Maria Cotton's husband having served as a guard over Napoleon, and Sarah Swain's husband being a Trafalgar man, who died but lately at the age of a hundred and three.

The arrival of the Diamond was the signal for a general holiday, and the visitors were charmed by the cleanliness and neat appearance, the quiet and unaffected good manners of their welcomers. There had been an addition to the population the night before, and the little lady and twenty-four other children were baptised by the ship's chaplain; who also had the pleasant task of uniting the only girl of marriageable age to a smart young fellow of seventeen. The bride's father entertained the officers of the Diamond at a wedding-feast, in which the entire community took part, astonishing his guests by the abundance of good things he put on the table, and the excellent fashion in which everything was served.

The captain, on taking counsel with the older members of the community, found them agreed as to the desirability of having an officially-appointed head, if only to prevent the island being made a receptacle for prisoners of war, as happened during the American Civil War; but what they wanted more was a resident clergyman. Among the things that would be especially acceptable they set down bibles, prayer-books, and school-books, blankets, serge for clothing, ploughs, spades, pickaxes, cords, and axles for cart-wheels, blasting-powder, a signal-staff and two ensigns, and one or two whale-boats with material for repairing them. Upon receipt of Captain Bosanquet's report, Lord Carnarvon put matters in train for carrying out that officer's suggestions as to the future government of Tristan d'Acunha; and determined, the Treasury permitting, to spend two hundred pounds in supplying the islanders' needs. In default of any evidence to the contrary, we suppose the minister got the money, and hope the interesting community is now reaping the benefit.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST HER MARRIAGE," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. THE FLIGHT FROM TEMPTATION.

CECIL LANDON'S life at Woolwich had made him no sybarite, and it was not the hard bed and the half-stuffed pillows, at the Stranger's Rest that night, which kept him wakeful, but his own tumultuous thoughts and fears—the battle between his good and his bad angel above his head. Like all men who have placed themselves in a similar position, he sought to defend himself by sophistry. He allowed that he was acting ill, but then he was the victim not of circumstances only but of necessity; for was not love all-powerful, and was not this the first time that he had ever experienced its influence? Ella had fascinated him, and he had married her; but Rose was the only girl whom he had ever really loved.

He arose early, unrefreshed, dissatisfied, and unresolved; but as the clear summer air blew in upon him it seemed to cleanse and purify his mind. To the unaccustomed sense (unless our nature has been wholly spoilt and dissipated) there is something inexpressibly pure in the influence of a country morning. If it has no moral teaching, it is, at least, antagonistic to the baser passions. The song of birds, the murmur of brooks, are the accessories of domestic drama, and very unsympathetic with plots, and strategies, and underhand proceedings.

"Bring me a Bradshaw," said Cecil at breakfast, and though Bradshaw was unknown at the Stranger's Rest, the landlady brought him a local time-table. By that means he discovered that he could start within an hour from Grantham, before the ladies at The Casket were likely to be stirring; and he resolved to fly the place and its temptation. He must call at the cottage, of course, but would do so only to leave some message accounting for his hurried departure. It would not be easy, but it would be certainly less difficult, than proceeding with that structure of hypocrisy which he had yesterday commenced. And what did it matter what was thought of him—nay, the worse the better, so far as Rose was concerned, and it was the thought of her, to do him justice, which was moving him to this good resolve—when he should have turned

his back on Grantham for ever? Thus it is with all men of mere impulse, who are more numerous than the philosophers would have us believe; with them self-interest is not the ruling motive, nor even self-gratification, nor does every straw show which way the wind blows with them. Their actions cannot be calculated upon; they are themselves straws blown about by every sudden gust of passion, or fancy, or good, or bad intent.

The Stranger's Rest did not boast of any wheeled conveyance, but the "Boots" took Cecil's luggage for him in a barrow; they had to make a slight detour on the road to the station in order to call at the cottage, and by the time they arrived there its inmates were astir. These, however, as Cecil honestly hoped, would only consist of the domestics—he felt that to see Rose would be to endanger his good resolves. He did not see Rose, but as he was leaving his message with the servant who answered his summons, Helen appeared at the front door.

"You are up betimes, Mr. Landon," said she, as they shook hands.

"Up, and, I am sorry to say, going," returned Cecil, pointing to the man with the luggage. "On consulting the time-table, I found that unless I went by the first train, I should be late for the business I have in hand in Wellborough to-day. I trust your sister finds herself pretty well this morning, or at least on the high road to recovery."

"Rose has had a pretty good night, thank you; I know that much, though I have not spoken with her this morning, but have given orders that she should not be disturbed."

"Quite right. Pray give her my—my best wishes for her well-doing. I am sorry, indeed, that I should thus be compelled to hurry away, without wishing her good-bye; but necessity compels me to do so."

"You know best where your duty lies," replied Helen, with a twitch of her proud lips.

"I know where my pleasure lies at all events," said Cecil, gallantly; "but unfortunately it must give way in this case."

"I am sorry you are going," continue the young lady, in slow and measured tones; "because I should have liked to evince my gratitude to you, if it were possible, for the great service you have done my sister. But since your pleasur

and your duty are incompatible, you are quite right to——”

“I did not say that,” interrupted Cecil quickly.

“I inferred it from what you did say,” answered she quietly. “Once again I thank you, Mr. Landon, for your care of Rose. By-the-bye, there is a material debt we owe you, if you will kindly tell me what it is”—she coloured, as indeed did he, for it is not pleasant for a young lady to settle money matters, purse in hand, with a young gentleman—“or perhaps, if you will furnish me with your address, which I believe you have omitted to do.”

“It is here,” said Cecil quickly, tearing out a leaf from his pocket-book, on which he had already set down the direction of the friend to whom he had written on the previous night. “The debt is a mere bagatelle, but if you would kindly let me know how Miss Rose progresses——”

“I think there is no fear of her not progressing favourably, Mr. Landon,” interrupted Helen coldly.

“Please sir, there bean’t much time if you be agoing by the yeast vourteen (8.14),” put in the “Boots” respectfully.

There was no option for Cecil but to say farewell; otherwise, he had caught the far-off tones of a voice that thrilled every fibre of his frame, and, at the sound of which, all his prudent resolutions vanished.

“Good-bye, Mr. Landon, I must not make you late.”

Her words were not uncivil, yet her manner plainly showed that she wished to be rid of him. The very way—or so it seemed to him—in which she clasped his hand, her light grip of it, and then the casting of it away, implied, even in its thanks for service done, the same desire. He turned upon his heel; a feeling of irritation weighing with his sense of ill desert, and set out towards the station with rapid strides.

Five minutes back, and he would have been glad to have got away at almost any price, but he had heard Rose Mytton’s voice, and so great was his infatuation, that now he would fain have stopped at almost any risk. He was a wolf, he owned, but no less he raged against the watchdog that had faced him out, and driven him from the fold.

Scarce had the door of the cottage closed behind Cecil’s retreating figure, before Rose, pale and trembling, stood at her sister’s side.

“Who is that to whom you have been

speaking, Helen — and saying ‘good-bye?’”

“Hush, hush—come out of the passage.”

She meant away from that door; for Rose had made as though she would have opened it, and followed Cecil.

“Mr. Landon has gone away upon urgent business. Indeed, indeed, my darling, it is better so.”

She had put her arms about the girl, but Rose shook herself free of them, and confronted her with upbraiding eyes.

“Better, why better? You have sent him away, Helen, you know you have, because of your own base suspicions.”

“He had to go, dear, indeed he had; and called to say ‘Good-bye!’”

“Then why did I not see him? I, whose life he saved, and who owe him so much. How ungrateful he must think me!”

“No, dear, not so. He only thought me unkind. That is not pleasant, but I can bear it. Indeed, it is better thus.”

“That is because you hate him.”

“I do not hate him, Rose. I rather like him; but I love you better than ten thousand Mr. Landons, and therefore I am glad he has gone. He was deceiving us, I am sure of it; there was something in the background.”

“On the contrary,” interrupted Rose, “I never met a man more frank and open.”

“That is his character, no doubt, which makes his reticence about himself and his affairs the more suspicious.”

“You praised him yourself, Helen, for being so reticent.”

“With respect to his address I did, because at that time I thought the reason he gave for it the true one. I do not think so now. It is quite possible, remember, for a man to be kind and gentle with a young lady like yourself, and to be as brave as a lion, and yet to be without good principles. As to his going away so suddenly, without rhyme or reason, I may say of it that nothing became him during his stay at Grantham so much as his leaving it. Nothing could possibly have happened—because no information could have reached him here—to cause him to change his plans, and I therefore ascribe his departure to his good feeling. He felt he might place himself—I don’t say he has already done so—in a false position, if he remained longer.”

“He has placed me in no false position, at all events,” returned Rose indignantly. “He has not said a word that a gentleman

should not say, or that you might not have listened to yourself."

"I am glad to hear it," said Helen quietly; "the least said the soonest mended. Come, don't let our first quarrel, darling, be on account of a man upon whom neither you nor I ever set eyes before yesterday. It is a very short acquaintance, surely, on which to build——"

"I have built nothing, Helen," interrupted the other quickly. "But there are times—short enough in duration—in which half a lifetime appears to be comprised. I have met this man but once, it is true; but under circumstances that showed his true nature, his generosity, his pity, his delicacy of feeling; and then came the greatest peril that I have yet encountered, and, by his good sense and courage he preserved my life. Is it surprising, then, that I think his being dismissed in this way discourteous and ungrateful; that to think that—that—here she burst into tears—"I shall never see him more is painful and distressing to me?"

"Again, I say, dear Rose," replied Helen tenderly, yet with the same firmness as before, "that I did not dismiss him. He could have stayed had he pleased, and, if he pleases, he may come back."

"Come back?" echoed Rose eagerly. "Did he speak of coming back?"

Helen shook her head.

"No; how could he," continued Rose, "when you almost turned him out of doors?"

Helen answered nothing, having already twice refuted that same charge.

"Don't let us talk about him, Helen, any more; when I hear you do so, it seems difficult to love you as I ought to do. If he does not return——?"

"He will not return," put in Helen quietly.

"That is your opinion. I say if he does not, pray mention him no further; if he does, you must allow that I have been right so far, and possibly may be a better judge of Mr. Landon than yourself."

Her speech implied that if he did come back she should take her own way with him, in spite of her sister; but Helen made no remonstrance, feeling sure, perhaps, in her own mind that Cecil would not return. She simply stooped beside the chair into which Rose had cast herself, and kissed her sister's cheek; and Rose looked up and returned the kiss. The ratification of peace between them was thus signed and sealed.

That very day, two hundred miles or so from Grantham, a conversation, as we know, was held between two other women with respect to this same man, the one accusing, the other defending, him; only, in this case, the accuser was she who loved him best, and bore his name. It was surely no little thing in any man to have inspired such defenders! When I think of such men, and of the love that is lavished, and, as it seems, wasted on them, I am reminded of those lines of the French poet, in which he hazards the enquiry, Whether genius be not itself a virtue in the eyes of Heaven? It is not with genius, indeed, that we have to do in this case. Cecil Landon had no claims to that distinction; but the power of pleasing—of personal attraction—which he did possess, though less rare than genius, is almost as magical in its way.

If the reader shall be presently tempted to say, "This Landon is worthless," let him pause to consider the matter, or, at least, to add in mitigation, "and yet how two pure women loved him!" Nothing is more common than to entertain respect where love and even liking refuse to keep company with that sentiment. Some men, and even women, wear their virtues so stiffly and unbecomingly that they repel rather than attract; but the reverse of this, which is at least equally common, namely, that the love and liking, and of the Good, attach themselves to those for whom there can be no respect, is a problem worthy of some attention.

CHAPTER XXXIX. A CHANCE OPINION.

CECIL LANDON had escaped from Grantham as a fowler out of the snare of the bird, but he still hankered after the bird. He had heard her song that morning though he had not seen her, and, unconscious siren that she was, it had once more fascinated him. He had escaped, but his safety gave him no contentment, and he almost regretted that he had not suffered himself to be taken captive. "Our thoughts are free," we are told, and in one sense they too often are so, but we are not all masters of our thoughts; and Cecil had no more control over his own, than over the iron steed that was whirling him to Middleton. When he arrived there, however, and was waiting for the train that was to carry him to his destination, he so far came to himself as to send that telegram to his wife, of which we have heard, and also one to the manager at

Wellborough, to announce his coming on that day. He did not know of course that the latter was at that moment sending word to Ella, that he had not arrived. As it happened, too, when he did arrive, the manager had been summoned elsewhere, and he sent those "full particulars by post"—as his telegram had promised, but which were by no means full—without having seen him. His deception thereby became, as we have seen, much complicated; though, as it chanced when the time came for explanation, graver matters prevented Ella from demanding it.

He arrived at his journey's end in due course, and transacted business at the office; and the duties that were so uncongenial to him were, for the first time, positively welcome; for while engaged in them he forgot to think of Rose Mytton, and the fever of his mind was for the time allayed. He did not encourage it; but never having been accustomed to the least mental discipline, the subject recurred to him during every interval of leisure. He had a private sitting-room at the hotel, but solitude had become hateful to him; so, after a dinner at which he could not eat, but drank freely, and notwithstanding that promiscuous acquaintances were in general by no means welcome with him, he sought the smoking-room of the hotel for company. This apartment was tenanted by only one individual, who, when he entered it, was reading a London newspaper. He did not put it aside, but dropped it on his knees, as though ready either for conversation or silence. He was a short, stout, intelligent-looking man of respectable appearance, and looked like a country lawyer, as, indeed, he was.

"Good evening, sir," said he to Cecil; "bad accident that at Pullham Junction yesterday, and might have been very bad."

"Yes, indeed," returned Cecil.

He had no particular reason for concealing that he had been a passenger by the unlucky train, but he did not say so; the unwonted habit of deception was perhaps gaining upon him.

"These newspaper accounts of accidents always amuse me," continued the stranger. "If a bit of romance can be squeezed into them, one is sure to get it."

"I have not read the account."

"Ah, then, I'll read this bit to you," and the stranger read, in a very unromantic tone, that episode of the young husband and wife saved by leaping from the rail-

way carriage, which had so interested Ella and Gracie.

"Now, that's what I call a telling bit," observed the stranger, laughing. "In all probability the event never occurred, and if it did, you may depend upon it they were not husband and wife at all. My experience of the married state—but, then, perhaps you're not a bachelor, and yet you look too young to be a Benedick?"

Cecil inclined his head with a smile which might have meant either that he was married, or was not; and his companion chose to take it in the latter sense.

"Well, I say that there are very few husbands, in my opinion, who would jump out of a railway carriage, when in motion, with their wives, though some of them might do so to get quit of them."

"That is very true," said Cecil.

Perhaps he was wishing to himself that the jumping out of a train was a legal dissolution of the marriage-tie.

"More histories are told in the papers pointing that way than the other, at all events," continued the stranger, with a malicious chuckle. "Just listen to to-day's doings in the Divorce Court, for example."

"I have read them," answered Cecil, coldly.

It was becoming clear to him that this man was a bore—a bore of the worst type—a creature that will read the newspaper aloud. He had not seen it that day himself, but when one is dealing with savages, artifice is held to be allowable.

"You saw that case, in the police-court yesterday, of course, where the man was acquitted of bigamy."

"I am not sure," said Cecil, with an effort to suppress a groan. "I generally do read the police cases."

"Oh; but this was a most remarkable one. Both the gentleman and the lady appear to have been very sagacious, and had a shrewd conviction, before marriage, that they should get tired of one another afterwards, since they married under false colours—at least, the man's name was a false one. Their misgivings turned out to be well-founded; for the gentleman, at least, soon got tired of his bargain and married somebody else. Under these circumstances—though she did not want him herself one bit—it was only what might have been expected, that his first wife gave him in charge for marrying Number Two, he well knowing that his lawful spouse was yet alive. In this, however, she must have been carried away by her

feelings, for she would certainly not have moved in the matter had she taken sound legal advice. She had, of course, not a leg to stand upon; her supposed husband was acquitted of the bigamy, and wife Number Two was declared to be wife Number One."

"I do not quite understand you," said Cecil, slowly. "I am not learned in legal matters. Why was the man acquitted?"

"Because the first marriage was not worth a rush. The parties adopted the false name to deceive the public, which, of course, made void their union. The first wife had no standing in the eyes of the law whatever."

"But suppose the wife had married under a false name, instead of the husband, would not that have made a difference?"

"Not a scintilla. The marriage would have been void in that case just as much as in the other—I am afraid your cigar is a little strong?"

Cecil had turned deadly pale; the room seemed to spin round with him, and a cold perspiration bedewed his brow. It was no wonder—to look at him—that his companion should have concluded him to be unaccustomed to tobacco, or to be suffering from the effects of a too-powerful "weed."

"I'll just put the window open an inch or two," continued the stranger, good-naturedly. "There, you're better now, arn't you?"

"Thank you, yes; I am much better. It is not the smoke, but a little faintness to which I am occasionally subject. You were talking of some divorce case, were you not, when I felt the attack coming on?"

"Well, it was scarcely that, for the matter only came before the police-court, the parties being in very humble life—a costermonger and his wife; but the legal point was rather curious. You may read it in extenso in yesterday's Telegraph. There's a nice case too about the beer license—Hullo; John, is it time?"

Here the waiter came to say the omnibus was coming round that was to take the stranger to the mail-train. He rose from his chair at once, and began to button his coat.

"The fact is I have got a parallel case myself, and this very week—not a hundred miles from here—you'll see it in the Well-borough News, and I shall take the same exception. It will be new to the county justices. The point is, 'Was it beer?'

My defence will be—Oh! the 'bus? Very good. Good morning, sir."

"Who is that gentleman?" enquired Cecil of the waiter, as he cleared away his late customer's toddy apparatus.

"That gentleman, sir? A very well-known gentleman, indeed—Mr. Everett, the lawyer, of Middleton. They call him 'Ever right' in this part of the country, because he always gets the justices into the wrong box."

"Is he a barrister or an attorney?"

"He's a lawyer, sir. 'Old six-and-eight' they call him at the Blue Bells; but that's because he's a good friend to the Heagle."

"Just so; if you can get me yesterday's Telegraph and bring it to my sitting-room, I'll give you a shilling for it."

Five minutes afterwards Cecil sat alone in his own apartment, turning over the stale newspaper's ruffled leaves. His face was no longer pale, but wore a hectic flush; his fingers trembled as they performed their task; and his eyes were keen and eager. He looked like a man in a fever, and, in fact, was so; but he felt like one who, after sharp grievous pain, imagines himself to be convalescent. The lawyer had spoken truth as respected the case of bigamy, in every particular; he had only left out the record of the husband's shamelessness and the first wife's passionate upbraiding, which were duly descanted upon by the reporter; the law was expounded by the magistrate in a few pithy sentences as clear as daylight, and the charge dismissed accordingly.

What followed, however, from this incident of the police-court, was to Cecil Landon of immeasurable importance.

It was evident that Ella's deception at the time of their marriage had invalidated it in the eye of the law; she was not his wife at all, and he himself was a free man.

There was no reason—that a lawyer could urge, at least—why he should not return to Grantham the next morning and offer himself as a lawful husband to Rose Mytton. To this conclusion his mind leaped forward at a spring, but presently subsided into other considerations, at least as grave if not quite so attractive. Their cases might be parallel, in a legal point of view, but Cecil was not like the defendant of the police-sheet, who was described as laughing in the face of the woman he had ruined and abandoned.

The idea of such a desertion filled him

with remorse and shame, though it did not shut the brighter prospect out; and if this was the case at the first flush—if he could look such a project as he was meditating in the face, and find it already attractive, though with drawbacks—it was but too probable that time would dull his scruples on the one hand, and sharpen his desires on the other. From Ella he was far away, and separated from her much more than by mere distance—by a sense of coldness and dissatisfaction; to Rose he was comparatively near, could be present with her whenever he chose, and was attracted towards her by many a magnet, to none of which, it is true, his heart ought to have responded, but to which it turned as a needle to the pole. Amid the tumult of his thoughts, the singularity of the fact that he had never entertained a doubt about the legality of his marriage before now struck him forcibly; but the true explanation of it—namely, that the wish, which is the father of the thought, to find it illegal had not before crossed his mind—did not occur to him. He felt rather that he had been wanting in conscientiousness to have ignored the circumstance so long. Ella's motive for deceiving him had nothing, he allowed, to do with their union itself; but she had deceived him for all that, and, also, set the law at defiance. He might, of course, offer her reparation—and make it—by a second and lawful marriage. But did he owe her reparation? He had not deceived her, but she him. On the other hand, if he did not make it, and, above all, if he married Rose, he would be effecting nothing less than Ella's ruin. "Dog, Coward, Cheat," were some of the flowers of speech with which the first wife in the police-court had saluted her faithless spouse, and Cecil owned to himself that, if he should act thus towards the woman who unquestionably believed herself to be, in the sight of Heaven, his lawful wife, he should justly deserve every one of these epithets, even though she might scorn to use them.

Then he thought of how she loved him, and he shuddered. He did not dare to say to himself, that the wrong she had done him could justify so dire a punishment. To do him justice, he had, indeed, no notion of punishing her. The very thoughts he entertained—independent of

their accomplishment—transferred all wrong to his own shoulders, and made him the offending party. Still he did entertain them, and, from that moment, alas, entertained little else. His mind, however, dwelt little on the legal point, notwithstanding its importance. Whatever he had set himself hitherto in earnest to do, whether in his work at the Military Academy, or in his present commercial calling, Cecil Landon had done well; and it is a peculiarity of men who know their own business thoroughly to suppose others do the like, and to respect their opinion accordingly. Moreover, in affairs that were outside of his own, Cecil, like most men of his stamp, had never taken much interest. The law in particular had been a sealed book to him, and Mr. Everett's exposition of it, backed, as it was, by the London magistrate's decision, was to his own mind final and conclusive.

His reflections, therefore, upon the astonishing revelation which had thus, by the merest accident, been made to him, were confined solely to sentiment on the one hand, and desire on the other—his pity for Ella and his passion for Rose. They occupied him for hours as he sat alone in the comfortless inn-parlour, and afterwards as he lay upon his sleepless pillow; but he arrived at no decision. All he resolved upon was procrastination. Fortunate it was for him that he had already despatched his note to Ella; its composition had been difficult even at the time he had written it; but now, it would have been well-nigh impossible. How could he have written to her with such traitorous thoughts agitating his mind?

It was bad enough to think of her in connection with them. But to write to her, to speak with her, to take her hand—no! To that he felt his powers of hypocrisy, notwithstanding their late vigorous growth, would be wholly unequal. He must break with Rose, before he could again meet Ella. The breaking with Ella was a thought made terrible, not by regret, indeed, but by the keenest pangs of remorse and shame; but the breaking with Rose was impossible. And the miserable, passionate creature thought he could meet Rose again without—at all events for the present—breaking with Ella.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER XIII. YES OR NO?

WHAT was I to do? I must own that I was fairly frightened. The cab moved off, leaving Mr. Leveridge standing alone upon the kerbstone, waving adieux to me. I can recollect, even now, how I felt struck anew by the grotesqueness of his figure, the extravagant uncomeliness of his face. He looked like an incarnate caricature. I should have laughed at any other time.

I could not speak. I leant back in the cab, half-closing my eyes, for my head ached badly from nervous excitement and fatigue; from the heat of the studio, with its glare of gas and smell of varnish; and perhaps from my folly in emptying that unaccustomed glass of champagne. Fortunately, Miss Leveridge seemed in no mood for conversation. She, too, was very tired, pale, and worn. She sank back in her corner of the vehicle, and presently she seemed to be sleeping fitfully, out of sheer exhaustion, jerked and jolted, now and then, into very trying positions by the uneasy method of our transit. Was she in her brother's confidence? Did she know of the advance he had made that night in his wooing of me? Had she seen the ring he had given me?

Perhaps not. I started when I found the flames of the street-lamps flashing upon it, wakening the jewels into brilliancy. It was a half-hoop of really superb diamonds. I was convinced their value was very great. I covered my left hand with my right. I wished to avoid seeing

the ring, and I did not want anybody else to see it—for the present, at any rate.

I wanted time to think, and I wanted power to think. I was too disturbed and confused for thought, just then. Nevertheless, it was very necessary that I should reflect upon what had happened, consider my present condition, and decide what should be my course in future.

Safely arrived in Powis-place, Miss Leveridge kissed me, and said good-night to me with unusual ceremony, and with a tinge of fervour in her manner that was also new. She was agitated and seemed very anxious. Something, I think, she wanted to say to me, but the words did not come at the right moment, and I was resolute not to wait for them. I was eager to escape, to lock myself in my chamber, and fling myself upon my bed. She knew, or she suspected, what had happened.

It was a lovely ring; that was very certain. For a long time I could do nothing but gaze at and admire it, turning it this way and that, holding my hand now near to me, now outstretched, studying the pretty streaks of sparkling light, which radiated from the manifold facets of the precious stones. A very beautiful ring; but what did it signify? Marriage with Mr. Leveridge? I trembled at the thought of such a thing. It shocked and scared me. Could I become his wife? I felt that I could not possibly. And yet—

It was not new to me, this idea of marriage with Mr. Leveridge. I had often discussed it with myself. I had talked about it, half-laughingly, with Basil. But it always seemed such a visionary thing—a bare possibility, amusing to consider, but which could scarcely become a cer-

tainty. It had been a sort of remote ghost—a thin, transparent apparition, that was not in truth very alarming—but now it had acquired very distinct form and substance and force, and it had approached near enough to touch me. It set me trembling, and really terrified me.

Of course I could not affect to misunderstand Mr. Leveridge. He had scarcely uttered a word concerning his suit; but his manner was sufficiently explicit, and his ring was really eloquent on his behalf. A queen might have worn such a ring. I had, I own, a woman's admiration for jewellery. How many would be willing, and even eager, to say yes to a suitor who could tender such rings as mine? For it was mine for the moment, at any rate—even though I returned it at the earliest opportunity. If I retained it, without doubt I allowed it to be understood that I had accepted Mr. Leveridge's offer—that I pledged myself to become his wife.

Perhaps I need hardly say that it is with shame I make this confession. But I have resolved that my narration shall possess the merit of frankness, even though I thereby make the fuller disclosure of my own demerits. I am speaking of what is past; and usually I notice people are inclined to candour about their bygone errors, as though simple lapse of time provided a sufficient excuse, however unconscious or disingenuous they may be as to their misdeeds of the present.

The ring made me hesitate—not merely because of its great value, or its exceeding beauty, but because it was emblematical of so much. Without that practical, visible, palpable bait I should hardly have been tempted. I do believe that I should straightway have declined Mr. Leveridge's offer, had it been plainly told in so many words, and unaccompanied by the ring. This may seem hard, and gross, and sordid. I well know the accusations that may be brought against me on the strength of my self-accusation. But the ring appealed to my imagination. It conjured up visions, it drew pictures for me.

I was so poor—we were so poor, let me rather say. For I did not think only of myself whenever I longed to possess money, as, indeed, I did very frequently—the poor are much beset with such longings, and hopings, and dreamings—it was not only for myself that I desired it; I thought of the help I could be to Nick and Basil. It would have been so delightful to me to assist them—to lift them up

from penury to prosperity. There lurks, perhaps, in the bosom of every woman an ambition to be a Lady Bountiful—to patronise and benefit the less fortunate—and to figure in the light of a guardian angel to the ill-starred creature Man. I admit that I was often occupied with such aspirations and sentiments.

It was agreed on all hands that Mr. Leveridge was rich; as his wife, I should share his wealth. At least, he would permit me to act as his almoner—to distribute his charities, and confer beneficences on his account. He was generous, he would be most indulgent; that he loved me I could not doubt. I should be "an old man's darling," with a sort of prescriptive right to be capricious, lavish—to do this or that odd, kind, generous thing unquestioned and uncontrolled. I felt that I could play such a part as that without much difficulty—that it was, indeed, rather suited to me. But this was the bright side of the question. On the other side stood Mr. Leveridge himself, in the character of my husband. He never struck me as so unattractive, ungainly, ugly, and old, as when I viewed him in that light.

What should I do, then? What should I say—Yes or No? Should I keep the ring, or should I give it back to him? It was really imperative upon me to decide, and quickly.

But I could not decide. In spite of my shiverings and burnings, my aching head and perplexing thoughts, I fell asleep at last with the ring upon my finger. I had forgotten to take it off.

I passed a wretched, restless night. I was troubled by horrible dreams, in which, strange, perhaps, to say, Mr. Leveridge played no part. But I had visions of myself, and of Nick and Basil, in extraordinary situations of peril and affliction, and, oddly enough, there always appeared as a bystander, observing our calamities, but in no way exerting himself to lighten them, the pale face and the slight, graceful figure of M. Riel.

I had gone to sleep undecided as to what I should do; when I rose in the morning I was still undecided.

"If I marry Mr. Leveridge, what will M. Riel think of me?" I asked myself as I looked in the glass. I saw and felt that my question had set my cheeks burning. What did it matter what M. Riel might think of me?

I locked up the ring in my dressing-

case. I would not wear it. Then I be-
thought me that, if I were to give it back
to Mr. Leveridge, it would be well for me
to have it easily within reach—it would be
inconvenient if I had to keep him waiting
while I went to fetch it. Indeed, it would
affect with absurdity a scene that could
not but be trying, and was in truth serious
enough both to him and to me. So I took
the ring from my dressing-case again. But
I perceived the danger of keeping so valu-
able a thing in my pocket. I might whisk
out my handkerchief and lose the ring un-
wittingly. I replaced it where Mr. Leve-
ridge had placed it. My finger had felt
rather bare in its absence.

Miss Leveridge usually breakfasted in
her bed-room, but she had made an effort
on that morning, which for her must have
been considerable; she had risen early, and
I found her presiding at the breakfast-
table. Poor thing! she had made sacri-
fices to what she conceived to be her duty.
She rose from her chair as I entered the
room. She was as white as a ghost, and
seemed trembling in every limb.

"My dear," she murmured faintly and
helplessly, "I ought to say something, I
know, but I can't—I can't." She grasped
both my hands in a nerveless, agitated
way; then she fell upon and kissed me, or
made-believe to kiss me. I can recollect
the odd sensation of her very cold nose
pressing against my hot cheeks.

"Try and think that I have said all that
I ought to say, my dear."

"Please say nothing, Miss Leveridge.
That's the best way, I think. You know
the proverb tells us, that the least said, the
soonest mended."

I felt myself a fool as I said this, and I
was conscious of a dreadful, school-girlish,
hysterical, idiotic giggle. My shame at
my own folly does not date from to-day.

"Ah, my dear, but dear Dick's happi-
ness is at stake. Can you wonder that I
am bewildered? Poor Dick has been so
much to me for so long a time. You will
make him so happy. Say that you will."

"It is my turn to own, Miss Leve-
ridge, that I don't know what to say,"
I answered.

"I am sure that you will make him
happy. Forgive me if I have ever feared
otherwise—if I have ever in that way done
you injustice. My dear, he loves you so
much—and he loved your poor mother
before you. He would have married her
if she had consented, and now he will, of
course, be reproached for marrying you,

seeing that he's so much older—old enough,
as people say, to be your father. But it
isn't for me, of course, to be telling you
such things. Forgive me, my dear. I was
never very wise at the best of times, and
you know what a poor creature I am in
point of health. But, indeed, I have Dick's
happiness very much at heart."

"Please don't say any more, Miss Leve-
ridge." But she would go on.

"I know he's not handsome. He never
was. He was always considered odd and
plain-looking, even by his own family.
But you don't know—you can't know
—how good, and kind, and worthy,
and excellent he really is. He was the
best of sons, and he's been the best of
brothers, as I can testify. Nothing could
be kinder, or more generous, or more deli-
cate, or more considerate than his conduct
to me. What I should have done without
him, Heaven only knows. My dear, you'll
find him one of the tenderest and most
devoted of husbands. And he is really
very well off is Dick. He's made a great
deal of money by his paintings. I dis-
approve of them, but they certainly sell
very well."

"Will you pour out the tea, please,
Miss Leveridge," I interposed, "I do so
want my breakfast."

I could think of no other way of stop-
ping her distressing garrulity.

CHAPTER XIV. ENGAGED.

I SAW nothing of Mr. Leveridge all that
day. I was thankful to him for his ab-
sence. I had dreaded his coming to claim
me as his prize, or to gloat and chuckle
over me as his victim. That he forbore
to do this seemed to me generous under
the circumstances. It was not flattering
to him as a lover, or complimentary to his
suit; but I liked him the better for his
apparent avoidance of me.

I had not yet determined what I should
do, what leave undone. It appeared that
I was engaged to be married, without any
distinct appeal having been made to me
for my consent to that arrangement. It
was as though I had really no voice or
interest in the matter. I had spoken no
word importing acceptance of Mr. Leve-
ridge's hand. Nor could it be that, by
glances or smiles, I had signified approval
of his addresses. For really I had not
done so, even in thought. Mr. Leveridge
had simply misconstrued my bearing and
the state of my feelings towards him.
How was I to undeceive him? Or should

I reconcile myself to his view of the position, and leave him deceived?

I did nothing. I decided in Macbeth fashion that, whatever might happen, should happen without my stir. Or rather, I came to no decision at all. My intellects were too disordered, my nervous system was in too feeble and vacillating a condition. I felt that, at sometime or other, I must make a stand. I must brace myself, more or less resolutely, and try and regain control over my own fortunes. But the time had not arrived, or I was unequal for the present to the task.

I sat in an easy-chair with my hands before me. I locked myself in my room. I was occupied with thinking, thinking, thinking—but in a confused and purposeless way. I had no clear view of my position. A sensation of numbness seemed to affect me, body and mind. I was incapable of thought or deed of an earnest, unflinching sort. I was, or deemed myself, almost in a somnambule state; nor could I, although I tried, escape from the feeling of dreaminess, that appeared to envelope me like a cloud. All the while I despised myself for my weakness and my irresolution, just as I should have despised anyone else similarly placed, chargeable with like infirm conduct. And despising myself, I was lured on to hate all the world about me. In truth, I was most miserable.

And yet, when Mr. Leveridge presented himself, I was tempted to laugh both at and with him. He had dressed himself with unwonted care. He wore a flower in his button-hole; he carried a little bouquet of blush roses, which he proffered me with much old-fashioned courtesy. His white hair was glossy with pomatum; his handkerchief was highly scented with bergamot. And then his white hat with a very curly rim was smooth and lustrous as satin; his highly-polished boots were undimmed by a speck of dust—he was, I think, proud of his feet, which were really of small size, and of good shape. He looked completely a lively old bachelor, assuming the airs of a bridegroom.

He advanced with a light, tripping step. His eyes were bright with happiness. Clearly he was untroubled by the slightest suspicion. He was fully confident that he saw in me his future wife. If I had said "Yes" to him a thousand times, he could not have been more satisfied as to my acceptance of his suit.

"My dear," he said in a low voice, "you have made an old man very happy."

I shrank back, for I feared he was about to kiss me. He was content, however, to possess himself of my hand, to raise it tenderly, and press it against his lips.

For my part, I was trembling violently. I could not utter a word.

"You are pale, my Doris," he said, "you look tired and ill, my poor darling. Well, well, it is not surprising, perhaps—you need peace and rest. We must take care of you. I must not have my pretty one suffer. She has given me a real right now to tend and protect her. It shall be my duty and my delight to ward off all trouble from her. She has given her happiness into my keeping—I must show myself worthy of the trust. And indeed, my poor little one, I will do all I can, all man may, to make you happy, and to convince you of my devotion and of my gratitude. For I owe you much—very much—my dear Doris. Does my talking distress you? Is the sound of my voice wearisome to you?"

I had moved uneasily in my chair; I confessed that my head ached badly.

He rose to look for my smelling-salts.

"Where is my sister?" he asked.

Miss Leveridge had been in the room when he entered; but she had departed with rather odious alacrity, demonstrating, as people will in like case, with needless force her consciousness that a third person was an objectionable presence. I particularly disliked being regarded with Mr. Leveridge as an ordinary young, loving, and engaged couple. I had nothing to say to him that his sister was not fully welcome to hear. Indeed, for the moment, it seemed that I had nothing to say to him of any kind whatever.

"Are you really ill, Doris? Shall I send for my sister, to come to your help?" he enquired with really touching solicitude.

"No, thank you; I need not trouble Miss Leveridge. I am better now."

I fear he understood me to express a preference for being alone with him; but I could not help it. He drew his chair nearer to mine; but still there was space left between us.

"My dear, I'm not a young man," he said, presently, "as you do not need to be told; and yet I am not so very old either. I may reasonably count upon some years of life remaining to me. Let me say that they shall be all devoted to your service. And my heart is still young, Doris. For hearts don't grow old quite so rapidly as heads do. Not but what I'll own," he said,

with an odd air of self-accusation, "that my heart has seen some service. I shouldn't be telling tales of myself, perhaps; but as a lad I was susceptible and sensitive, apt to melt, and tremble, and glow, and thrill in the presence of beauty. I have always had a lover's heart, although I was never blessed with a lover's looks. Yet don't think that I've been for ever distributing my affections right and left of me broadcast, as though they were mere halfpence. I have been all my life faithful to one ideal. I found it years ago in your mother, Doris; but I found it only to lose it. I was deprived of it, or, rather, it was not really for me in those times, and now I've found it again, not to lose it, but to hold fast to it; to love and to cherish it unto my life's end. Amen."

He waited, as though he expected me to say something; but I was not capable of speech. What, indeed, could I have said to him?

"I didn't think, of course, when I loved her—and I loved her deeply and truly, and with my whole heart—that I should ever be loving a child of hers as I love you, Doris. For I love you, my dear—well, well—more than I can tell you. There are things not to be set forth, or expressed, or made intelligible by words, and love's one of them, and especially my love for you, dear one. And mind, it isn't merely because you are your mother's child that I love you, although that would be a very good reason. If you were not her child, I should love you just the same. You are like her, and yet you are unlike her, too. I love you because you are like her—all the same I love you even more, I think, because you are unlike her. That may not seem a compliment to her; but it's true. You've often a great look of her. I am often amazed at the likeness. Then there comes an expression upon your face I never saw upon hers. You've a stronger will, I think; your character is more defined and decided."

He was wrong, it was clear. My mother had been able to dismiss his suit straightway. It was true, however, that she loved someone else—my father.

"Of course," he went on, rather ruefully, "I cannot hope to be loved now as once I hoped. A young man always thinks he richly deserves to be loved—that love should be his almost as a matter of right, because of his surpassing merits and special worth. I dare not look for love of that kind. I shall try to earn your

esteem; I shall be content if I can win from you the affection of a daughter towards a father. For you will be to me at once wife and daughter. I do think you may be happy, Doris; I do think so, and I hope and pray so. I know that some sacrifice is asked of you; I know and feel that full well. A girl like you needs must entertain certain notions of romance and sentiment—not in the least to be despised because of their romance and sentiment—as to the bestowal of her hand and her affections. That you deserve a younger and a handsomer husband, I will admit, frankly and heartily; but if you can make this sacrifice, Doris, I venture to promise that you shall not regret it. You are heart-free. Will you let me try and gain a share of your heart? I am old; but I am sympathetic. I don't forget that I have been young; I don't stand aloof from the ways and the thoughts of the young. You will find me indulgent. I am what people call—well, I am ashamed to speak of such things, but it must be said, I suppose. I have worked hard and have sold my pictures, and have so earned money. Well, all I have I place at your feet with myself. Your aims and objects in life shall be mine. I am bent upon making you happy. I shall live only to accomplish that. Your brothers, dear lads, shall be my brothers; your friends shall be my friends. Indeed, Doris, it is your happiness I have in view when I ask you to become my wife—it isn't mere selfishness that urges my suit. I seek a real right to love and protect you—to serve you and, so far as I may, secure you from care and trouble."

There were tears in his voice as he spoke; there had been tears in his eyes almost from the first. His manner was most kind and tender; for all the plainness of his words there was an air of refinement about his way of speaking them, I had never before remarked. His sincerity could not be questioned. I was genuinely affected. I had never liked him so much before.

"Indeed, Mr. Leveridge, I thank you," I said. "I am very sensible of your kindness to me. I am, indeed, most grateful for all you have done for me and for my brothers. I feel that I am not worthy of your love."

Something more I said, I forget what. But I sought to depreciate myself—to reduce the exalted estimate he seemed to have formed of my merits—and to turn away his love from me. He listened, not

very attentively, I think, and by no means convinced by anything I had said. He nodded his head once or twice, and smiled upon me very kindly, and he kept on smoothing and patting my hand in a tender, caressing way.

"There, there," he said, "we will say no more about it now. I have distressed and wearied you, I daresay; and your head ached to begin with. I was always rather a proser, and I've brought tears into your eyes—to say nothing of my own. I shall leave you now: remain quiet, close your eyes, and sleep if you can. God bless you, dearest. Think of me as kindly as you can. And let me count this little hand mine, and mine only, from this day forward."

He again lifted my hand to his lips, and then he stooped down and kissed me on the forehead.

He left me. My cheeks were burning, and my lips were parched with fever. I could not help crying grievously as I buried my face in the sofa-cushions.

I was engaged, to marry Mr. Leveridge, that seemed clear. I was engaged—partly because I had been without the wit or the courage to protest, to say "No," or to assert myself at the right moment, and partly, I suppose, because I had not really been unwilling to be engaged. But of the joy and elation, which girls are said to experience upon accepting a lover's proposal, and promising themselves in marriage, I certainly felt none; but rather deep shame and contrition.

And I confessed to myself that this matter would have been ordered otherwise, that I should have spoken to Mr. Leveridge in very different terms, if I could have believed that M. Riel cared for me—or, if he had but addressed a kind word or two to me on the night of the birthday-party. Not, I say again, that I loved M. Riel. But his want of love for me piqued, and vexed, and angered me.

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

If it be difficult to write biography—"to attempt the life" of one's friend, as Hook called it—how much more serious is the task of recording one's own life journey! Its uphill and downhill; its stoppages and the various obstacles it has encountered, albeit all is at last well, have often a certain humiliation about them, which makes their relation painful and inclines us to gloss them over; then how we shall write of our contemporaries is, if we are

not very thick-skinned indeed, a source of great embarrassment; there is a temptation to speak one's mind which is, for once, by no means a proof of moral courage; and a temptation to be silent, when to be so would take the very backbone out of our book. Moreover, if our autobiography treats of faith and feeling, as well as of mere action, the difficulties are infinitely increased. We are prone to place the "views" of one portion of our lives in the wrong period, especially in the records of our youth, and to fit a philosophic garment on what was in fact mere impulse and fancy. If we pretend, like Rousseau, to tell all, we are certain to fail, because it is not in human nature to be so daring; and, when we once begin to palter with the truth, all is over with our enterprise. Our proposed life becomes a mere fiction without incidents. The popular idea that we do not know ourselves is, notwithstanding a great classical authority, a false one; though the gift of "seeing ourselves as others see us" is, it is true enough, denied to us. We know ourselves better than anybody else, just as an author knows his book better than any critic; we have given more time to the study; we have had better opportunities of observing the subject; and with what folks call our faults—of which they suppose us to be peculiarly ignorant—we are above all things conversant. Indeed, some of us pass all our lives in the endeavour to conceal them. Yet when we are dead, and something "comes out" concerning us, which causes our most intimate friends to say, "Who would have thought it?" it never strikes them that we must ourselves have known all about it, and the secret characteristics that led to "it" all along. No one is so well fitted, in some ways, to write a man's life as himself; but, in other ways, no one can do it so ill. It is human nature to gloss over our own weaknesses, to exaggerate our influence, to excuse, to mitigate, and sometimes even to lie when writing about ourselves. It is only very seldom that we find a man, in relating his own conduct, just to others as well as to himself; in speaking of his own views, frank and natural; appraising his own talents, modest without the affectation of humility. "One (such) man in a thousand have I known," says one, who claims to speak with authority; "but one (such) woman in a thousand, I have not known." But then he did not know Harriet Martineau.

No one who read the biographical sketch of her, written by herself, in the *Daily News*, and published the day after her death, can have failed to have been struck by its marvellous moderation and fairness. Where it erred, was just where a critic—which means an unfavourable outsider—would have erred, in the way of depreciation and detraction. In her just-published autobiography, this drawback is not so prominent, because there is no attempt to sum herself up for the judgment of posterity, though the modesty and “quiet” of the record is as complete as in the former case. There is no flourish of trumpets, far less any tinkling brass. The whole book, though full of life and reality, is as serious and, apparently, as accurate as a scientific essay. When the whip is used—as in the case of Lockhart and Brougham—it is laid on, though sharply enough, as if in the public interest; there is no sign of any personal indignation, or, at all events, of any pleasure in the infliction of the chastisement. It might have been more dignified to have let the culprit go scot free; but then there would have been a miscarriage of justice.

There is at the very commencement of the work a characteristic disinclination to waste time about genealogy and one's grandfather, which at once wins the favour of those who have gone through much biographical reading. We are merely told that the ancestors of Harriet Martineau crossed the Channel with other Huguenot refugees in 1688, on the occasion of the Edict of Nantes, and settled in England. One of them pitched his tent at Norwich, where his descendants “afforded a succession of surgeons up to my own day. My grandfather, who was one of the honourable series, died at the age of forty-two, of a fever caught among his poor patients. He left a large family, of whom my father was the youngest. When established as a Norwich manufacturer, my father married Elizabeth Rankin, the eldest daughter of a sugar refiner at Newcastle-on-Tyne. My father and mother had eight children, of whom I was the sixth, and I was born on the 12th of June, 1802.”

At the very beginning of her life the seed was sown of that ailment, with which all personal recollections of Harriet Martineau are inseparably connected—her deafness. Being a delicate child, she was sent to a wet nurse in the country, who, “holding on to her good place after her milk was going or gone,” did her little

charge an irreparable injury. Her health became wretched, and continued to be so for nearly thirty years. Those “long years of indigestion by day and night—mare terrors are mournful to think of now.” From her infancy, in fact, this strong-minded woman, as it is the fashion to call her, was a prey to nervous and morbid fears, and her bringing-up was unhappily far from judicious. In her early days—it must have been the consequence of her ill-health, for in later years she was far otherwise—she was gloomy and reticent. “It never occurred to me to speak of anything I felt, and I doubt whether my parents ever had the slightest idea of my miseries. It seems to me now that a little closer observation would have shown them the causes of the bad health and fitful temper which gave them so much anxiety on my account; and I am sure that a little more of the cheerful tenderness, which was in those days thought bad for children, would have saved me from my worst faults and from a world of suffering.”

This is a very charitable way of putting the matter; “cheerful tenderness” neither was nor is “withheld from children, because it is thought bad for them,” but because parents were and are too cold or too selfish to employ it; but no one will find fault with the tenderness that gives so charitable a solution of the matter. Her treatment in her own family, when her deafness was getting more pronounced, seems to have been thoughtless and even harsh. Remarks such as “None so deaf as those who won't hear” seem to have been spoken loud enough for her to hear them, and on a child with such a strong sense of justice must have had the worst effects. “I did once think of writing down the whole dreary story of the loss of a main sense like hearing . . . but there is no saying that an elaborate account of the woe would create the sympathy for practical purposes.” At a very early age, “long before I dreamt of being deaf myself,” she had an example of the miseries of this defect. A girl of her acquaintance was very deaf, and when it was announced by any child at the window that — was coming up the steps, there was an exclamation of annoyance. “What shall we do? We shall be as hoarse as ravens all day,” and so forth. “When I was growing deaf, all this came back to me; and one of my self-questionings was, Shall I put people to flight as — does? Shall I be dreaded and disliked in that way all my

life?" From becoming "a bore to all the world," through that inquisitiveness which is the bane of deaf people, she was saved by her own marvellous strength of will. "I made a resolution, which I never broke, never to ask what was said." To her steady adherence to this piece of self-denial the present writer can testify. He well remembers the patient look with which she would contemplate the smiling faces around her, and though her ear-trumpet lay on the table before her, would wait for an invitation to learn the joke.

It was good-humouredly observed by a well-known author, that nothing had amused him more in Miss Martineau's conversation, than her statement that "some man in the Strand made all her ear-trumpets." "Why, good gracious," said he, "she can never have worn even one out by listening to other people." This was an unmerited severity. She was always ready to listen to what was worth hearing, though her great conversational powers were certainly not suffered to fall into disuse.

Some persons have called Miss Martineau a "female John Stuart Mill." It is scarcely possible to have selected a greater misnomer; for she was genial, tender, and sympathetic. Only once or twice in early youth does she remind us of the childhood of the great philosopher. Between two and three she began to preach in an oracular manner; she would nod her head emphatically and say, "Never ky for tyfys, dooty fust, and pleasure afterwards," and so forth, and edge up to strangers and ask them to give her—a maxim. At nine years old, when there was a little baby-sister born at home, she thus expressed her satisfaction at the event: "I shall now see the growth of a human mind from the very beginning." But, as a general rule, she differed from Master Mill *toto cælo*; indeed, during her childhood, and long afterwards, her mind was almost entirely given up to religious thought. "While I was afraid of everybody I saw, I was not in the least afraid of God. Being usually very unhappy, I was constantly longing for heaven, and seriously and very frequently planning suicide in order to get there. I knew it was considered a crime, but I did not feel it so. I had a devouring passion for justice—justice first to my own precious self, and then to other oppressed people. . . . It is evident enough that my temper must have been very bad."

Having discovered at an early age that

the globe swam in space with sky all round it, she communicated this fact to her brother James, and between them they set about a great scheme, which they had, nevertheless, no doubt of executing. They had each a little garden, the soil of which was but two feet deep, after which came broken bricks, &c. &c. Their plan was to dig completely through the globe and emerge at the other side. When they found that their wooden spades could not even get through the brick-bats, they altered their plans. "We lengthened the hole to our own length, having an extreme desire to know what dying was like. We lay down alternately in this grave, and shut our eyes and fancied ourselves dead, and told one another our feelings when we came out again, and we fully believed that we knew all about it."

It was the one weakness of Harriet Martineau through life that she fully believed "she knew all about" such matters as death and futurity, although she altered her opinion about them many times; and though she ended, as is well known, and is retold in the present volumes, in differing from the rest of mankind in the rejection of what is usually termed "religion," she remained very credulous with regard to certain "facts" which the common sense of ordinary persons refuses to accept. We are not speaking of the mesmerism matter which is to some extent an open question, but of other things. Notably, in much later years there was a story of a Jesuit miracle, on which she pinned her faith to such an extent that it produced a temporary breach between her and some very dear friends, and even caused a discontinuance of her literary connection with the predecessor of this periodical (*HOUSEHOLD WORDS**).

As a child she was eminently spiritual, without, as we venture to think, being very imaginative. The octagon chapel at Norwich had some windows in the roof, through which she was constantly looking for angels to come down, and take her to heaven in sight of the congregation. "I was thinking of this and of the hymns the whole of the time. It was very shocking to me that I could not pray in chapel. I believe that I never did in my life, though I prayed abundantly when I was alone."

* Reference to dates, to letters, and to a survivor, show that the writer's imagination exaggerated, and her memory failed in, almost every statement respecting a far from formidable difference of opinion which arose about a trifle.—ED. A. Y. R.

The whole current of her youthful thoughts indeed ran in a theological channel. She used to tabulate scripture texts, and confided to her mother that she hoped it might be printed and make a book, and then she should be an authoress. This produced such ridicule in the domestic circle that she resolved "never to tell anybody anything again." Her first literary effort was therefore made in secret.

There was a certain Unitarian periodical called the *Monthly Repository*, to the office of which, at nineteen, Harriet Martineau ventured to address an article on *Female Writers on Practical Divinity*. "I took the letter 'V' for my signature—I cannot at all remember why. The time was very near the end of the month. I had no definite expectation that I should ever hear anything of my paper, and certainly did not suppose it would be in the forthcoming number. That number was sent in before service time on a Sunday morning. My heart may have been beating when I laid hands on it, but it thumped prodigiously when I saw my article there, and in the *Notices to Correspondents* a request to hear more from 'V' of Norwich. There is certainly something entirely peculiar in the sensation of seeing oneself in print for the first time. The lines burn themselves in 'upon the brain' in a way of which black ink is incapable in any other mode." After tea in the family circle, her married brother said, "Come, now, we have had plenty of talk; I will read you something," and he held out his hand for the new *Repository*. After glancing at it, he exclaimed, "They have got a new hand here. Listen!" Then, after reading a paragraph or two, he repeated, "Ah, they have got a new hand; they have had nothing so good as this for a long while." (It would be impossible to convey to those who do not know the *Monthly Repository* of that day, how very small a compliment this was.) "I was silent, of course. Next (and well I remember his tone, and thrill to it still) his words were, 'What a fine sentence that is! Do you not think so?' I mumbled out, sillily enough, that it did not seem anything particular. 'Then,' said he, "you were not listening. I will read it again. Harriet, what is the matter with you? I never knew you so slow to praise anything before.' I replied in utter confusion, 'That paper is mine.' He made no reply, but read on in silence. When I was going away, he laid his hand on my shoulder and said gravely (calling me

'dear' for the first time), 'Now, dear, leave it to other women to make shirts and darn stockings, and do you devote yourself to this.' That evening made me an authoress."

Immediately after this she wrote her first work, *Devotional Exercises*, "of which," she says, "I now remember nothing." She also began a theological-metaphysical novel, but "at the end of half a volume I became aware that it was excessively dull, and burned it. This was the only piece of my work but two (and a review) in my whole career that never was published." To be an author in those days, however, was one thing, and to be paid for one's writing was another. Not till six years after her introduction to the public did Harriet Martineau make her first "pecuniary success," which consisted of five pounds sent by a Calvinistic publisher, one Houlston, of Wellington, Shropshire, for two little stories published at eightpence each. Presently Houlston wrote for a longer story. "My *Globe* newspaper readings suggested to me the subject of machine-breaking as a good one, some recent outrages of that sort having taken place; but I had not the remotest idea I was writing on *Political Economy*, the very name of which was unknown to me, or conveyed no meaning." She wrote *The Rioters*, the success of which was such as to cause some hosiers and lace-makers of Derby and Nottingham to bespeak a tale on the subject of wages—*The Turn-out*. After this she regularly wrote little tracts for Houlston, which he sold for a penny, and for which he paid her a sovereign. It was in 1827, and when she was twenty-five, that she learnt for the first time, from Mrs. Marcet's "*Conversations*" on that subject, that she had been teaching political economy without being aware of the fact.

In 1829 Harriet Martineau's father failed in business; and, as her deafness precluded "governessing," she became entirely dependent upon the scanty proceeds of her pen. At one time she was literally without a shilling, "inasmuch that, in those days of dear postage, I dreaded the arrival of a thirteen-penny letter. The sale of a ball-dress brought me three pounds." She hoped, and not without reason, that her skill with the needle would support her for a time; and "I did earn a good many pounds by fancy work. For two years I lived on fifty pounds a year." Even for what she wrote she received little more than the wages of a seamstress. The

Traditions of Palestine, published during this same year, was quite a literary success, but seems to have brought little grist to the mill. The Monthly Repository could give her next to nothing for her articles, and no London editor would "look at them." "My heart was often very near sinking, as were my bodily powers, and with reason."

At this time the Central Unitarian Association advertised for prize essays, by which Unitarianism was presented to Catholics, Jews, and Mohammedans: ten guineas were to be given for the first; fifteen, for the second; and twenty, for the third. The essays were to be superscribed with a motto; the motto was to be repeated on the sealed envelope containing the writer's name, which was not to be looked at till the prize was awarded, and then only in the case of the successful candidate. She resolved to try for all three, and she gained all three. The reading her name out at the Unitarian May Meeting, with the clappings and the "hear, hears" that accompanied it, must have been a proud moment for her, though the memory of these triumphs—for there were many such—annoyed her in later years, because she then thought them purchased at the expense of truth. "I had now found," she tells us, "that I could 'write,' and might rationally believe that authorship was my legitimate career." And yet she was as far, if not from fame, from fortune as ever. The failure of her attempt to get her famous Illustrations of Political Economy brought out is a very painful story. No publisher would venture to undertake the proposed series. "The public excitement about the Reform Bill and the cholera," they said, "forbad it." She was in London, making personal application to the gentlemen of the Row, in vain, for many weeks. "Day after day I came home, weary with disappointment and with trudging many miles through the clay of the streets and the fog of the gloomiest December I ever saw. I came home only to work, for I had to be ready with the first numbers, in case of a publisher turning up any day." No publisher turned up, and yet she did not give in. One day, however, she almost succumbed. "I could not afford to ride the four miles and a half (to her London home), but weary already, I felt too ill to walk at all. On the road, not far from Shoreditch, I became too giddy to stand without support; I leaned on some dirty palings, pretending to look at a cabbage-bed, but saying to myself, as

I stood with closed eyes, 'My book will do yet.'" In six months from that date she was the most famous woman in England, and her society courted by all sorts of cultivated persons, from secretaries of state to the editor of the Edinburgh Review.

The narration of this enormous change in her fortunes must be read in her autobiography itself, for it is a long, though most interesting, story; it is sufficient to say here that the "Series" was started by subscription, and at once made an immense success. Her reputation was established, not only as an authoress, but as a political writer. Mr. Mill himself, who had said that "political economy" could not be taught by stories," very frankly acknowledged his error, and members of the Ministry called in person at the humble lodgings of "the young woman in Fludyer-street, Westminster," to hear her suggestions upon the forthcoming Budget.

From this date the character of Harriet Martineau's life changes; the struggling authoress becomes—or rather people tried to make her so and failed—a literary lion. She had her foes, too, as well as her friends, and she lets us know it. No one will blame her, who ever read the infamous attack on her in the Quarterly Review, for her refusal to speak to Lockhart; nor can we wonder that she took the same line with Moore, in consequence of a scurrilous poem which he wrote about her in The Times newspaper. A few nights after its publication she was at an evening-party, when the host came to say that Rogers and Moore were anxious to make her acquaintance. "I was obliged to decide in a moment what to do, and I think what I did was best under such a difficulty; I said I should be honoured by Mr. Rogers's acquaintance, but if Mr. Moore was, as was generally understood, the author of a recent insult to me in The Times newspaper, I did not see how I could permit an introduction." The little bard was made very uncomfortable, and deserved it; but, in some cases, we think Miss Martineau's personal judgments were harsh. She would not speak to Sterling, the editor of The Times, on account of the rude way in which that paper spoke of her refusal of a pension from the Ministry. Of Lord Brougham, in 1834, she says: "His swearing became so incessant, and the occasional indecency of his talk so insufferable, that I have seen even coquettes and adorers turn pale, and

the lady of the house tell her husband that she would not undergo another dinner-party with such a guest." Of Macaulay she expresses a very hostile opinion. "It has long been settled that literature alone remains open to him; and in that he has, with all his brilliancy and captivating accomplishment, destroyed the ground of confidence on which his adorers met him when, in his mature years, he published the first two volumes of his History. His review articles, especially the one on Bacon, ought to have abolished all confidence in his honesty, as well as in his capacity for philosophy." A good deal of this bitterness may, perhaps, be explained by Miss Martineau's views of the political party to which Macaulay belonged, and which she despised beyond everything both socially and politically. "I have seen a good deal of life," she writes, "and many varieties of manners, and it now appears to me that the broadest vulgarity I have encountered is in the families of official Whigs, who conceive themselves the cream of society and the lights and rulers of the world of our empire."

In 1834 Miss Martineau went to America, about which she has much to say, which would have been more interesting had it appeared when this autobiography was written—namely, in 1854, when she was seized with that illness which, as she believed, would result fatally in a few months, but which forbore to strike the fatal blow for more than twenty years. On her return from that country, this lady, once a suppliant at "The Row," found half-a-dozen publishers at her feet. She gives a most humorous story of three of them, Saunders, Bentley, and Colburn, all calling at her house at once, where there were fortunately—as they all hated one another exceedingly—three separate rooms at their disposal. She does not, however, seem to have got much out of any publisher. Two thousand pounds was all she received for her thirty-four numbers of the *Illustrations of Political Economy*. For the American book she got nine hundred pounds, and for another work on the same subject, six hundred pounds. Altogether, reviewing her financial position in 1854, after more than thirty years' incessant literary labour, she concludes that she has made but ten thousand pounds by her pen. The best offer ever made to her—though in very vague terms—seems to have been one by Mr. Murray, after the publication

of *Deerbrook*. "He said he could help me to a boundless fortune and a mighty future fame, if I would adopt his advice. He advised me to write a novel in profound secrecy, and under appearances which would prevent suspicion of the authorship being directed towards me. He desired to publish this novel in monthly numbers, and was willing to pledge his reputation for experience on our obtaining a circulation as large as had ever been known." The lady's answer was characteristic. She "could not adopt any method so unprincipled—in an artistic sense—as piecemeal publication."

About this time, however, ensued her first illness—the one which she endured at Tynemouth, and from which, after six years, she was raised, as she avers, by mesmerism—and no literary work of any kind, save her charming *Life in the Sick Room*, was to be done.

Our space is coming to an end, and we must omit much, both of entertaining and instructive matter, to which we would fain have referred. Everyone knows how, after her Tynemouth illness, she journeyed to the East, published her *Eastern Travel*, and eventually settled at Ambleside. She has done the present writer the honour of transcribing into these volumes a description of that place, which he wrote, when a very young man, in the columns of *Chambers's Journal*. To him it is astounding, that she should speak of herself as having been unable—though with all the will in the world—to assist people on the road to success in literature, save in one or two cases. Her help was often asked, always given, and, in many cases, though perhaps not directly, was of the greatest practical advantage.

Her views were decided upon almost every point, but, though sometimes peculiar, were never advanced in a dictatorial manner. She would own to her want of appreciation of many good things. She had considerable sense of humour—though she always denied it—but not enough gaiety of heart to appreciate Dickens. She was unable to read *Vanity Fair*, from "the moral disgust it occasioned," and a great drawback to its author in her eyes was, "the impression both his looks and manners conveyed to her that he never could have known a good and sensible woman." She has written, as it will be seen, severe things of many persons, but also some very kind ones. Her admirable description of London society when she

was a star in it of the first magnitude, has at least as many pleasing portraits as unfavourable ones. Her account of Joanna Baillie, "with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line, and who had enjoyed a fame almost without parallel, and outlived it," is one of the most beautiful and touching we have ever read. Sydney Smith, too, was one of her prime favourites. He remonstrated against her going to America, after having expressed her anti-slavery views. "I can fancy your enjoying a feather—one feather—in your cap; but I cannot imagine you could like a bushel of them down your back with the tar."

We have no room for the curious account of how Harriet Martineau's translation of Comte's works came about, or for the history of the Atkinson Letters. Suffice it to say that her hands were never so full of literary work as at the time (as she fancied) she received her sentence of death. She had been writing story after story in Household Words, and especially those admirable accounts of English manufactories which are perhaps without a rival; she had undertaken to conclude her History of the Peace for the Messrs. Chambers; and she was writing sometimes as many as six leading articles a week for the Daily News. For many years afterwards she continued to write for the last-named paper, but quite contrary to her expectation. She penned her autobiography, which here ends, under the idea that her days were numbered. But if she had written her life up to the last, instead of having deputed the task to another, however competent, she would probably have given the same verdict upon herself—notwithstanding a certain romantic disappointment in early life, and much sickness and trouble later on—which she wrote in 1854: "I believe I have been the happiest single woman in England."

It is interesting to note that, at the very time our authoress was being accused of preaching revolution, blasphemy, and even worse, by unscrupulous Tory critics, the Duchess of Kent sent her a message of acknowledgment of the usefulness of her stories in connection with the education of the Princess Victoria. That young lady's favourite among the Political Economy series was, it seems, Ella of Garveloch.

There are some admirable observations, that it would do the world good to lay to heart, in this record of a famous woman's life. One of them is concerning the

curious impertinence that prompts amateurs to give their advice to authors, and to authors only.

Even "musicians have not to complain of this interference. Amateurs let them alone. It is to be hoped that, some time or other, literary works of art will be left to the artist to work out according to his own conception and conviction. At present it seems as if few but authors had any comprehension whatever of the seriousness of writing a book."

Lastly, as the epithet "strong-minded" has so often been applied to Harriet Martineau in an unpleasant sense, it may be well to say that she had no sympathy with the Ladies of the Platform. "The best friends of the cause (of Women's Rights) are the happy wives and the busy, cheerful, satisfied single women, who have no injuries of their own to avenge, and no painful vacuity or mortification to relieve. . . . Often as I am appealed to to speak or otherwise assist in the promotion of the cause of women, my answer is always the same—that women, like men, can obtain whatever they show themselves fit for."

A PRETTY BLOW UP.

ANGLING is usually associated with ideas of coolness. Even in the height of summer, when the stick and the string, with a worm at one end and you know what at the other, start to pursue their intellectual amusement, they pick out the greenest meadow, the shadiest clump of willows, the loudest-whispering line of aspens, and the freshest streams, whereat to make the least possible exertion, mental or corporeal. Bobbing for eels hardly begins before sunset. Night-lines, often affording such satisfactory hauls, are laid down at dewy eve and taken up at rosy dawn. The fly-fisher follows his more active occupation along rushing streams, by refreshing waterfalls, amidst bracing mountain breezes, almost always in picturesque sites where sunshine enlivens without oppressing. Whether whalers ever complain of heat, I know not. If they do, they are scarcely reasonable. All fishing-parties are not so fortunate as they are. Your humble servant lately took part in one which would have welcomed an iceberg from the Arctic Circle.

For more than a week we had been lying off Cape Palmas, at the entrance of the Gulf of Guinea, within thirty miles of

it, more or less. The sea, as flat and smooth and shining as oil, reflected, all day long, the rays of the blazing and burning sun. Not a breath of air stirred, unless towards night a stray tempest brought us a little coolness, paid for at the price of torrential rains. The thermometer, rarely lower than eighty degrees Fahrenheit, had an obstinate habit of standing at ninety degrees.

On board a sailing vessel, during a calm, you have only to lay in a good stock of patience; but in a ship which, although a steamer, restricts its locomotive agents to sails, you have a perfect excuse for going crazy. Our commandant—an old weather-beaten Jack Tar, as stubborn as a mule, and surly and crabbed when he thought his sailorship or his authority questioned, though good-hearted in the main, and even jolly at times—had made up his mind not to get up his steam, but to make the passage with his sails alone. One day one of us gave him a hint that we were in a fair way of dying, either of heat or of hunger; but he got such an answer, as to discourage him completely from volunteering any further advice.

We killed time, therefore, as well as we could, by searching out the coolest corners in which to chat and hold converse by fits and starts, till it much resembled the game of Cross Questions and Crooked Answers. "Aura, veni!" sighed a youth fresh from college; but nobody seemed to understand him. In fact it was too hot to talk, and even to listen. The hardest workers amongst us were completely done for, and gave up attempting any serious occupation.

One sultry evening we were clustered on the poop, out of temper with the sea, which was as smooth as glass. The few wrinkles on its face were not caused by any breeze. No such luck! That line of coast abounds with fish, and, in consequence of the fish, with sharks in any quantity. That evening they were prowling about by hundreds. Every dimple on the sea, soon spreading into a streak of phosphorescent light, was caused by the fin of a hungry shark, anything but particular what he got for his supper. When hanging about a ship, only a few yards from her sides, the first-come object is the first to be swallowed; a bone, or an old shoe, go down just as well as a biscuit. I have even seen a shark swallow a bottle, and was sorry I could not ask if its digestion had been easy. Poor things, they must eat something! In such

a closely competitive struggle for life, the wonder is that they don't eat their own tails.

"An idea strikes me," suddenly exclaimed Maury, a young gentleman of lively imagination; "what a capital opportunity!" After which he was buried in deep reflection. "Certainly, 'tis practicable. I will pay the expense out of my own pocket, if the commandant will only consent."

And he ventured to go to the commandant, who, after sundry smiles of incredulity, half disdainfully, half confidentially, nodded permission. "Do as you please," he gruffly said, not sorry in his heart for any incident that would divert the impatience of his officers. "You may try if you like, only don't blow the ship up."

We asked what new maggot was biting Maury? What fresh-hatched bee had got into his bonnet? We pelted him with a choice of sarcasms, which he bore with the air of pitying our ignorance.

"He is laying his plans to catch a mermaid," said Dubois.

"He is going to send a telegram to his mamma," said Jarnac.

After each and all had had his say, everybody retired to bed.

Next morning, without communicating his secret to any of us, Maury astonished the master-gunner by asking for certain mysterious water-tight cylinders, four inches broad and two inches wide, capped or primed in the middle with fulminating powder. When used for the experimental practice of firing them off by electricity, a little common gunpowder is put into them to render the explosions more perceptible, but not enough to injure the ship or its inmates from which the said experimental practice is made. To let our cat out of the bag, these pretty cylinders are torpedoes.

To obtain a more decisive result, Monsieur Maury used dynamite in lieu of gunpowder, and that in liberal quantity, obtaining thereby a firework of very respectable potency. To the wires of the priming he fastened a conductor, consisting of a couple of wires, like those which cause bells to summon housemaids and footmen, the whole terminating in an exploding apparatus called a *conp de poing*. The torpedo was then enclosed in so lovely a piece of bacon, that no shark, at the sight of it, could help the water's coming into his mouth. Corks sustained the line of communication with the battery, and kept the

highly-seasoned morsel suspended about a foot below the surface of the water.

Nothing more was wanted now, except a customer for the devilled pork; and, as sometimes happens when the best plans are laid, all Maury's trouble seemed to have been taken in vain. Not a fin would show itself, not a hungry mouth would gape. The commandant took his walk on the deck, munching his cigar, and pretending not to notice what was going on, but stealing now and then a glance at the operations with a knowing twinkle in his eye. Shrugging his shoulders, as much as to say that it was beneath his dignity to wait any longer, he went down to his déjeuner; we also went to ours. He was swallowing the last mouthfuls of that pleasant meal, when a steersman brought him the news that several sharks were in sight. "Ah, indeed!" he said, immediately rising from table. We wondered what the old commandant could want with sharks, which for him were anything but a novelty. He must have seen sharks ever since he left off baby-clothes. Ten minutes afterwards, the same steersman came down to us with a message, politely inviting us to join the commandant on the poop. Of course we obeyed, and found Maury in the midst of heaps of traps and tackle, with the air of a general besieging a city whose fall is certain.

Sundry sharks were cruising round the vessel at a few yards' distance—a common sight enough on board a ship of war in the tropics. The whole crew were on the look-out, perched here and there amongst the rigging, as if they awaited some extraordinary event. Maury carefully let down the bacon into the water, not allowing it to come too near the ship. The exploding pile was placed so as to allow the operator to watch everything that passed outside. The attention of the public became more and more excited; the commandant himself could not help mingling with the crowd.

Sharks, like pretty girls, have their caprices. Although the bacon was tempting—as white as snow—and its perfidious contents completely hidden, several sharks sailed up to it leisurely, smelt it, swam over, under, and round it, with airs of the most complete disdain. At last one of them, sharper set than the others, or at least less prudent, turned on his back and engulfed the bait inside his capacious gullet. Maury, without losing an instant, gave a vigorous thump on the handle of his exploder. Immediately we, the spec-

tators, were ducked and bespattered with a grand splash of water and scraps of shark's flesh. The shark, in convulsions, sank for an instant, and then floated motionless on the surface of the sea. The sailors applauded the successful result with a triple salvo of huzzas.

It was desirable to see what were the effects of the explosion, and to hold a post-mortem on the body. The commandant, therefore, allowed a boat to be lowered, in order to pass the noose of a rope round the dead shark's tail, and so hoist the carcass on board. Jarnac, in his hurry to get into the boat, and secure for inspection the fragments of the exploded bait, fell into the water. Instantly a party of sharks went at him. A rope was thrown out to him over the ship's side, up which he climbed with astonishing agility. Never did gymnastic practice produce happier results. In a very few minutes he would have disappeared piecemeal down the voracious creatures' throats. As it was, friend Jarnac, literally and figuratively, saved his own bacon, though little, if any, from the torpedo.

The shark's head was completely shattered; a good third of the jaw was gone, the rest was broken up into shreds. Evidently the explosion had taken place at the moment when the animal closed its mouth on the bait. Such splendid success naturally inspired the wish to try again. The commandant gave Maury *carte blanche*; but, anxious to combine the useful with the agreeable, he suggested the trial of the effect of a torpedo outside and at a distance from the bait, hanging a foot beneath it, in three feet depth of water. Any shark who might be bent on tasting the bacon would thus be about six inches above the torpedo. Would it blow him up, or only tickle him?

There was no want of sharks. The first-killed individual was cut up into joints, and as fast as the pieces were thrown into the sea, they were unscrupulously swallowed by those insatiable stomachs whose everlasting craving is for "More, more!" No qualms did they feel at this cannibal feast. The hungry pack waited about the ship, looking out for further rations. Maury, not to spoil his first triumph, took his precautions leisurely. Soon a shark was nicely in position—crack! went the exploder. The animal, thrown completely out of the water, along with an inconsiderable quantity of saline fluid, fell back with its belly torn open,

and sunk, violently agitated. Probably its back-bone—which isn't a bone, but only a cartilage—was broken.

At this Maury, elated with victory, asked for an hour—and took two—to make further improvements in torpedo-fishing. The result was a galvanically-primed torpedo, capped with platina-wire. In this case the conductor was connected with a powerful pile. A piece of sail-twine, fastened to the conductor, induced, by its breaking, the interruption of the current. In this way, if a shark swallowed the bait, the shock would break the twine, and the torpedo would explode. It was, in fact, a self-acting torpedo, expressly for the use of sharks.

When these arrangements were carefully made, and the contacts established, the apparatus was lowered into the sea. We then had only to await the good pleasure of our interesting victims. Our suspense was not long. A candidate presented himself, and swallowed the bacon without the slightest pull on the line; but the instant that he gave the stroke of his tail which was to scull him away, the sail-twine broke, the explosion took place, and the animal was so completely cut in two, that its head and shoulders remained fastened to the line, which had got between its teeth. The monster had swallowed his prey without making a movement, consequently it was in his very stomach that the explosion occurred.

A second torpedo had been got ready. It was soon put into the water, and everybody crowded forward to enjoy the expected fun. The required shark soon made his appearance, the twine broke, the line tightened till it upset the galvanic pile, nearly pulling it into the sea. Our shark, who had succeeded in cutting both line and conductor with his teeth, sailed off majestically with the unexploded torpedo in his belly. Lucky for him that he was not an ostrich, with a gizzard plentifully furnished with nails and pebbles! But, if he can digest a wine-bottle, why shouldn't he assimilate a nice cool torpedo? Maury, in his feverish hurry, had forgotten properly to establish his contacts. Of course, to his great annoyance, we laughed heartily at this trifling oversight.

The sport, resumed with proper precautions, went on till the dinner-hour took everyone except the commandant unaware. He crowned the day's amusement by inviting us all; Maury was the hero of the feast.

Just when a fair allowance of wine had been drunk to his health and to his next fishing-bout, a sudden inclination of the sloop abruptly brought the toasts to an end. The commandant rushed on deck, and we after him. It was blowing a gale strong enough to tear your eyes out of your head. We were caught by a tornado. Those storms, you know, give no more warning than a thunderbolt. Vessels are often sunk at once. We got off cheaply: main-topmast carried away, fore-topmast broken. The next day it was blowing fresh, and there was an end of torpedo-fishing.

JOTTINGS FOR BOOKWORMS.

Books are among the best friends a man can have; and yet he does not always treat them with the kindness and respect they deserve. A reader need not be a book-worm to do this; a reasonable book-lover knows, or ought to know, what is due to these dumb yet ever-speaking companions of his room. There are a few interesting matters connected with the manufacture or building-up—so to speak—of books, on which we will say a few words, before touching on the recommendations of practical men, concerning their good management and preservation.

In the first place, the paper. The old cut-and-dry designations have lost much of their meaning; and the sizes of sheets of paper are no longer so definite as formerly. When a heavy excise duty was in full force, the manufacturer was subject to numerous troublesome restrictions, which prevented him from giving due development to his trade; but now, the burden being removed, new energy is thrown into the matter, new materials introduced, new paper-making machines invented to keep pace with the magnificent printing-machines of Walter, Hoe, Marioni, and many others. Nevertheless, for book-work, it is found convenient to retain the old names for sheets of definite sizes. It would be useless now to enquire how the names arose. An odd medley they are: pot, foolscap, post, crown, demy, medium, royal, super-royal, and imperial; and, for special work, requiring very large sheets, elephant, atlas, colombier, double elephant, and antiquarian. The size varies within such wide limits, as to show how little definite meaning there is in the designation, "a sheet of paper." From fifteen inches by twelve and a half, up to fifty-three inches

by thirty-one: the largest has more than eight-fold the surface of the smallest. We can but dimly guess what the future may have in store for us in this matter. Paper-makers can now make several miles of paper in one sheet, while the Walter and some other machines will print these miles of paper, and at the same time cut it up into sheets of any desired length. The page of a newspaper could now be made

Too broad to be conceived

By any narrow mind—

like the many-caped great-coat on the back of Hood's stage-coachman. There has been one exceptional number—possibly more than one—of the Daily News, in which the single sheet measured fifty-three inches by forty-six; and these great dimensions could easily be exceeded by an adaptation of the machines employed.

Next, the colour of the paper; concerning which much has been written and said, by Mr. Power, Mr. Leighton, Mr. Edwards, and other bibliophiles. Great book-readers may, for the nonce, be placed in two classes—the tinted and the white. The former declare that tinted or toned paper fatigues the eye less than white. Mr. Babbage, the distinguished mathematician, when he had completed a new table of logarithms, solicited the opinions of numerous persons on this matter; one and all stated that they would like the work to be printed on toned paper, rather than white; but they could not agree as to which tint is the best. The first edition was printed on pale yellow-toned paper, the second on pale green. On the other side, four objections are urged against any decided tint. Different eyesights require different tints, if white is once departed from; a tint suitable by daylight, may be unwelcome to the eye by candlelight or gaslight; tinted is from five to ten per cent. more costly than untinted paper, and would in that sense render our books more expensive; lastly, almost all the tints fade in an unsightly way by degrees—a sober buff or nankeen being perhaps the least fugitive.

The paper being selected, the sheets printed, and the volumes bound, a grave question, it appears, has sprung up among the custodians of valuable libraries, whether or not to use gas for evening lighting? Of course, the binding is primarily chosen on other grounds than this; but still it is known that—of costly bindings—Morocco leather is less affected by impure air than Russia; that the latter is less

attacked by worms and insects than the former; that calf is worse than both the others in these particulars; that sheep leather is good enough for most school books; that gilt cloth, or stamped cloth without gilding, has almost entirely driven paper-boards out of the market; and that strong canvas is a cheap and useful binding for books that pass much from hand to hand, such as those in some working-men's and village libraries. But, be the books and the bindings what they may, we are asked to consider how to treat them by evening light. The gas made in London is unfortunately very impure, and is treated as a delinquent by many librarians. Some years ago, the books in the library of the Athenæum Club were found to be in a seriously injured state, many of the handsome bindings being sadly discoloured and decayed. The club appointed a committee of its own members—comprising Professor Faraday, Professor Brande, Mr. Aikin, Mr. Prout, and Mr. Brown—to investigate the matter. Applying various chemical tests, the committee arrived at a conclusion that the mischief had been wrought by sulphur, in the form of sulphurous acid gas; and furthermore, that this destructive agent had resulted as one of the products of the gas-jets and burners, with which the rooms were lighted in the evening. A question arose whether to substitute oil for gas, or to adopt some improved plan for carrying off the fumes and vapours that ascend from gas-lights. Faraday recommended the adoption of the second of these two courses; and, assent being given, he commenced the work. Since that time, the books in the library have not suffered to the same extent as before. Mr. Brayley ascertained that the books at the London Institution, in Finsbury-circus, were similarly suffering; and as those on the upper shelves were in worse plight than those on the lower, he inferred that ascending fumes and vapours, as from gas-lights, had wrought the mischief.

When these facts became known, other libraries were examined; and the opinion was strengthened, that gas-lights had been workers of mischief. The library of the Royal College of Surgeons, and that of the Philosophical Society of Newcastle-on-Tyne, were among those injured. A fine library belonging to the Earl of Tyrconnel, at Kilpin in Yorkshire, was found to be almost destroyed, so far as concerned the handsome bindings of the books. Some of the books in the office of The Times,

in rooms strongly heated by gas, had shrivelled up and broken, after two or three years' use. At the London Library, in St. James's Square, the subject has been much discussed, whether to use gas or oil. The general opinion now seems to be, that gas is cheaper, handier, and cleaner, than oil-lamps; and that the destruction of books and book-covers by gas fumes, is best prevented by judicious arrangements for carrying off the products of combustion. A solution of this problem has not been called for at the great national library of the British Museum, seeing that very little artificial light is used in that invaluable establishment.

Book lovers have something to say about mildew. In a library at Liverpool, mildew attacked the inside of the covers of the books, sometimes the printed paper also, at others the margin of the leaves likewise. When closely examined, the mildew was found to consist of roundish or irregular brown spots, presenting no evidence of organisation. Experiments led to a conclusion that the mischief was due to some sulphurous agent employed in bleaching the paper on which the book was printed. If such were the case, there could be no actual cure; but dryness and good ventilation would prevent the mischief from spreading.

Human book-worms are occasionally vexed by the presence in their books of real worms—little beings whom we should hardly expect to be influenced by a taste for literature. A correspondence sprang up a few years ago among bookish men concerning these worms, with a view to collect such facts as were obtainable. One correspondent described the book-worms, or, at least, a book-worm, as being about one-seventh of an inch long, rather narrow in proportion to the length. He believed that the ravages are made when the worm is in the larva state, at which time it resembles a small cheese-mite. One book-doctor says that the best way to get rid of book-worms is to mix an ounce of powdered camphor with an equal weight of colocynth (or tobacco), and strew this in thin layers on the book-shelves; the layer to be renewed after a few months' interval. It may perchance be effectual; but we cannot regard this as other than a somewhat untidy way of treating shelves whereon handsomely-bound books are placed. In some libraries a new and invisible enemy is said to have made its appearance within the last few years. It

attacks new books, beginning at the top, and rapidly destroying the upper margins of the leaves, usually stopping when the printed matter is reached. Sometimes it begins at the bottom; very rarely at the sides. If a volume be regularly bound, with cut and coloured or gilt edges, this enemy does not appear; the evil usually makes itself first visible on the cottony or fibrous edges of newly-cut cloth-boarded books.

On one point all authorities are agreed—the necessity for good ventilation. The books in a library should not be exposed to extremes either of temperature or of dryness; tolerably circulated air, of fairly good purity, will answer better than any doctored-up atmosphere. It has been laid down by a good authority that light without injury to colour, a slight humidity without mildew, and air without soot or "blacks," are as necessary to a library as to a greenhouse. If gas be used to light a library, the choice bindings should certainly not be exposed to it. A glass-fronted bookcase, kept closed for months or years together, is not necessarily the best receptacle; to let in a little fresh air once now and then, by daylight, is a course that has good sense to recommend it.

So far as concerns the dainty books a lady places on her drawing-room table, a little perfume may be agreeable enough; but we cannot say much for the dandyism which would perfume a whole library, unless with some direct intention to the preservation of the books from the sources of injury above named. Musk, with a little oil of neroli, placed in an open vessel in the bookcase, or bits of cotton-wool dipped in oil of cedar or oil of birch, and placed on a few of the shelves, are among the remedies sometimes adopted.

We are cautioned by all good bibliophiles against the barbarism of ill-using our books, which, if worth keeping at all, ought to be treated with care and regard. Never cut open the leaves of a new book with the finger; it is an inexcusable bit of laziness; a smooth-edged paper-knife is better for this purpose than a keen-edged steel knife. Never lift a book by the corner; nor take it from the bookshelf by the head-band; nor hastily pull open a new book, or a newly-bound book, if the back is stiff, on peril of finding the front-edge made to resemble a flight of steps ever after; nor stand a book long on its fore-edge, as this will injure the proper curvature of the back. If you have the misfortune to tear a leaf of a book, do not resort to the clumsy

expedient of pinning or sewing; a narrow slip of pasted paper is a much better doctor. Do not shut up cards, dried leaves, nor botanical specimens in a volume, if the binding be costly or elegant; they will lessen its firmness and symmetry in the course of time. Never bind a book when fresh from the press; the ink is pretty sure to set off from one page to the opposite by the pressure. Those who possess choice old books are advised never to discard antique bindings, if the volume will hold together tolerably well; nor is it the custom of a lover of books to commit the anachronism of putting old books into new jackets, or old jackets upon new books. Lastly, do not inflict on your books the rude indignity of—sitting upon them.

In reading our books, we certainly ought not to turn down the leaves as a means of noting the page at which our reading last ended. This leads us to say a little concerning book-markers, which, as ordinarily made, are apt to slip out of place. The late Professor de Morgan, who discoursed upon many things and had something useful or curious to say upon all, recommended a mode of making and using a book-marker consisting simply of a narrow slip of paper. He bids us take a rectangular slip, double it by means of a fold, and then double one of the halves; one half of the whole slip will form the marker, while the other half will serve as a pair of legs to hold it in its place by bestriding the top of the leaf. The thinner the paper the more likely is it to hold in its place. In regard to loose leaves, unstitched into sheets or a volume, it is difficult to keep a marker from dropping out and thereby becoming useless. To ensure greater firmness, he suggests that the rectangular slip to form the marker should be doubled sideways so as to present a marker, and what may be called a handle, joined at a bevelled crease; the handle should then be inserted between the leaves at the back, and the rest will act as a marker. This description is not altogether clear, but it is Professor de Morgan's own.

Books, however tenderly we may treat them, will, of course, become dimmed and faded in time; and, even under ordinary usage, we naturally see them more or less soiled, stained, discoloured, or otherwise disfigured. Bibliophiles have not left us wholly without hints as to the best modes of lessening, if not of remedying, these evils; at the same time dwelling on the

fact that prevention, by careful usage, is better than cure. If the leather backs of books have become soiled, we are told that they may be furnished up a little. Procure some bookbinder's varnish or French leather varnish; clean the leather with a little water, and, when it is dry, apply the varnish with cotton-wool, lint, or sponge. Another plan consists in cleaning the leather with a piece of flannel, sponging it with beaten yolk of egg; and polishing when dry with a hot iron. If the surface of the leather is much decayed, or the grain worn into holes, we are bidden to fill up the defective parts with paste, and dry them before the yolk is applied, to prevent the tint at these spots from being blackened by the egg.

The recipes for removing grease and stains from the leaves of books are numerous. One is to get some scrapings of pipeclay, magnesia, or French chalk; apply them to both sides of the paper, and press with a moderately hot iron. This plan is also said to be available for removing grease stains from coloured calf. Another method consists in applying warm water, absorbing the moisture by means of blotting-paper, and brushing on a little warm essential oil of turpentine; re-bleach the paper by means of ether, benzine, or chloroform. For single spots of grease or wax, wash with any one of the liquids just named, absorb with blotting-paper, and pass a heated iron over the surface. To remove what are called iron-moulds, or iron-stains, apply a solution of sulphuret of potash, then a solution of oxalic acid, and wash with clean water; the first solution loosens the iron, the second dissolves it. The wise men also tell us of another remedy, by diluting spirits of wine greatly with water, and applying it to the iron-mould spots; after letting it remain a minute or two, wash off with clean water.

Quite an army of chemicals are named as being useful for the removal of grease spots; but the chief are oxalic, tartaric, and citric acids. Slightly diluted, any of these acids will render some service, at any rate, if applied with a camel-hair pencil. A bit of chloride of lime, about the size of a nut, dissolved in a pint of water, makes a solution which similarly removes ink and grease spots, if the pencilling be repeated several times. Single leaves, when disfigured with stains of oil, grease, tallow, or wax, have often been restored to tolerable purity; partially fill a wide-mouthed bottle with sulphuric

ether, naphtha, benzine, or chloroform; roll up the leaf and put it into the partially-filled bottle; after brisk shaking for a minute or two, take out the leaf, and wash it in clean cold water.

One more of these jottings for book-worms, and we have done. Do we, any of us, possess a book which we believe to be rare, and wish to ascertain the technical definition of rarity? Listen. In the first place, a book is not rare, in a dealer's estimation of it, unless there is a demand for it; if nobody wants it, nobody cares whether it is rare or not. The causes of real rarity, or scarcity, are many. The book may have been printed by one of the early printers, such as William Caxton or Wynkyn de Worde; or it may be a first edition of a celebrated old work, or a copy printed on vellum or large paper; or only a few copies may have been printed; or the book may have been withdrawn by the author or the publisher; or the printed edition may have been nearly all destroyed by fire or other accident; or it may have fallen dead upon the market, and been sold to the trunkmaker or the waste-paper dealers; or the work may never have been completed; or it may have been privately printed; or it may be in a little known language; or it may have been purposely kept from the general market on account of being heretical, licentious, libellous, or seditious. When, through any of these causes, the copies in the market have become comparatively few, the principal dealers and collectors of old books adopt a curious mode of classification. If the book is not current in the trade generally, it is "infrequent;" if not common in the country where sought for, "rare;" if hard to find in the neighbouring countries, "very rare;" if only fifty or sixty copies have been printed, "extremely rare;" and, if it is believed that not more than ten copies exist in the whole world, the book rises to the dignity of being "excessively rare."

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGER," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XL. THE WOLF IN THE FOLD.

I SOMETIMES wonder—but always to myself, lest the susceptibilities of those who hold "Whatever is, is right," should be wounded—whether it might not be of advantage to the human race if less time were given us for reflection. On the

whole, the impulses of men are, at least, as good as their principles; and certainly self-interest asserts herself more and more, the longer the opportunity that is afforded her to do so. How often do we say, "This will be right," and then after a little thought—though the act remains as right as ever—"But is it expedient?" or, "Is it advantageous?" after which the good deed is postponed indefinitely. Even as a matter of intelligence, it is better in nine cases out of ten, where promptness is possible, to act with promptness. The whist-player who takes time to think—as he miscalls it—generally increases the magnitude of his impending transgression. But in moral cases the proverb, "Second thoughts are best," has always a selfish significance. They are best, no doubt, for oneself and one's own gratification; but that is all. Where the question lies between "What is right?" and "What is pleasant?" to hesitate is, indeed, to be lost. The temptation with an unprincipled, but not wholly abandoned character, to procrastinate in such a case is immense. He wishes to establish for himself a sort of neutral territory between good and ill, in which he can debate the matter in question, and—as he says to himself—come to a just conclusion; this is a sort of purgatory that leads eventually to the Infernal Regions. It is a mistake to suppose that bad impulses are to be resisted; they are to be knocked down and trampled under foot at once. If you come to argue with them, they will beat the best rhetorician or philosopher, who is but human after all.

Poor Cecil Landon was very human, but not at all a philosopher, so it may be guessed how it fared with him in his question of conscience. He did not, however, give way at once to his temptation. He contrived the matter so sagaciously that he left it in the hands of Fortune; while, at the same time, he supplemented her so as to make all sure. He made up his mind that he would take no action in the matter of Rose Mytton unless he heard from Grantham. If she made no sign, neither would he; but, then, as we are aware, he felt certain that the cheque would come to him for her railway fare, and with the cheque there would surely be a few lines.

In the meantime, he worked at his office like a horse, and did all he could to stop his thinking. He might as well have tried to stop the stars from twink-

ling in the vault of heaven. His imagination was ceaselessly active; now, he was with Ella, forlorn, forsaken, wondering at his cruel silence; or picturing her to himself as she would look one day, when the news came that she was not his wife, and that he was the husband of another woman. He saw the fierce denial in her glowing eyes, and then the despair of her proud face, when the truth was forced upon her. He saw his father, shamed and sorrowful; and all the faces of his friends—Darall among them—cold, contemptuous, and averted. He saw Colonel Gerard Juxon, furious, revengeful, thirsting for his blood; and this was the least hateful of the spectres of the Future that thus haunted him. He was not afraid; he could give back word for word, and blow for blow, but against himself, and against those other ones—and especially against her who loved him—he had no defence. He saw Rose, tender and shrinking, dragged, as it were, from her peaceful home into publicity; the sport of vulgar minds, the scorn of natures pure and gentle as her own; trustful in him to the last and forgiving him, but wounded, nevertheless, to her heart's core. He saw Helen's noble face turned upon him with loathing; he saw the good vicar's honest scorn. There are many sins pleasant enough in their fruition—in their blossom of a day—but whose Before and After may well give us pause; and here, indeed, was one of them. If Rose was to be his heaven, he had to pass through purging fires indeed to gain her; and when he had done so, the fires would burst out afresh and with tenfold fury. The thought of the consequences of what he meditated was sometimes so overwhelming, that he almost resolved to abandon it; but it was the "almost" of King Agrippa.

On the third day a letter came for him under cover from his friend in town, whose address he had given to Helen. For many minutes he did not dare to open it; but sat with it in his hand, conning the handwriting, which, though a lady's, was very distinct and clear. In that "Henry Landon," so bold and steady, he did not seem to recognise Rose's hand. And yet whose but hers could it be? She would scarcely have deputed Helen to write for her; though, even if she had, there would be some message, which—let it be what it might—would take him back to Grantham. He had shifted the responsibility of the matter from his own

shoulders—so he reasoned—to those of Fate, and now Fate had decided for him that he was to return.

Presently he opened the envelope with reverent care so as not to destroy the address—the first lines of her dear handwriting he had ever seen—and outdropped the cheque and a note.

"DEAR SIR,—I enclose the amount which you were so good as to pay for my sister's railway fare, and remain yours truly and obliged,
HELEN MITTON."

Rose had not written at all. He was so amazed and even offended that, for the moment, he could make nothing of it. What on earth could it mean? It was not her right arm that was injured? Why, therefore, had she not written? And she had not sent so much as a word of kindness. One might have supposed that he would now have owned, "Well, Fate has decided against me." So soon as he began to reflect, however, he at once came to the conclusion that Helen had written, without telling her sister that she was doing so. It was to Helen he had given the address, and not to Rose, who had only his initials at a post-office in her pocket-book. Perhaps she had written thither. He had a great mind to take the mail-train to town that evening and go to that post-office; but, on the whole, he thought he might venture to telegraph, paying, of course, for the reply. In half an hour he received it. "There is no letter lying for H. L." Fate, then, one would say, had evidently declared against him. Cecil, on the contrary, drew a directly contrary conclusion. Rose had wished to write, but was deterred from doing so by her prudish sister, aided by her slave, the vicar; she was acting under compulsion, and it was the duty of an honourable man to go to her rescue. She had been persuaded—no, not persuaded, for that was impossible—but her ear had been abused concerning him; it was incumbent, therefore, upon him to go and defend his character. Or, again, they had told her that it was unladylike, unmaidenly, in her to write to him, and that any communication between them should come from his side, not from hers. He would, therefore, make it at once, and in person.

This contingency had been arranged for beforehand, though he never owned to himself that such was the case. The advisability of starting a branch establishment of their house farther south had

been hinted at by the late manager, and the proposition had received Cecil's adhesion. It was a promising project in itself; but what had given it favour in his eyes was, that it would afford him an excuse for absenting himself from Wellborough, quite indefinitely; and then instead of going south he might go north-east—to Grantham. If the gods who wished to destroy him had made him mad, there had been, at least, much method in his madness. And now, growing more mad, he used more method. He employed an agent in town to take business chambers for him in Greythorn-street—where we have once seen him—that he might have a local habitation and a name in London to satisfy the enquiries of Rose's friends; and as for herself, he knew that she would believe all, without enquiry. He had given his first name to her (Henry) instead of the second, not by design, but by a sudden instinct; he did not choose her to call him "Cecil," as poor Ella did. But he used the name of Henry now, as a precautionary measure. There might be many Henry Landons, but scarcely another Cecil. No matter what care he took to hide himself, he felt that there was risk for him every way; but there was no help for that. There would be danger, too, when the present wish was over, and he had gained his point in wedding Rose—for he no longer concealed from himself that such was his intention—but there was no help for that either. He would have taken all Rose's danger on himself, and, to give the devil his due, all poor Ella's ruin, too, if that had been possible. If the consequences of sin could be limited to those who commit it, sin would be comparatively sinless—the sinner's "own look out," as the phrase goes; but, unhappily, it involves others who cannot "look out," and who are punished with him.

Cecil strove to forget this remorseful thought in action. Time was now become everything to him. He was well aware, if Rose became acquainted with his position, and, notwithstanding that he could have proved his first marriage illegal, not only to her own mind, but to the whole world, it would have availed him nothing. She would have had nothing to say to him, save "Farewell." Every moment, therefore, in which he was not making way with her was precious time lost, and an opportunity for discovery. He repaired to his office, and wound up the clock of his affairs there, so that matters should

go on without him as long as possible; and then started, nominally for the South upon a business tour, but in reality in another direction, and with a very different object—to Grantham. He had thrown dust in the eyes of his father, and of his own clerks; he knew that Ella's pride would prevent her becoming importunate, and that, for the present, he would be unmolested. He was neither in health nor spirits; but a certain wild excitement had possession of him; the last time he had travelled by that route he had been in a low fever; he was now in a high one.

On arriving at Grantham in the afternoon he went straight to the Stranger's Rest, to deposit his portmanteau.

"What? Back so soon, sir!" cried the landlady, with whom such open-handed visitors as Cecil were rare; "we are main glad to see you. One of the young ladies from The Casket has just gone by towards Pullham."

"Indeed," said Cecil, with an indifferent air, "which of them was it?"

"Well, I didn't see her face; but I think—as the vicar was alongside of her—it must ha' been Miss Helen."

The naïveté of this remark—the honest divine's attachment to the young lady in question being as well known in the village as his Christmas sermon—would, under other circumstances, have tickled Cecil; as it was, it only pleased him with the prospect of finding Rose at the cottage alone. He took his way thither at once, and boldly enquired of the servant if the young ladies were at home.

Miss Helen had gone on foot—she was a great walker—to Pullham, was the reply; but Miss Rose was in the garden. Etiquette was evidently not strictly observed at The Casket, for the girl pointed quite naturally to the glass door which opened on to the lawn, and Cecil was not slow to take the hint.

Rose was sitting by the fountain with a book in her hand, which she was apparently conning with great attention; her back was turned to the cottage, so that she was not aware of Cecil's presence till he came quite close; then she sprang up with a little cry of pleasure and a pretty flush, and held out her hand. The next moment the flush deepened, and with her other hand she slipped away the book, but not before he had identified it with the pocket-book in which he had written his initials.

"I am so glad to see you can use your left arm," said he. "Is it quite well?"

"Quite well," returned she.

"I was afraid, from not getting a line from you, that it was at all events still unserviceable," observed Cecil.

It was cruel of him to reproach her thus in order to extort from her some gracious confession; but even the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

"Well, the fact was, I—I mean we—that is, my sister—thought it better that she should write."

"So that you should not compromise yourself in any way," said Cecil, smiling, "with a total stranger, who might be anybody, or nobody, a penniless adventurer, eh? It was a very wise and prudent course. I was prudent myself last week when I ran away from Grantham without so much as wishing you good-bye. I cannot tell you how it pained me to do so. You must have thought it very strange."

"I—I was very sorry, of course," said Rose, stirring the daisies with her dainty foot; "but Helen understood you to say that you had good reasons for your departure."

"So I had, the best and worst of reasons. There was an obstacle to my speaking certain words, that were always trembling on my lips, to you, Rose. That obstacle is now removed; and the words, which I am now free to utter, were, 'I love you.'"

Her eyes, that had been riveted on the grass, looked up for an instant into his tender, longing face, and then once again sought the ground.

"I have known you so very short a time," said she, softly—"though it is true under unusual circumstances—and, as Helen says, we are so utterly in the dark about you, Mr. Landon."

"You called me 'Henry' once," answered he, "when we were not so well acquainted? Why not call me 'Henry' now? Of course you are in the dark about me, Rose; and I am come back on purpose to throw light upon that subject—I hope not altogether an uninteresting one to you. I believe I shall have little difficulty in satisfying your sister as to my prospects and position; my doubt, my fear is lest I should fail with you—for, believe me, I am conscious of my own unworthiness."

His last words at least had the genuine ring of truth about them, and to Rose's ear so had they all. So far as she was

concerned, he felt that he had already gained his point.

"I am so sorry—Henry," said Rose, presently—the dainty, hesitating way in which she called him by his christian-name was music to him—"that my sister is from home."

"I am not at all sorry," answered Cecil, laughing. "She is enjoying her walk, no doubt—as I am sure Mr. Welby is—and I am very happy here alone with you. Are not you happy also, dear?"

When the watch-dog did arrive, only a few minutes before dinner-time, the wolf was quite at ease in the fold, and secure of his position.

"Has Mr. Landon been long here?" enquired Helen, with feigned indifference, when the servant informed her of the arrival of the visitor.

"He has been here all the afternoon, miss."

Helen's heart, freighted with vague misgivings, and only certain of the event it had dreaded, sank within her.

"So you are come back, Mr. Landon?" said she, summoning up a smile to greet him.

"Yes, he is come back," put in Rose, triumphantly. "Did I not say he would?"

Those words alone—had Cecil needed such, which he did not—would have been a revelation to him of her love. His wooing was over; but every step of the road he had to tread, before he could win her—whether it should be long or short—was set with pitfalls.

CHAPTER XLII. REFLECTED HAPPINESS.

MONTES had now passed away since Ella had heard one word—save from Mr. Landon the elder, and that only of vague report—concerning Cecil. She felt his coldness and his silence, as some ship's company, shut up in Arctic seas, feel the approach of voiceless winter. Every day the barrier between her and home was growing broader and more formidable; the parallel failed in this alone, that for her there was no certainty of spring, yet rather the menace of eternal exile. She had remained at Woolwich—not, indeed, as the commissary's guest, but contributing with her usual liberality to the common expenses—much longer than she had originally intended, not because she was happy there, but because her own house was hateful to her, but now it became necessary that she should return to it. Her host had openly expressed his intention of marry-

ing Miss de Horsingham, and though he did not propose to make her his wife at once, he made no secret of his purpose so to do before that decent interval which society has imposed upon widowers who take to themselves a second spouse. She could no longer countenance by her presence the frequent visits of the lady thus openly proclaimed a bride elect; and she strove to persuade Gracie to accompany her, and leave her father's roof for hers. "I have nothing to offer you, darling, but my friendship and a home," said she, with pitiful pleading; "my heart is no longer mine to give, though he who won it from me values it at naught; just a few poor embers of love and goodwill are left for you to warm your hands at. Come, dear, for charity's sake, if not for love's, and bear me company."

But Gracie would not go.

"When my father marries, I will leave him, and if you are still in the same mind, Ella, will come to you, at all events for a little while, till I can gain some means of livelihood. I cannot eat the bread of idleness and dependence, even though it be your bread—"

"Great Heaven, what talk is this!" broke in her friend impatiently. "What is money that it should weigh a feather's weight in life's balance! Even I have money—and look at me!"

The scorn and pathos of her words and tone were terrible.

"My darling, it was my dead mother's wish that I should do my duty here, till I was superseded by another," returned Gracie quietly, "and I dare not disobey it."

There was pathos in poor Gracie's words also, and, as her friend perceived, an implacable resolution. So Ella went back to her stately house, so well provided in all things save that which makes house home, and which being absent leaves it bare indeed; and Gracie stayed on at Woolwich. Their mutual affection continued as warm as ever, but their lives exhibited even a greater contrast than before. Ella, though well-nigh friendless, save for Gracie, had many to call her friends. She was still cut off indeed from a certain portion of her old acquaintances, the echoes of whose harsh judgments reached her from time to time; her husband's absence gave them fuel, and they heaped coals of fire on her, though they paid no good for ill. But in the eyes of many the very doubtfulness of her position gave her a certain éclat. Her beauty too—dangerous passport—admitted

her to circles which were exclusive in their way. She was fêted, flattered, and caressed among them; and more pitiable than even "the women who have biographies," was quite the rage. One day a little comfort came to her among all this gilded misery. It was Gracie.

"My father is to be married to that woman at once," said she, "and I have kept my promise, Ella, and come to you."

It seemed to Ella that into the cold gray murk of her wintry sky a little blue had at last shown itself, and that, peradventure, it would abide there. But it was not so to be.

On the third day, when Gracie had gone out—she had not said "whither," though poor Ella's heart, alive to every presentiment of evil, foreboded that she was seeking for some place or employment that should tear from her, once more, this dear companion—a visitor called.

It was Hugh Darall.

Ella had not seen him since the days when she had revisited Woolwich in Cecil's company, and the sight of him tried her sorely. He asked after her husband, but not in his frank old fashion. He knew of course, in common with all the world, that there was some shadow between them, and his manner was tender and, as it seemed to her, commiserating. He did pity her, no doubt, though he meant only to show his sympathy, and she resented his pity.

"My husband was well the last time I heard of him," said she coldly; and then went on at once to congratulate him upon his appointment on the survey.

"Thanks," said he; "it is that piece of good fortune, Mrs. Landon, in connection with something else that can be called by no such term, that brings me up to town—Miss Ray is now living with you, I hear—as your companion."

"Your informant is mistaken, Mr. Darall. Gracie does me the honour, and the great kindness, of staying with me for the present as my guest; that is all."

"You use gracious words where other people are not so delicate, Mrs. Landon," returned he with emotion. "You had always a good heart."

"Had I?" answered Ella, with a bitter smile.

"Yes, and you have it still," continued Darall, earnestly. "It was from Gracie's father that I heard she had come to reside with you in the position of which I spoke."

"He is angry with her for having refused to sanction by her presence his marriage with Miss de Horsingham," explained Ella. "She has done quite right in coming to me."

"Of course," said Darall, quietly; "she is happy in having such a friend—to come to. I am here, however, Mrs. Landon—for why should I conceal it?—to offer her a home—though it will be a very humble one—of her own."

"You are going to take her away from me then?" said Ella, fiercely. "You wish to rob me of my last treasure." Then, reminded by Darall's astonished look that her anger was unintelligible to him, she burst into tears.

"Forgive me, Mr. Darall," sobbed she, "I am not well—not mistress of myself to-day."

"There is nothing to forgive, Mrs. Landon," said he softly; "I ought indeed to feel in some sort complimented upon Gracie's account, since she has become so indispensable to you. But I trust that, in making her my own, I shall not deprive you of her friendship. She will be a soldier's wife, and it is only too likely that I may have to leave her—perhaps for years—when a friend like you will be invaluable to her. Besides, even at present, her home—where you will be always welcome—will be but a few hours' journey: it is near Pullham Junction, and what is to prevent your meeting?"

"What indeed?" sighed Ella. She was thinking of her husband, who, though Wellborough was not much farther off than Pullham, found the distance, or affected to do so, so insuperable.

"My mother is already settled in that neighbourhood, at Grantham," continued Darall, "which is quite convenient so far as my work is concerned, and is by her account a charming spot. I am going down thither, to-day, and, if I am able to take with me dear Gracie's promise to be my wife, I shall be a happy man indeed."

"You deserve happiness, Mr. Darall; nay—though that is saying very much indeed—you even deserve Gracie. I have no doubt of what her answer will be to the question you have come to ask. It is said of very old people, that their happiness is derived from the contemplation of it in those they love. I am not old, but I hope—nay, I believe—that that much will be vouchsafed me with respect to Gracie."

The hopelessness, as regarded herself,

that this speech implied was not lost upon her companion; but a sound caught his ear, that at once monopolised his attention, and chased from his face, in spite of himself, its sympathetic sadness. It was Gracie's voice; and presently her step was heard passing by upstairs.

"Come in, my dear," said Ella, opening the door of the back drawing-room, so that Darall in the front one was not immediately visible to her friend.

"I was told you had someone with you," said Gracie, simply.

"You should not believe everything that is told you."

"I should be very willing to disbelieve some things," said Gracie, wearily.

"What, you have been trying to find some excuse to get away from me, have you? A genteel family in want of a governess. I thought as much."

"Well, yes—I was not very particular about the gentility; but I have been told that I am 'a drug in the market,' which is not pleasant."

"I am sure you are a very wholesome drug, and agree with me to perfection," returned Ella, smiling. "Still, if you are really fixed on setting up on your own account, Gracie, I have heard—since I saw you last—of a situation which will just suit you."

"Oh, Ella, are you serious? You don't know how I pine, notwithstanding all your kindness, to begin to do something for myself."

"I am quite serious, but unhappily the situation is in the country."

"I am sorry for that, dear Ella, as respects yourself; still—I never knew till to-day the full meaning of the proverb, 'Beggars must not be choosers!'"

"Just so. The place is in a pretty district. You will meet, I can vouch for it, with every kindness there; and though the house, I hear, is but small, you will find it to be indeed a home. The terms are only moderate, but I think the offer a satisfactory one."

"I shall most gratefully accept it," said Gracie, fervently.

"I thought you would—Mr. Darall, she accepts it."

It was rather wicked of Ella, but she made amends for her delinquency by instantly withdrawing from the apartment, and leaving Gracie in her new employer's arms.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER XV. WHAT CATALINA SAID.

I HOPE I have done justice to the manner of Mr. Leveridge's love-making. I have endeavoured to report exactly the words he spoke. It is a proof of his skill, or of his success, that I forgot for the moment his age, and his very plain looks; I would even have loved him if I could. I was grateful to him for his love; I entertained a sincere respect for him. Yet I should certainly have respected him more if he had loved me less. For his love perplexed me; I knew how little I really merited it.

And now, I was to be reminded at every turn of the fact of my engagement. The servants knew it. I could read their knowledge in their faces. They smirked and smiled upon me effusively, treated me to lower curtsies, and seemed to find pleasure in gazing at me. Behind my back, I have no doubt they ridiculed me considerably; while Mr. Leveridge, in his character of accepted lover, probably afforded them infinite amusement. And no doubt, with his elated air, his tripping gait, his frequent visits, his great good-humour, he did lay himself rather open to ridicule.

Miss Leveridge—in her agitated, infirm way—was most reverential to me, and, after a fashion, sympathetic with me. She did not like me, I was well assured of that; but she thoroughly recognised that I was to be her brother's wife—that I was to occupy thenceforward the most pro-

minent place in his thoughts and affections. She sighed as she reflected upon the fact, and muttered compassionately concerning "poor Dick." Nevertheless she viewed him as one of those proverbial wilful men, to whom it is advisable to permit their own way. If he could not be happy without me—well, it was best that he should obtain me. He was, in her eye as a child crying for a toy—I was the toy to be given him to quiet him. I was very subordinate consideration in the matter: a mere chattel, in fact. Yet probably Miss Leveridge held that altogether I was very much to be envied; I had come in for so large a share of good fortune in winning the hand, and heart, and wealth of "poor Dick."

Let me admit, however, that it was perfectly natural, and even right, for Miss Leveridge—touching this question of her marriage—to think more of her brother's happiness than of mine. After all he was her brother—I was an absolute stranger. And certainly I had done little in the way of conciliating or comforting her, or earning her good opinion. And I did not really blame her because of her little regard of me; except sometimes, when was in the mood to blame everybody—including myself.

"Try and make poor Dick happy, my dear. Be a good wife to him, for indeed, indeed, you'll have the best of husband. And we shall be sisters-in-law, and you must learn to call me Deborah. Dear me, how many chances and changes there are in this life!"

And thereupon Miss Leveridge plied her knitting-needles with extraordinary energy, and purchased an enormous supply of wool. She was bent upon completing

as a wedding-present to her brother, an expansive piece of work, of the counterpane sort, brilliant of colour and very neat and close of execution. I forget how many pounds it was to weigh. For some time it completely engrossed the attention of Miss Leveridge.

Catalina came to see me. Somehow her presence was not welcome to me. I assumed that her visit was one of congratulation; although, in truth, I had not informed her, or anyone, concerning my engagement—I had not even addressed a word to Nick or Basil upon the subject. I was pledged to be married almost in spite of myself. They would learn the fact in good time—if later rather than sooner, what did it matter? I was faithful to my plan, or my no-plan, of apathy—of drifting on, without stir on my part, whither chance might direct.

And of late Catalina had been less dear to me than once she had seemed to be. She was a rebuke to me—for I recognised the superiority of her nature. I felt myself capable of things, of which I believed her incapable. I mean things of rather an unworthy sort. Then she was very beautiful; not that I was therefore jealous of her—although, perhaps, in another respect, I was accountable for such a sin.

"It is true, then?" she said.

I suppose my face betrayed my embarrassment—perhaps a certain sense of shame. Assuredly I was not proud of my engagement—I had, indeed, little reason to be proud of it.

"Well, yes, it's true," I answered, trying to meet her firm, bright gaze—and falling—and then blushing; and then hating myself for my lack of self-control and courage.

"Dearest, I do trust it may be for your happiness."

"Indeed, I trust so too. But one can't be quite sure about it."

My tone was heedlessly tart and flip-pant, I daresay. I could see an expression of disappointment, or even pain, flit across Lina's forehead. To be just, I thought I had never seen her look so beautiful. Her eyes beamed most tenderly upon me; there was something so good, and sweet, and pure, in her face.

"Let us sit down," she said. "I thought to say some formal words of compliment, Doris—but though the time has come for them, somehow I don't feel that I can say them."

"I don't want compliments, Lina, or congratulations."

"Are you sure that you are doing right, Doris?"

"Is it worth while to ask that now? It is done, now; I suppose so, at any rate. How did you hear of it, Lina?"

"From M. Riel."

"And he learnt it—?"

"From Mr. Leveridge. He is very happy, it appears; and he does not—perhaps he cannot—conceal the fact of his happiness. He speaks of it to all about him. He mentioned it to M. Riel."

"And he told you again; I see. He expressed disapproval, regret, surprise?"

"No. He simply spoke to us of the fact."

"He made no comment?"

"He made no comment. Why should he?"

"Why, indeed? It was no business of his. And yet, Lina, I think he might have said something."

"What should he have said?"

"That I can't tell you. Did he speak of Mr. Leveridge?"

"Yes. But he did not say very much. Something about his future plans, I remember. For one thing, that he was engaged upon a new work of great importance."

"Indeed? I have not heard of it."

"Yes; and he mentioned the subject. From his account, Mr. Leveridge set great store upon it. But I confess I don't understand these mythological pictures; and therefore, no doubt, I cannot value them properly."

"What was the subject?"

"As M. Riel described it to us, it was—The Marriage of Vulcan and Venus."

She spoke with perfect simplicity and sincerity; of that I was fully convinced. She had no suspicion that something of insult was intended in this reference to an imaginary picture. For, of course—only she had not the wit to perceive it—Mr. Leveridge was engaged upon no such work as that M. Riel had described. Only a sort of bantering allusion was designed to the projected marriage between Mr. Leveridge and myself.

It was with difficulty I could hold my peace. I nearly bit my tongue through in my effort to keep silent. For, indeed, I longed to speak—to express myself very freely. I felt insulted—grievously offended. What right had M. Riel to speak of me thus? To make me the

subject of a hard, rude, heartless jest? Surely I had deserved better treatment at his hands. For the moment I hated him.

I scanned her face very closely. No; it was clear she was innocent of all intention to affront me—she was not M. Riel's accomplice.

"Your hands burn, and your cheeks flush, and then pale again as suddenly. Are you ill, Doris? Can I help you in any way?"

"In no way, Lina."

"Dearest, I must say again that I trust what you have done may be for your own happiness."

"You say that because you doubt."

"And I have no right to doubt or to question. We are not quite such close friends as once we were, Doris. You have withdrawn your confidence from me. Indeed I fear that you have hardened your heart against me; yet, Doris, be sure that you are very dear to me. If I might speak frankly to you!"

"You may, Lina, if you will."

I was moved by the sympathetic tone of her voice.

"But would it be right to speak? That is the question. Doris, I must speak; I will speak. Why do you marry Mr. Leveridge? I had pictured your marrying such a very different husband."

"One who was young and handsome?"

"Yes; young and very handsome."

"And rich?"

"I never thought about his being rich. Does that matter so very much? Poverty is not so grave a thing. One can be happy in spite of it. We—I mean my grandfather, and old Uncle Junius, and myself—we have always been poor, very poor; yet we have been happy too—very happy sometimes."

"I hate poverty! I dread poverty! I have not your courage, Lina; I cannot bear misfortune with so light a heart. I am a coward, especially on this subject of poverty. Mr. Leveridge is rich. Does not that explain it all to you, Lina?"

"No. Because it is unlike you to be doing this thing. You are not really a coward; you but fancy yourself one. It is not for that you have stooped—for it is stooping, to marry Mr. Leveridge. Pardon me, I should not have said that."

"No; for it is he that has stooped, Lina. But tell me—this young and handsome husband you spoke of just now—he exists but in your fancy? It was no real living person you were thinking of?"

"No," she answered, laughing. "It was but a picture of the possible or impossible perfect husband, that girls dream of for their beautiful girl friends; and for themselves, too, perhaps. I do not know any such person really."

It seemed clear that she could not have been thinking of M. Riel, as I had suspected in the first instance.

"You will come and see me after I am married, Lina?"

"Certainly, I will come, if I may. But, I can't quite believe it yet. It takes my breath away. Perhaps, by-and-by, it will not seem so strange a thing to me—I may even persuade myself that it is wise and right for you to marry Mr. Leveridge."

"Think as well as you can of me, Lina. Don't despise me for what I am about to do."

"There is no fear of my despising you, Doris."

"It is wise and right, Lina, or very nearly so. Mr. Leveridge loves me."

"I can well believe it."

"And I owe him so much. He has been so very kind to me—and to my brothers. He begs of me my hand. He has almost a right to demand it. Could I refuse him after all he has done for us?"

"It is hard to say. And yet—I feel that he should not be your husband."

"Because he is old and ugly?"

"Well, yes—to be frank—in a great measure because he is old and ugly."

"Is it fair to him to dwell so much upon that?"

"Perhaps not; but in these cases we can't always be quite fair. Prejudice, and sentiment, and romance tilt the scales, and destroy the balance."

"But bring common sense to bear upon the question. I weary of my present life. I am nothing. I can do nothing. I look forward to nothing. If I cannot give my love to Mr. Leveridge, at any rate I have given it to no other."

"You are sure?"

"I am very sure. Perhaps I have no love to give to anyone. Perhaps I can love no one. But I do want to help my brothers."

"That seems a good motive. But would they consent to the sacrifice? For it is a sacrifice."

"Their consent has not been asked; nor do I want to excuse my conduct upon high grounds. I am selfish. I have considered my own interests. They commend to me this marriage with Mr. Leveridge."

"I am not competent to discuss the question, Doris. I know that I am apt to decide by feeling, rather than by reason. You will forgive me, if I have spoken too plainly. I do wish this marriage was not to be. But, since I learn it must be so, dearest, I hope and pray it may be for the best."

She kissed me affectionately, and it seemed to be agreed between us that upon that occasion, at any rate, little more should be said in relation to my engagement. I showed her my ring, which she greatly admired, avowing it to be the most beautiful she had ever seen.

"Some day, Lina, a ring very like that will be slipped on your own slim third finger."

"That is not probable," she said, with a faint blush. "If lovers come to me—and they may not come at all—they will be poor, I think; they will not be able to afford such gifts as this."

"But a rich suitor may appear, determined to win you."

"He will fail. I shall never marry, I think—certainly not a rich suitor."

"You will love, and you will be loved."

"It may be so," she said, musingly. "But, sometimes, it seems to me that life is too serious and too sad, for love to take part in it. Yet love is a serious thing, too. At least, we should think of it seriously, should we not? You see I know a little of the subject of which I venture to speak. I have read of love in books, of course; I have read love-stories, and the many beautiful things the poets have written upon love. Yet I never feel that they have described anything of which my own heart has knowledge and experience. Can one love and not know it, do you think?"

"I think it possible. It is hard to be sure always of one's own sentiments."

"We may fancy we love and yet not really love; or we may fancy we do not love, the while we are really loving very much indeed. What tricks our fancy may play us! I am not speaking, of course, of the love I feel for my grandfather and for poor Uncle Junius. That is affection or devotion, a very genuine and precious thing, but different to what people mean generally when they speak of love and friendship. I think that may be even worthier and nobler than love, although the world does not judge so. Yet what would the world be without affection and friendship—the love of child for parent and of parent for child, the

deep and earnest attachment of friend to friend?"

"You will count me your friend still, Lina?"

"Surely I will—you and your brothers, Nick and Basil. We are all old and fast friends."

"And M. Riel?"

"He is scarcely a friend of mine. I know him, of course, and see him frequently; but he is rather my grandfather's friend than mine."

"But if he loves you?"

"He? Impossible! It cannot be. Why do you say such a thing?"

"It would not be so very strange. You are very beautiful, Lina."

"He is more likely to love you than me, if beauty is to be the excuse for his love."

"Well, it is certain that he does not love me," I said.

Catalina was silent.

"But Nick and Basil; they love you, Lina. I resumed presently.

"They love in jest," she said, smiling, "as men fence—with buttons on their foils. There is no danger in either case."

"You answer for yourself; you cannot answer for them."

She did not reply to this, but looked rather thoughtful; and presently we parted. I liked her, and I knew she meant kindly; yet I could not be assured that I thoroughly understood her. That I had forfeited, by the fact of my engagement, something of her good opinion was hardly to be questioned. I could not be surprised at this; for, indeed, I had made sacrifice of my own good opinion of myself.

PORTRAITS WORKED IN TAPESTRY.

II. THE LAST OF THE VALOIS.

ON the banks of the Loire. The bright river gleaming in the sunshine, and rolling through the arches of the ancient bridge—over which frowns the great castle of Amboise—not yet deformed by the builders of Louis the Great, but rejoicing in a wealth of architectural beauty; the stern Norman features of the stronghold throwing into relief the florid richness of the Renaissance. As the sun descends, steeping the lofty castellated rock in crimson and purple—at the close of this glorious July day of the year of grace 1559—the little bright-eyed, black-haired girl, gorgeously dight in a dress stiff with gold and pearls, knows little of the terrible event which has left her

to be the plaything and the tool, by turns the prey and the lure, of Catholic and Huguenot, of mother, and brother, and husband. Her father, the great King Henry the Second—name forgotten since, were it not for a certain beautiful kind of pottery—has fallen a victim to the luckless lance of Montgomery; and France is left in the weak grasp of a gentle, smooth-faced lad known to historians as Francis the Second, and celebrated, poor boy! for nothing save as having been the first husband of Mary Stuart. The little girl at Amboise has been a pet of her handsome, sad-looking father, and of her long-headed mother, Catherine de' Medici. In the old happy days of triumph, while the victories of Metz and Calais, and successes in Italy made the French king deem himself a thunderbolt of war, Henry oftentimes dandled his daughter on his knee, and asked her why she preferred of her little playmates the youthful Guise to the bonnier Beaupreau—a question fully answered in later and sadder days. Unluckily for the little girl, she is pretty, and, luckily or unluckily, is clever. Fated to be the last of the intellectual race of Valois, she is second to none of them in the accomplishments of the time. Skilful instructors are opening her mind to the literary masterpieces of antiquity. Unhappily, her school, if brilliant, is far from pure. The taste of the court of Catherine de' Medici is formed on the model of M. de Ronsard, whose ditties are over-much given to the passion of love. A change comes over France as the little girl grows upward. The writings of the rollicking author of *Pantagruel*, and the bitter satires of the friends of Ronsard, have raised a storm soon to break in a crimson shower. Persecuting François, gloomy Henry, and poor little François the Second are gone, and under the rule of the livid, hectic youth, Charles the Ninth, with his smooth face and snakey look, the "taint of Huguenotry" has spread far and wide. Little Marguerite, who has been brought up "bonne Catholique," undergoes all kinds of persecutions at the hands of her brother, the Duc d'Alençon, who, "infected" with Protestantism, burns her old-fashioned books, and leads his poor little sister a dreadful life. The court of France is really playing a double game, the queen-mother being the reigning spirit. On the one hand is orthodoxy—and the whole power of the House of Lorraine—hateful to the Valois. Against orthodoxy and the Guises skilful

Catherine covertly encourages the chiefs of the Huguenots, aiming to secure by this Machiavelian policy the predominance of the Crown—not to be accomplished till three-quarters of a century later by the genius of Richelieu.

Little Marguerite grows apace in these troublous times, increasing in beauty and the consciousness thereof. Long before there is any question of marrying her, there are rumours that she has faithful servitors—lordlings who wear her colours, and enjoy the reputation of possessing her affections. First among these shines, in all the bravery of court favour, the handsome Balzac d'Entraignes—the "bel Antraquet"—dainty minion of Marguerite's brother, the Duc d'Anjou—a slender, graceful man, with delicate, well-cut features of quiet, concentrated expression; one of those self-contained men, full of courage, vice, and intrigue, who have left their names in letters of blood on the page of the Renaissance; a dandy, too, of the first water, shaved and curled, perfumed and essenced, till he sheds an aroma of gallantry around him—a dangerous admirer for a young princess of volcanic tendencies. But his web is soon spun, as he, with Quélus and others of the same type, follows his master to the kingdom of Poland. The reception of the Polish ambassadors is made the occasion of a brilliant fête, at which, of course, Marguerite is present in a wondrous dress of velvet incarnadine glittering with spangles, blazing with precious stones; her head—already decked, alas! for vanity—in one of the "dainty blonde wigs" that she loved to her dying day. The raven locks are hidden, and the hazel eyes shine out under a remarkable head-dress, also of crimson velvet, decked with feathers, diamonds, and pearls. A very beauteous Marguerite indeed, and soon furnished with a new lover—no other than her early playmate, the Duc de Guise—the dark-visaged, scarred one; the famous soldier who, when threatened, said proudly, "They dare not!" A well-matched couple this, "le Balafré" being anxious to wed a daughter of France. Guise, backed by the whole power of the papacy, is strong enough to break off the projected marriage between Marguerite and the King of Portugal, but is forced to bend to the policy of the queen-mother. Catherine will not see the hated house of Lorraine, already, to her mind, far too strong, strengthened yet more by another

alliance with a daughter of France. It may not be; and the handsome lovers are advised that their destiny is different. The scarred one, terrified by the menaces of the king, marries at once a handsome widow—the Princess de Porcian—who gives him no little trouble as time rolls on. Hapless Marguerite, like another, but by no means spotless, Iphigenia, is destined for another fate—foreshadowed at a famous meeting on the confines of France and Spain.

Never was a fête more brilliant than this held to celebrate the interview between Queen Elizabeth, consort of Philip the Second, her mother, Catherine, and her brother, Charles the Ninth. The island of Aiguemeau on the Adour has been metamorphosed into a fairy palace, surrounded by lofty trees, under which lurk snug parties of ten or a dozen, the royal table at one end of this sylvan palace being elevated on a dais of four steps of emerald turf. Around these tables hover attendant shepherdesses, dressed in satin and cloth of gold, in the costume of all the various provinces of France. As the state barges, draped in costly stuffs, emblazoned with the royal device, approach the island to the sound of sweet instruments, and the song of mermen and mermaids, the island shepherdesses dance after the manner of their respective provinces—the Poitevines, to the skirling of a bagpipe; the Provençales, to the clash of cymbals; the Burgundians, to the piping of the oboe; the Champenoises, to the fife and tabor; the Bretonnes dancing the most vigorously of all. Dancing over, there enters a band of musical satyrs and lovely nymphs, but “envious fortune being unable to endure so much glory,” a heavy storm, accompanied by a deluge of rain, descends upon the fairy isle, scattering the gay company, and driving them to their boats for shelter pell-mell—a retreat giving rise to many comical adventures, and more queer stories of the general confusion of partners. One couple, however, is well matched, but they hardly laugh, these two, nor is their apparel so bravely decked with bright colours and sparkling gems, as that of the giggling dames and forward gallants who hurry to the water-side. Neither of these serious persons is of French birth. The woman, large-eyed and large-nosed, is a genuine Medici; the man is lean, haggard, and ascetic-looking, wearing a face as the face of Don Quixote. These two have come to an understanding—the woman having at

last yielded to her companion's energetic remonstrances. Catherine de' Medici and the Duke of Alva have decided on the destruction of the Huguenots; not yet for a little while—till the suspicions of watchful Jeanne d'Albret are quieted for ever, and “my plump Madge” shall catch them all—her charms proving very lime-twigs to the accursed heretics, and her gentle voice as the whistle of the fowler.

“Plump Madge” declares herself not averse to the Portuguese marriage scheme, which Guise and Philip the Second contrive to strangle between them, but secretly plots to secure her alliance with the Lorraine prince, till the news of his wedding with the Princess Porcian awakes her from her dream of love and ambition. Her fate is already decided by the stern mother who plays her children like pawns on a chess-board—so long as they permit her. She had an easy reign over poor gentle François, but sullen, wayward Charles is more difficult to deal with. The grim plot, arranged to the sound of fife and tabor on the island in the Adour, is not to be communicated to him on any account till it is ripe for execution. Meanwhile, the queen-mother urges him to strengthen his own hands by marrying Madge to the young King of Navarre—the son of Jeanne d'Albret and Antoine de Bourbon—a prince with “more nose than kingdom,” the famous ancestor of long lines of kings. His chance of the French crown looks remote enough just now, for between him and it stand three brothers of the Valois—Charles, Henry, and François, Duc d'Alençon—but strong-minded Catherine has one weak point; she is superstitious to a fabulous degree, and is sorely troubled by the horoscope of Navarrese Henry, which declares that he will “reign in France.” Superstition and worldly wisdom are both served, by securing the fox-faced Huguenot as the husband of Madge.

Charles is not sorry to acquire an ally of his own. Between his mother and the Guises—his too-powerful relatives—and his rebellious Calvinistic subject, she is often lashed into fits of ungovernable fury, and bitterly bewails that no human being loves or cares for him, save only gentle Marie Touchet. As is his wont, this wild hunter of beasts and men, once seized with a project, pursues it to the end with savage vehemence. But there are obstacles to be overcome—obstacles even to the furious will of the Most Christian King. The pope, still occupy-

ing the centre of the European tapestry, is horror-struck at the proposal to wed a Catholic princess to a heretic leader, and the consent of the pope must be gained, for Henry and Marguerite are, in a fashion, cousins, and undoubtedly within the limit forbidden by the Church. The pope refuses a dispensation, and, moreover, sends his cardinal nephew to dissuade the king from his monstrous project. But another counsellor has the ear of Charles—one singularly out of place in the giddy court of Catherine—a grave, sad-visaged gentleman, the famous "Admiral" Coligny, who is quite won over by the arts of the Italian, and is anxious to pacify France by marrying the "fox of Béarn" to "plump Madge" as quickly as possible. A valiant and skilful soldier this admiral, but over simple-hearted and truthful to contend in political intrigue with the professed students of the Florentine. Carried away by the real sincerity of the king, and the pretended heartiness of the Duc d'Anjou and the queen-mother, the brave old warrior persuades Jeanne d'Albret to join the court at Blois—gay, brilliant Blois—the summer palace of François the First, with its great exterior staircase and ancient hall of the estates. Blois is especially joyful just now, glancing coquettishly down on the smiling Loire. Its quaint streets and lofty narrow staircases are swept by the "vertugadins" of merry dames and damsels, for it is the humour of the strange Italian that all should be bright and mirthful around her, as if to intensify the darkness within. While forming the centre of her bright bevy of dames and their circumambient gallants, Catherine loves a joke, and is no bad hand at quip and crank, merry conceit, and highly-seasoned repartee. But when the fête is over, she turns from the gorgeous figures which wave to and fro on the arras, and bending her steps towards a remote part of the ancient castle, after climbing many stairs, reaches the lonely turret projecting over the church of St. Nicholas. It is the observatory employed, not with any scientific purpose, but purely as an instrument for interrogating the obstinate stars which persist that Henry of Navarre will "reign in France."

The Queen of Navarre, who, reluctantly enough, has come to this giddy court at the entreaty of the admiral, is grievously shocked at all that she sees and hears, for the language of the court dames and gallants is happily new to the Puritan

Jeanne. Billingsgate and St. Giles's are names that convey but a faint idea of the "joyous remarks" and the "pleasant sayings" current at Blois in this bright springtide of 1572. Fêted and caressed by the king and his mother, wary Jeanne yet fears to bring her son to a place horrifying to every sentiment of decency. More difficulties arise. Catherine wishes the wedding to take place at Paris according to the Catholic rite. Jeanne objects to the mass, and insists on the ceremony being performed in some city less inimical to the Huguenots. Pending this debate Pope Pius the Fifth dies, and is succeeded by Gregory the Thirteenth, who displays more flexibility than his predecessor, but yet hesitates, till Charles loses all patience, and tells the Queen of Navarre one day, "My aunt, I honour you more than the pope, and love my sister more than I fear him. I am not a Huguenot, but I am not an ass. If the pope plays the fool too long, I will take Madge by the hand myself, and see her married in full conventicle." Just as the marriage contract is signed the Queen of Navarre dies—some say of pleurisy, others of poison—but nothing is now allowed to impede the ceremony.

The scene changes to old Paris—not the Paris of St. Louis, nor that in which luckless English Henry was crowned "despite of foes," but the Paris of the ruthless Renaissance. The castellated dwellings of the Middle Ages have developed into the hotels of great seigneurs—fortified more or less, and crammed with gentlemen armed to the teeth. A strange mixture of splendour and squalor this good city of Paris. Tall gabled houses nod towards each other over narrow streets ankle-deep in filth, with no approach to drainage save an open gutter. Gloomy passages and dreary alleys slink from the light of heaven. Thieves abound, though what they find to steal is a mystery, as after dark no honest citizen ventures abroad, lest he should be waylaid and plundered by the professional robber, or killed, out of pure joyousness of heart, by the gay gallants in search of adventures. The gallant is as unlike the person depicted by writers of romances and operas, as can well be imagined. He is splendid, but by no means clean, for the silken hose which adorn his nether limbs have previously been worn for a week or two by his inamorata, that they may comfort him the more, and awake his mind to deeds of chivalry. He by no means

flings his cloak around him, and issues forth armed only with his trusty rapier. Not he. The gallant on the way to a rendezvous is in his fashion a prudent man. Beneath his doublet of satin, slashed with the colours of the lady of his heart, lurks, for the better preservation of that organ, a finely-worked shirt of mail. His rapier, of portentous length, is supplemented by a long, left-handed dagger. Before him walk pages with flambeaux, and a stout man-at-arms, pike or arquebuse in hand. Behind and with him come two or three, or, if he be a great man, a dozen trusty friends to see him through his adventure. These chivalrous times are curiously practical when seen in contemporaneous tapestry. That terrible seeker of amorous adventures, the young King of Navarre, never stirs out of his room to perambulate the long corridors of the Louvre, where he is as yet only a guest, without a pikeman, for the way is short from the boudoir to the grave. The thing known as fair play is not yet invented, and man smites his enemy when and where he can take him at a disadvantage. The atmosphere of Paris is heavy with rumours. There is talk in council and ruelle, and strange conferences are held, between mighty chiefs of the faction of the Guises, and the provosts of the great guilds of the good city of Paris. Apart, aloof from these, the Huguenots shiver in their fortified hotels, for there is a scent of blood in the air, and the chiefs unvanquished in the field talk strangely of being led into a mousetrap. And yet these wary warriors have come hither on an occasion more fitting for silken favours than buff jerkins. They are bidden to a wedding banquet.

Henry of Navarre, still in mourning, has arrived in Paris, in the early days of August, at the head of a gallant train of eight hundred gentlemen, the flower of the Huguenot nobility. On the seventeenth of the month the betrothal takes place at the Louvre. On the following day the marriage is celebrated with "maimed rites" by the Cardinal de Bourbon. A strange scene. Not within the sacred fane, but outside the Cathedral of Notre Dame, a huge structure has been erected, of wood carved and hung with cloth of gold. Henry of Navarre—his mother two months dead—lays aside his mourning, and appears with his eight hundred gentlemen in brave attire of velvet, satin, and cloth of gold, strangely

pinched and slashed in the latest mode. Marguerite herself—splendid, and conscious of her splendour—"dressed in royal robes, with a crown and bodice of spotted ermine, glittering with the jewels of the regalia, and the royal mantle of blue, with four ells of train, carried by three princesses." Plump Madge, looking very handsome and triumphant, to be made a wife and a queen at last—albeit to a husband whose neighbourhood is unsavoury to those of delicate nostrils—people shouting and crowding to suffocation, while the bride hears mass, and her husband waits for her outside. Then come fêtes and dances, jousts and junketings, masques and merry-makings, the bells of Paris ringing out a merry peal—prophetic enough to some sharp ears of the tocsin of St. Germain l'Auxerrois.

Captain Blosset—a Burgundian Huguenot, distinguished by his valiant defence of Vezelay against the Catholic army—calls one morning on the admiral, and asks permission to go home.

"Why," asks Coligny, "why are you in such haste?"

"Because they mean no good to us in this place."

"What!" shouts the admiral, "do not you believe we have a good king?"

"Too good! Too good to us by far! That is why I want to go away; and, if you would do as I do, M. l'Amiral, you would do good to yourself and to the cause."

It is impossible to keep the sharp Burgundian, who takes to horse and away.

Hardly is he clear of Paris, than Mauververt's pistol-shot reaches the doomed admiral. Angry remonstrances and many threats are made by the Huguenots, and, at last, the king is told that he has no option, that his enemies are delivered into his hands, and that he may not let them go. This is a fearful time for a bride in the first week of her honeymoon. Everyone whispering, none telling her anything. Suspicious Huguenots avoiding her because she is Catholic. Catholics keeping their lips close, because she has married a Huguenot. Left to herself, she creeps into the ceremony of the "coucher" of the queen-mother, and feeling very lonely and wretched, sits down upon a cotter beside her sister Claude, Duchess of Lorraine, also very, very sad. The two young women sit, hand in hand, silently and wretchedly enough, in the great dimly-lighted room, hung with tapestry depict-

ing the martyrdoms of saints. At last the queen-mother perceives Madge sitting sorrowfully with her sister, and commands her to go to bed. As she makes her curtsy, her sister Claude seizes her by the arm, and, weeping bitterly, cries, "Oh God, my sister, do not go!" Madge is more frightened still, till Catherine flies into a passion and forbids Claude to tell her anything. The Duchess of Lorraine then flies out, and declares that her sister shall not be sent to the sacrifice; that the Huguenots will revenge themselves upon her. Nevertheless, the old queen is firm. The absence of Madge would give rise to suspicions. Her place is with her husband. Driven from her mother's presence, she seeks her husband, whom she finds already in bed, surrounded by thirty or forty zealots of his party, talking loudly of the attempt to assassinate the admiral, and resolving, the next morning—alas! for them, that next morning—to demand of the king that justice shall be done on the Guises, as otherwise they will "take the law in their own hands." Thus passes a night sleepless and of utter misery, the words of her sister Claude ringing ever in Marguerite's ears. As day breaks, her husband rises to go and play tennis till King Charles is awake, the weary woman tells her nurse to close the door, and sinks into a feverish sleep.

The awaking is frightful enough. There is loud knocking at the door, and cries of "Navarre! Navarre!" The nurse, thinking it must be the King Henry, opens the door, when in rushes a man streaming with blood, with arm and shoulder cut and slashed, and clings to the young queen—as frightened as he. Four archers pursue this M. de Léran into the very nuptial chamber, and are only restrained from killing their man by M. de Nançay, captain of the guard—and a right merry, jovial gentleman, who laughs heartily at the comical picture of the wounded man holding fast to "plump Madge," and his four bloodhounds eager to tear him down. These worthies got rid of, jolly M. de Nançay remains with Marguerite, and "while she changes her dress, being all covered with blood," tells her all about the merrie jest in action this fine August morning. First he grants her the life of M. de Léran, whom she stows away in the dressing-room till his wounds are healed, and then quiets her fears concerning her husband, assuring her that he is safe enough with the king in his cabinet,

where, by the way, is also the Prince de Condé—the king offering the choice of "mass, death, or Bastille." Covering Marguerite's shoulders with a mantle, pleasant M. de Nançay tells her not to be alarmed, that they are only killing all the Huguenots except her husband, and conducts her to the chamber of her sister Claude, where she arrives "more dead than alive." Just as she steps into the ante-chamber, she sees another gentleman pursued by the archers, and struck with a halberd within three paces of her royal person. Without, make themselves heard the rattle of arquebusades, the clash of swords, the triumphant yell of the white-scarved crusaders, and, now and then, the defiant roar of a knot of old soldiers who, despite chains and barriers, pike and gun, out through their enemies and get clear off, while above all tolls the great bell of the church of the Auxerrois.

Another fold of the tapestry shows us Marguerite and the "kinglet" her husband, prisoners rather than rulers, as ornaments of the court of Charles and his successor, Henry—quickly returning from Poland at the news of his brother's death. There are schemes to effect the escape of the "fox of Béarn," but they are long unsuccessful, costing also the lives of Coconnas and La Mole—regarded, perhaps, with too kindly an eye by Marguerite. Then comes the famous hunting-party at Senlis and the escape of the husband, Marguerite being still at the court of Henry the Third—out of favour, too, with husband and kingly brother, and plotting with the Duc d'Alençon, her younger brother—but yet the ornament of society in the best period of the Renaissance. A period of charming costume and of culture excessively elegant, when compared with all that preceded it. Yet, with all this beauty and elegance, the age is full of savagery. The famous duel of the mignons will bear witness to this. It is true their hair is frizzed, the beard plucked from their soft chins, their ears pierced and jewelled, and their ruffs so vast that the head of a mignon "resembles that of St. John the Baptist on a charger;" but they are always ready with the steel, and die violent deaths almost to a man. So does their master, who, with all his vice and effeminacy, his look of ineffable weariness and scorn, his masks lined with almond paste to preserve his complexion, his love of female attire—"black satin, slashed with white, puffed and pinched,

laced and frilled"—his hair dressed in two arches, à la Marie Stuart, his blackened eyebrows and face painted, is yet brave as a lion, as the red fields of Jarnac, and Moncontour can testify. The Queen of Navarre is, for the time being, greatly smitten by the splendid figure of Louis de Clermont, better known as Bussy d'Amboise—the favourite of her younger brother—one of the ablest captains, and certainly the greatest swash-buckler, of his time. All the time he can spare from love-making he devotes to quarrelling and fighting. The king's "mignons" are the particular object of his attack. He misses no opportunity of insulting them both by word and deed. He loves to dress his own lackeys as richly as the king's favourites, and to go himself in attire of the severest simplicity. Marguerite's too susceptible heart is occupied by this paladin, who wears her colours—to wit, green and gold, white and violet—openly. Bussy comes to court from the wars covered with glory, meets Marguerite on her return from a journey to Spa, and delights the heart of that princess, whose undisguised admiration of him is a fertile subject for those sarcastic young gentlemen—Quélus, Saint-Luc, Livarot, Mangiron, and Saint-Megrin. To do Bussy justice, he is abundantly provided with wit—not of the delicate, high-dried kind, but rough and full-flavoured, strong military wit, as it were. Two or three attempts are made to assassinate him, but in vain. Impunity makes his tongue wag all the faster. Handsome, curly-haired Quélus—daintiest and bravest of the "mignons"—is his especial butt, never spared either before the throne or the altar. At last things come to such a pass that the king, insisting on a formal treaty of peace, compels the two enemies to embrace in his presence, but only provokes from Bussy one of his odd strokes of buffoonery. Nevertheless, the quarrel is patched up for a while, Bussy, and other friends of the king's brother, leading a joyous life with the royal mignons, whose life is one perpetual feast—merry, indeed, as it need be, for Fate has decreed that it shall be short enough. The court is on the best terms with the great citizens of Paris, who give entertainments three or four times weekly. Lent is given up to these amusements, which prove too much for a worthy churchman—the Cardinal de Guise, better known as the "Bottle Cardinal"—a fine

specimen of gopprmand and gourmet, "who meddled with no other matters than those of the cellar and the kitchen, which he understood very well—far better than those of church and state."

A few more bright threads in Marguerite's web of life, and then all is dark in hue and coarse in fibre. The king has determined to establish, or rather to revive, the Order of the Holy Ghost—to found an order of knighthood in honour of his sister. This Order of the Holy Ghost, new to France, dates from the year 1353, when it was founded at Naples by Louis d'Anjou, King of Jerusalem, a descendant of the brother of St. Louis, whose statutes are extant, and came into the possession of Henry at Venice—a gift of the Serene Republic to the King of Poland. It is the first day of the new year, 1579, and the ceremony of inauguration is celebrated with great pomp in the church of the Angustines, magnificently decorated for the occasion.

The chevaliers and knights-commanders are gorgeous to look upon. They are clothed in a barret cap of black velvet, pourpoint, and trunks of cloth of silver, shoes and scabbard of white velvet, a great mantle of black velvet, embroidered round with fleurs-de-lys in gold, with tongues of flame intermingled, and the king's cypher in silver thread—the lining of orange satin. Over this mantle, instead of a hood, they wear a mantelet of cloth of gold, also enriched with fleurs-de-lys, tongues of flame, and cyphers like the great mantle. The collar of the order is formed of the king's and Marguerite's cyphers, interlaced with fleurs-de-lys and fiery tongues. From this hangs a cross of gold, of marvellous work in gold and enamel, in the middle of which is a white dove—the emblem of the Holy Ghost.

A great grief now oppresses Marguerite. The career of Bussy comes to an end. Fighting appears to agree with him, but letter-writing brings him to grief. In a moment of confidence, he writes a letter to the duke, his master, telling him that he is in pursuit of the "doe of the king's grand huntsman." The duke—false and fickle ever, and just now very weary of his too active partisan—shows the letter to the king his brother, who, detesting Bussy, reads it aloud to the grand huntsman himself—Charles de Chambre, Count of Montsoreau. This gentleman hies him to his castle of Montsoreau, near to Saumur, and compels his unhappy countess to write a letter to

Bussy, inviting him to visit her there. Arriving at midnight, he is assailed by Montsoreau and a dozen bravoos, and after a desperate combat, fought out as long as a bit of his sword remains in the hilt, he is finally slain, after killing several of his assailants.

Marguerite, inconsolable for a while, rejoins her husband at his little court at Nérac, and, allowed to act as she pleases, is the most complaisant wife in the world. But, as Henry of Navarre develops into Henry of France, he determines to divorce "plump Madge," now more than plump—with great fat cheeks, enormous shoulders, and goggle eyes set in a bald pate, crowned with a golden wig, shorn from the skulls of a "score of blonde lackeys." No longer resplendent at the great court of Paris, or the little one of Navarre, she keeps state, sorely straitened for cash at times, at the Castle of Usson. Years, luxurious and inglorious, pass by, and again the last of her race descends upon Paris; no longer a wife, but divorced, and taking it in such good part, that she is present at the coronation of her successor—Marie de Medici. Eighteen years have improved neither the looks nor the morals of the ex-queen, who lives in great splendour at her palace in the Rue de Seine. But she is true to her destiny, and brings death to the favourites of her old age, as to the lovers of her youth. Bewigged and bepainted, the old woman lives out an existence divided between devotion and dissipation. She outlives all—parents, brothers, husband, and lovers—and dies "greatly regretted as a princess, full of goodness and good intentions, who only did harm to herself." Saint Denis claims her body, but her heart—still at last—is deposited at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, of which she was founder. Thus, in the year 1615, fades out this notable figure of the last daughter of a royal house—famous and infamous as that of Pelops.

TWILIGHT.

A LONG, low room, with oaken-pannelled walls,
And narrow windows looking to the west,
A quiet room, where flickering firelight falls
On folded hands of one who sits at rest;
Who rests and listens in the twilight gloom.
To tender strains of music, soft and slow,
That rise, and fall, and flutter through the room
In wordless but melodious ebb and flow.
Without, a splendour lingers in the heaven,
Of rose, and purple, royal gold, and gray;
Green leaves are trembling in the breeze of even,
The nightingale's sweet voice comes o'er the way.
While overhead, in skies serene and far,
Shines, like an angel's smile, the evening star.

The long, hot hours of garish day are past,
The long, hard years of life draw to a close,
A tired hand and heart enjoy at last
Life's twilight hour before their long repose,
A blessed oventide of love and home,
Before the shadow of that darkness falls,
Whose deepest density enwraps the tomb,
And through whose awful mist Death's angel calls.
The sweet strains rise and fall; the twilight gray
Grows deeper in the room; but peace is borne
Unto that listener's heart from far away,
All eloquent with whispers of a morn
Songful and beautiful, prophesied to last
When noons of earth and nights of death are past.

EVADING THE LAW.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, in one of her trenchant speeches, roundly rated the lawyers for standing more upon form than matter, more upon syllables than the sense of the law. Had the subjects of the royal censure dared to answer her outspoken Majesty, they might have retorted that all manner of men, if it suited their interest, were apt to do the like, and hold by the letter rather than the spirit. When Pope Innocent put England under an interdict, condemning its fertile fields to barrenness, the people—not yet sufficiently wise to laugh at a mortal pretending to control the operations of nature—might have starved but for some beneficent hair-splitters opportunely discovering that the interdict could only affect land under tillage at the time of its imposition, and therefore that crops might be raised upon the waste lands, commons, and fields hitherto unploughed. Necessity begets casuistry. The old knight, whose sacrilegious deeds earned him many an unheeded anathema, as he lay waiting the coming of death, remembered that he was an excommunicated man, sentenced to be damned, whether buried within the church or without the church. Although the contumacious reprobate had never found himself much the worse for ecclesiastic curses, he thought it advisable to be on the safe side; so, directing his body to be buried, neither within the church nor without the church, but in a hole cut in the outer wall, he died in that happy conviction.

Once upon a time, the governor of a city issued an order of the night, commanding every person walking about after dusk to carry a lantern. Sundry citizens were arrested for non-obedience, whereupon they produced their lanterns, and being asked what had become of the candles, replied that they were not aware candles were required. An amended order now appeared, but night-strollers wandered

about as much in the dark as before, and it was not until he commanded the candles to be lighted ones, that the governor got things done to his mind. This very old story is usually told of some continental city, but if such a farce were ever played at all, it is as likely as not that London was the scene of the performance. In 1418, a civic proclamation ordained that every honest person dwelling within the city limits should hang out "a lantern, with a candle in it, to burn so long as it might endure," from which it might be inferred that the Londoners had heretofore lit their candles only to blow them out again, so that they were quite capable of poking fun at the authorities. Indeed, the latter would seem to have inclined to jocularly themselves, humorously insisting only upon honest folk lighting up, a limitation calculated, however, to ensure a general illumination. There was sense as well as humour in the defence made by the precise Parisian charged with allowing his dog to be at large without a muzzle—"The regulations do not say where the muzzle is to be put, and, thinking my dog would like to be able to breathe a little fresh air, I put the muzzle on his tail!" A similar omission in the Act requiring owners of common stage-carts to have their names painted upon them, led to the object of the law being defeated in various odd ways. Some painted the name where no one could see it, others scattered it all over the cart, a letter on a panel, and one ingenious fellow's vehicle bore the inscription: "A most odd Act on a stage-cart"—a clever anagrammatic arrangement of "Amos Todd, Acton, a stage-cart."

Legal nets were never cast for a more slippery fish than that triton among demagogic minnows, Daniel O'Connell, but clever as he was, like other cunning fish, he was caught at last. The suppression of the famous Catholic Association, followed up by the Act empowering the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by his proclamation, to suppress and prohibit "the meeting, or adjourned, renewed, or otherwise continued meeting," of any association deemed dangerous to the public peace and safety, rendered it difficult for the liberator to carry on his agitation without getting into trouble. The plan he adopted was this: the persons forming his staff, when they found the Government anticipated them by proclaiming and prohibiting their meeting, met to declare the association dissolved, and assuming then and

there another name, called a meeting of the new association at an early day. By this means, two or three vice-regal proclamations were set at naught with impunity, but, when O'Connell met his followers at Usher's-quay, he had to announce that a proclamation had been issued forbidding the meeting, which not only referred to all the names assumed time after time, but prohibiting the assemblage of the same body of persons under any style or denomination whatsoever. The agitator comforted his despondent hearers with the assurance, that they might safely meet again in Dawson-street after breaking up. Here his legal acumen was at fault. The repealers met an hour afterwards, as their leader counselled them, and, by so doing, supplied the link wanting on former occasions, it being evident that the persons assembling in Dawson-street were members of the association that had met at Usher's-quay, after being prohibited by proclamation. Trapped at length, O'Connell was tried for the offence and convicted, but even then his luck did not desert him. He could not be called up for judgment until the following term, and, in the meantime, Parliament was dissolved, and the Act under which he was indicted expiring with it, the whole proceedings came to an end. Ringing the changes was practised more successfully by the money-lenders interested in defeating the Bills of Sale Act of 1854, which required the registration of every bill of sale within twenty-one days of its execution. Instead of registering the bills of sale, they held them for twenty days, and then exchanged them for new ones, effectually nullifying the statute without breaking the law, the courts deciding, "with regret," that such evasions were not illegal.

A few years back, the streets of salt Droitwich were in such a deplorable condition, that the turnpike trustees offered to give a hundred pounds per annum out of the trust funds towards repairing the roadways, until they were all put into proper order, provided the parish raised a similar amount, so as to make up two hundred pounds a year. In accordance with this arrangement, operations were commenced in 1865, but when the surveyor's accounts were presented to the magistrates, one of the ratepayers disputed the legality of the payment, and the magistrates, much against the grain, were obliged to disallow the item. The Corporation of Droitwich, determined to keep

faith for the honour of the town, voted the mayor an annual allowance of a hundred pounds, and his worship generously presented that identical sum to the repairing fund; thus securing the rehabilitation of Droitwich in a perfectly legal manner. Shrewd folks have sometimes managed to get the weather-gage of the law, by simply shifting the responsibility. When the laughter at locksmiths was not above invoking a blacksmith's aid, abducting a heiress being a criminal offence, gentlemen taking a trip over the Border with a well-dowered damsel were careful to make it appear the lady was the abductor. Upon a happy pair reaching Carlisle, the post-horses for the last stage were ordered by the bride expectant, her companion becoming non est for the moment; and the goal attained, the lady paid the postillions, sent for the forger of the matrimonial bonds, and, when he had done his office, satisfied his demands out of her own purse. A female toll-taker, sued by the turnpike trustees for money she held belonging to them, and ordered to pay up, induced a travelling tinker to make her his wife, and, when summoned for contempt, produced her marriage certificate, and pleaded that the trustees must look to her husband for payment of the debt, owning, at the same time, that she did not know, nor want to know, what had become of him. Alphonse Karr, finding it convenient to leave Paris for awhile, betook himself to Italy to start a newspaper there. He succeeded in obtaining the patronage of the king and of Count Cavour, but the minister would not listen to his dispensing with the encumbrance of a responsible editor. He did not dispute the absurdity of the law, but, being the law, it must be obeyed. Karr's printer quickly settled matters by engaging a man to fill the post for a salary of thirty francs a month. Karr never set eyes upon his responsible editor, and that worthy was answerable for the doings of a man of whom he knew absolutely nothing, and over whom he had no control.

The truth of the saying, "Where there's a will there's a way," was exemplified in a more comical way by a tramp who was refused a night's lodging at a police-station in Maine, the officer on duty explaining, "We only lodge prisoners; you've got to steal something, or assault somebody, or something of that kind." "Oh, I've got to assault somebody, have I?" remarked the vagabond, and knocked the sergeant off his stool; and when the astonished

officer had picked himself up again, quietly said, "Give me as good a bed as you can, mister, 'cause I don't feel very well to-night!"

How London managers and actors evaded Walpole's Licensing Act has already been told in these pages.* How their provincial brethren eluded its pains and penalties, we learn from Roger Kemble's advertisements in Berrow's Worcester Journal. In 1767, the faithful city was visited by "Mr. Kemble's Company of Comedians;" they opened at the theatre at the King's-head, with a celebrated comedy, called *The Tempest*, or the *Enchanted Island*, as altered from Shakespeare by Mr. Dryden and Sir W. D'Avenant, with all the scenery, machinery, music, monsters, and other decorations proper to the piece, entirely new. Roger Kemble doubled the parts of the Duke of Mantua and Stephano, his wife played *Amphitrite*, Miss F. Kemble *Mitche*, Miss Kemble took *Ariel*, and her future husband, Mr. Siddons, *Hyppolito*. Respecting the rest of the dramatis personæ the playbill is silent, but it tells us that the Concert of Musick, for which tickets were to be had at the usual places, would begin exactly at half an hour after six o'clock, and that the comedy would be presented gratis between the parts. When the company moved on to Wolverhampton, even the concert was advertised as a gratuitous entertainment, but the tickets were only obtainable of one Mr. Latham, who had packets of tooth-powder from London, in two-shilling, shilling, and sixpenny papers, on sale at his shop, and if he chose to reserve the concert tickets for the purchasers of tooth-powder, that was "nothing to nobody."

Shortly after a revision of the American tariff, resulting in the imposition of a heavy duty upon lead and the freeing of imported works of art from taxation, twenty-four grotesque-looking leaden effigies of Lord Brougham were to be seen, standing all of a row, on the custom-house wharf at New York. They had been consigned to a merchant by an English firm as works of art, a description the American officials refused to endorse, insisting that they were mere blocks of lead. The question was referred to the lawyers; and when, after three months' consideration, the courts pronounced in favour of their artistic origin, collectors of curiosities bought the hideous statues

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 13, p. 79, "The Licenser of Playhouses."

at prices far beyond their metallic value, to preserve them in remembrance of the Britishers having, for once in a way, proved too cunning for their cousins.

To overreach the tax-gatherer is too generally regarded as a venial species of knavery. In the days of high postal rates people resorted to all sorts of dodges to cheat the Post Office of its dues, not the least extraordinary being that recorded in Sir George Jackson's Bath Archives: "Miss C. has written to ask if the hares she sent me a month ago had arrived, and the letters with which they were stuffed. Now, the hares I acknowledged; but, not being aware that their stomachs were used as post-bags, the letters were thrown in the fire, as I have since learnt from my cook. On my telling her of what the stuffing of the hares chiefly consisted, she drew herself up, and, with a dignified air, asked how she was ever to suppose that a town lady would do so nasty a trick; or how I could suppose that she didn't better know her duty than to send up on a silver plate, for drawing-room reading, such dirty bits of blood-soiled paper that she, in the kitchen, wouldn't touch with her fingers? I own that I had little to say in defence of Miss Clayston's ingenious device for defrauding the revenue, which deserved, as it did, to come to a bad end." Nowadays, there is no temptation to cheat the Postmaster-General; but, thanks to the mode of levying the Income-tax, the penny-saved, penny-got utilitarians, as Coleridge calls them, are enabled to make their game for higher stakes. Your prosperous man of business, if he will, as he too often does will, finds it easy enough to escape paying his quota of taxation. When the compensation claims arising out of the demolition of property, for the making of Queen Victoria-street, were sent in, the Income-tax Commissioners discovered that the claimants, by their own showing, had made false returns for years, and, of course, came down upon them for surcharges. In one case a return of two hundred and fifty pounds had been made in 1865, where a surcharge of one thousand nine hundred pounds, in 1867, was confirmed on appeal. Upon another return of two thousand pounds, the parties were found to be liable on three thousand three hundred and eleven pounds; and they justified themselves on the ground that their returns were fully as large, in proportion to their incomes, as those made by others in trade. In this, perhaps, they spoke truly: for, in a third case, the ac-

countants employed in making the claims for compensation deposed that, for four years, the profits of the firm had averaged four thousand four hundred and seventy-seven pounds; although, during that time, they had made no Income-tax return at all. In another case a return of two thousand pounds, was surcharged to nine thousand pounds; and it was proved that in one year, when the firm paid on nine hundred pounds, their profits amounted to ten thousand. The aggregate of the taxable income of the entire body of claimants for compensation was, according to their own statements, a hundred and seventy-one thousand three hundred and seventy-pounds; the amount they had paid upon was seventy-three thousand six hundred and forty-two pounds! A still more flagrant instance was noted by the commissioners in one of their reports. A person, returning his income at one thousand five hundred pounds, was charged upon twenty thousand pounds, and paid without demur. The following year he made no return, and, being assessed on forty-five thousand pounds, paid duty on that amount; and in the next year the amount was raised to sixty thousand pounds with the same result. Mr. Hubbard lately stated in Parliament, and the statement passed unchallenged, that, while forty-four millions was the amount of income returned on assessment, a hundred and one millions was that which should be returned; the difference of fifty-seven millions being the sum on which duty was evaded, signifying, at the old twopenny rate, a fraud upon the revenue to the amount of four hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds per annum—a fraud, be it remembered, perpetrated by men rich enough to be honest without inconvenience.

Experience teaches that legislation running counter to public opinion is so much legislation wasted. Parliament once thought to stop dram-drinking, by raising the duty on gin, and putting an exorbitant price upon spirit-licences. All it succeeded in doing was to prevent licences being taken out, to the injury of the revenue, while gin went down the throats of the multitude more freely than ever. The law was violated in every way ingenuity could devise. From one end of London to another a roaring trade was done in contravention of the law, almost every chemist supplying the popular comforter under some suggestive fancy name. Informers were treated as public enemies

and lynched, even to death, without compunction, while the magistrates were wonderfully lenient to any offenders that were brought before them, for although it is easy to invent new crimes, it is not always easy to make men look upon them as such, and after awhile the obnoxious Act was repealed, as something far worse than a failure.

The tactics successfully adopted against the Gin Act have been repeated, with variations, in our own time, wherever the Maine Liquor Law has been established. A traveller in Colorado wished to get some whisky as an antidote against possible snake-bites. Not a drop was to be had, but he was told he would find spirits of ammonia, to be obtained of any chemist, quite as efficacious. Determined to be prepared for any amount of snake-poison, he had his quart-flask filled as advised; and tasting it, out of curiosity, declared, if he had not known better, he could have sworn it was Bourbon whisky; just as Henry Phillips was prepared to make an affidavit of the impossibility of distinguishing between genuine cognac and the sarsaparilla the black steward of a "temperance ship" recommended for the prevention of seasickness. In Ohio the potions dispensed by the druggists are carefully wrapped in paper, that the sharpest eye may not discern if a customer carries away with him an embrocation, a black draught, or a bottle of unmitigated Bourbon. The bar-keepers satisfy the law forbidding spirits to be sold over the bar, by passing round the counter to serve their customers; or invite them to take a seat in a room behind the bar and supply their wants there. In Vermont, the dram-seeker passes into a private room, is locked in, and indulges in his particular vanity, unseen by friendly or unfriendly eyes. At some places the liquor-dealers only sell crackers or biscuits, the cracker-buyer receiving a glass gratis to wash the dry stores down. Wanting a stimulant, Mr. Dawson was directed to a fruit-seller's, and entering the shop passed through it into a small room furnished with two cupboards, a counter, and a man. To the last-named he put the question, "What sort of stuff is Bourbon whisky?" Without a word, the man went to one of the cupboards, produced a bottle and a glass, and satisfied the enquirer in the most practical way; giving him a paper requesting him to pay so many cents to the cashier in the shop. The man who gave Mr. Dawson the whisky took no

money for it, the man who took his money supplied him with no whisky. Mr. Ward's kangaroo was not such a profitable "cuss" to him as the half-starved wolf constituting the entire menagerie of a travelling showman, owning naught else, save a dirty tent and a mysterious-looking keg. Upon arriving at a likely "pitch," the showman announced that the wolf was on view at the charge of six cents a head. After one or two sight-seers had seen what was to be seen, patrons poured rapidly in, to come out wiping their lips, apparently satisfied with having had their money's worth. One man developed an unsuspected interest in natural history, looking in eight-times in the course of an afternoon; then he made a start homewards, but after going a few steps, stopped, turned over his pockets, turned round, walked back to the tent, and as he paid the entrance fee, stammered out, "I b—b—lieve I'll take another look at that wolf!"

Yankee smartness has been displayed in evading other laws, besides that especially admired by the advocates of permissive prohibition. A railway company having to run a curve of their line through a street in New York, an operation necessitating the blocking of the public way, set their men to work on Sunday, no injunction against their proceedings being obtainable on that day. The suppression of the game of ninepins was met by the invention of ten pins. When the selling of clocks by travelling traders was forbidden in Alabama, the Yankee clock pedlers let them on lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years. Ordered to close their bars at midnight, the San Francisco liquor-sellers shut their doors as the clock struck twelve, and opened them five minutes afterwards for the next day's business. The Civil Rights Act ordained that negroes were for the future to be placed on the same footing as the whites at "inns, public conveyances by land or water, theatres, and other places of public amusement." In the North the Act was quietly ignored. In the South, where that could not safely be done, it was evaded. Upon a negro pushing his way into a pew, occupied by a white lady, the minister immediately dismissed the congregation. Managers of places of public entertainment sold all their admission tickets to one gentleman, who announced his willingness to dispose of them at treble the price he paid, "allowing a discount in certain cases"—that was, when the applicant chanced to be of the right

colour. Hotel-keepers closed their establishments for a few days, re-opening them as boarding-houses, which were not included in the Act; and one ready-witted bar-keeper avoided that inconvenience by issuing a notice that, owing to circumstances unnecessary to recount, he was forced to adopt in future the following rates: "Beer, by the glass, ten dollars; whisky toddy, fifteen dollars; brandy, straight, twelve dollars; and so on in proportion. To regular customers a liberal discount will be made." The Civil Rights Act, by all accounts, appears to have as fair a prospect of fulfilling its purpose as our own Betting Act, which was to make betting—at least, ready-money betting—impossible. Yet book-makers and backers are still to the fore, giving and taking the odds. The bettors upon commission are, indeed, condemned to voluntary exile, and can no longer advertise their business or their "prices;" but they console themselves with knowing that the law cannot prevent them letting their friends know where they live, nor exclude the "betting at Boulogne" from the columns of the sporting papers; and, by putting this and that together, those inclined to back their fancy get all the information they require. As for the poor tipsters, threatened with extinction, they have transformed themselves into editors; their circulars into duly registered newspapers, wherein they discourse after their wonted fashion, and advise their subscribers of good things and certainties, all enactments to the contrary notwithstanding.

SOLDIERS' DRESS.

THE most savage tribes have been of one accord with civilised nations, as to the expediency of a special garb for war. The red and yellow ochre that besmear the grim face of a Cheyenne brave, as he takes up the tomahawk against the detested whites; the black and vermilion blazonry of an Apache chief; form no unmeaning display in the eyes of the wearers, since every streak and shade has been dictated by immemorial tradition. It was the same with the tinted feather-work armour and gold gorgets, of the Mexicans who vainly confronted Cortes. Every Indian there knew his own tribesmen by the fillet bound around the head, and his cacique by the nodding crest and hauberk, gorgeous with the plumage of the humming-bird and paroquet. But the first actual uniform of

which we read was that of the Great King's body-guard—those Persian Immortals, with golden suns flashing on their broad breasts, whom it was the proudest boast of the Greeks to have crushed at Marathon.

The Greeks themselves—soldier-citizens, from the mounted dandy who fought on horseback, to the sober spearman who left his shop, to take his place in the front of the bristling phalanx—went to war, as they went to labour, in close-fitting tunic and greaves; and it must have been difficult, save by the device on the shield, to have known the militia of Argos from that of Athens, or the Spartan from the Theban. It was easy to point out the Roman legionary, laden like a beast of burden, shod with nailed shoes, and conspicuous by his tall helmet and the long buckler, with S.P.Q.R. upon it, that protected almost his entire person from Jewish javelins or Gaulish arrows.

The colours of the clan tartan, at Killiecrankie and Prestonpans, no less than when Agricola marched against the wild Scots, rendered it facile for one Celt, in the confusion of battle, to recognise a kinsman or an enemy; but during the long struggle on English ground between Danes and Englishmen, it was very difficult to tell friend from foe, so alike, at a little distance, were the peaked helmets and gleaming mail-shirts of the combatants. In strictly feudal times the same inconvenience was often felt. No one could, of course, pretend to give uniforms to a forty-days' army, the units composing which might very possibly, six months later, be arrayed in rebellion against the very monarch under whose standard they marched. Hence it became of the utmost importance to remember the personal badges of the principal knights and lords, since a falcon-crest, a dragon-shield, or a lion-broidered banner could alone serve as the rallying-point of regiments and brigades.

As we enter on the gunpowder period, the time when there were nearly as many arquebusiers as pikemen in the ranks of the infantry, we find white shirts, worn over the steel armour or the leather jerkin, in great request as a means of distinguishing the stormers, when a night attack was made upon a town. This was notably the case at Geneva, where mummers yet rehearse the all-but-successful escalade of the Papist Savoyards; while Scott has made picturesque use of the practice, in Quentin Durward, as an incident of the

recapture of Liege by Charles the Bold of Burgundy. "Save me from my friends!" was the motto of assailants thus attired; nor was the precaution useless, for, even at Waterloo, blue-clad officers of British light cavalry were shot down, as Frenchmen, by the 67th of the Line.

The Free Companies that, in mediæval Italy, earned their bread at the expense of the peaceful population—half-robbers and half-mercenaries—were too loosely held together by the bonds of discipline to be dressed alike. But the Swiss in the pay of Italian princes—those formidable hirelings, prized by their masters, but hated by the natives of Italy with a hate such as we in England, whose hearthstones have never resounded to the swaggering step of a foreign soldier, can scarcely realise—wore the quaint distinctive High-German garb. The Pope's Swiss halberdiers wear it, slightly modified, to this day. The English bowmen—half of them supplied by the city of London—who won Agincourt, made no attempt at uniform. When they marched down Cheape, no doubt, they were decently clad, with flat caps, gray or blue hose and jerkins, arm-brace, bow, and quiver. But they were in rags, without cap or shoe, when their cloth-yard arrows turned the scale of victory.

The redoubtable Turkish Janizaries—the "new soldiers," as their name denotes: long the finest body of disciplined troops in Europe or Asia—were perhaps the first to wear a regular uniform. The very sight of their high head-gear, decorated by a sleeve, in remembrance of Hadji Bektash, their founder, once carried consternation among the opponents of the Crescent, on the Danube or beside the Bosphorus. The Yammacks, too, a sort of Turkish Marines, abolished by Sultan Mahmoud at the time of the massacre of their better-known comrades, wore a blue and gold jacket, only too familiar to the unwarlike Levantines.

Presently, as monarchs grew richer, and power more centralised, certain colours came to denote the armies of various continental countries. The Spanish yellow, the Austrian white, the Swedish blue, were proverbial long before the Bourbons began to attire their grenadiers in white coats, and before anyone in England dreamed of a permanent uniform. During the civil wars, Royalist and Parliamentary dressed anyhow, and a field of battle must have been as many-coloured as an old-fashioned flower-garden—Sir Byng's Greens, or my Lord of Derby's Blues, coming into colli-

sion with Harrison's Red Lambs, or the Hazlerigg Cuirassiers, in sad-tinted cassocks. But what the officers of both factions wore, when they could beg, borrow, buy, or steal it, was the buff-coat, proof against sword-cut and spent-bullet, worth some eighty or a hundred pounds of our money, and the loss of a specimen of which, in a lawless raid of pillaging Cavaliers, the husband of Lucy Hutchinson so piteously bewailed. At last Cromwell's taste in military tailoring prevailed, and the red coat was definitively established as the wear of British soldiers. Our insular scarlet, first seen beyond seas at the siege and taking of Dunkirk, had the merit of being unique. No continental infantry, with the exception of the Swiss regiments in French pay, wore red. The Scandinavian countries, then of greater political weight than they now are, dressed their troops in blue. The semi-disciplined host of the Grand Duke of Muscovy, or, as some began to style him, His Czarish Majesty, wore gray gaberdines, or greasy sheepskins. The far mightier emperor at Vienna ordered white coats for Croat and Pandour, Bohemian and Illyrian. During the eighteenth, and the first few decades of the present century, the authorities at the Horse Guards appeared to regard the British soldier as a live doll, to be dressed so as to combine the minimum of comfort with the maximum of display. The pattern, to be sure, was a German one, but successive commanders-in-chief and their zealous subordinates were always trying to improve upon their model, to stiffen the spines, to tilt up the chins to a more unnatural angle, and to tighten the belts of the smartly-drilled defenders of their country. It reflects no small credit on our soldiers, that in strangling stocks, strapped, braced, and buckled to the uttermost, and excruciatingly tight about the knees, they contrived to scramble up the Heights of Abraham, and, at Lincelles and San Sebastian, found their way over breach and wall.

Eighty years ago, a young recruit, whose hair had been carelessly cropped by the regimental barber, was often unable to shut his eyes on account of the remorseless dragging back of the forelock to serve as a fulcrum for the artificial pigtail, without which he dared not come upon parade. Serious petitions at about the same date were presented to the king, praying that his Majesty, on account of the dearth of bread, would excuse the suspension of the general order that the army should appear

with powdered heads, and entering into elaborate calculations as to the amount of flour daily wasted in whitening the locks, not of the regulars alone, but of the militia, pensioners, fencibles, yeomanry, and the many regiments of red-coated volunteers which then converted England into the likeness of a monstrous camp.

The gay Hussar uniform, and with it, for light cavalry alone, the moustache, were borrowed from the enemy during the long war with France, and the innovation was greeted with sneers, of which we may see some faint reflex in the minor poems of Sir Walter Scott. The experience of Waterloo augmented the picturesque appearance of our Household Cavalry, by the adoption of the French cuirass. Gradually the light of common sense began to filter through the chiaro-oscuro of Horse Guards' tradition. First the pigtail was lopped off; then the hair-powder was brushed out; next went the tightness at the knees, and the preposterous gaiters. Presently, in the heat of the Crimean struggle, and sorely in despite of sundry respectable Peninsula martinet generals, the sacred stock itself was tampered with, the belts loosened, and the upper lip, and for that matter the lower lip too, of the foot soldier, was exempted from the razor. Of late years it may be safely said that every change in soldiers' clothing and accoutrements, on both sides of the Channel, has been made with a view to his improved health and greater efficiency. Abroad and in England, much ingenuity has been expended in lightening the knapsack, in preventing the pressure of the cross-belts on heart and lung, and in devising tunics, caps, and great-coats, which should be slightly, and yet comfortable. A perfect uniform may perhaps never be devised, although the late Emperor Napoleon, when he attired his famous Zouaves in oriental apparel, believed that he had found one; but it is at all events fortunate for those who fight our battles that we have got out of the old-world groove of pipe-clay, impossible shakoes, and tight coatees.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XLII. A MOTHER'S DARLING.

WE have now to accompany another traveller, upon the same line of rails that bore Cecil Landon and Rose Mytton to

their destiny, some six months ago. It is late autumn with external nature, but in the heart of Hugh Darall beats the eternal spring. He has parted from the girl he loves, but only for a while, for he has her promise to be his bride in a few weeks. His heart is full of sweet and precious thoughts of her. Even the intervening time that lies between to-day and his marriage morn, is not without its own happiness. He is going to see his mother in her new home, which is presently to be also his and Gracie's. The old lady is devoted to him, and the tidings that he brings her will, he knows, be eagerly welcomed. Thanks to the good offices of Sir Hercules, and his own merits, he has obtained an appointment, which, although very slenderly remunerated, will enable him, with his pay, to wed. His income, all told, will not even amount to that proverbial three hundred pounds a year, upon which everybody, who is anybody, knows that it is "madness" to marry.

Fortunately, Darall and Gracie were nobodies, to whom, therefore, that stringent rule of society did not apply. They were going to "risk it," and, notwithstanding the danger of the experiment, very happy they both were in the prospect of so doing. It would certainly be a love-match, yet not altogether brought about by thoughtless passion. Circumstances, as we are aware, in the person of the commissary—himself a somewhat too ardent swain—had precipitated it; and it had some sanction for Gracie at least, in the confidence which her dead mother had always expressed in the object of her choice. Gracie had told him as much, and Darall had replied, "And when *my* mother comes to know you, darling, she will have confidence in *you*—with much more reason for it—and only wonder why I didn't run away with you, appointment or no appointment, when I got my commission." They had talked great rubbish together, in short, from which—please to take notice—we have quoted but that single extract.

There was no lovely damsel in distress for money for her railway ticket in Darall's case; he met with no "interesting" adventures—some philosophers would tell us because he was in no humour for them—but travelled in peace, and with pleasant dreams over his cigar in the smoking carriage, to his journey's end. He got out at Pullham, because he had to arrange some business there, and afterwards walked by a short cut of five miles across the fields to

Grantham, whither his portmanteau had preceded him. The quiet beauty of the evening mingled with his own bright thoughts, and "made their round complete." It is not to the eye of the young and hopeful that the "happy autumn fields" bring the tears of divine despair; the memory of the days that are no more does not intrude upon them; they look before, not after, because their brightest days are in the store-house of the future, not the past. Beyond the last stile was the little inn with which we are acquainted, the Stranger's Rest. And there Darall enquired for his mother's house, Wold Cottage.

"You pass the rectory, sir, yonder, and then straight on till the second turning as leads to the moor; it's the only house there is after that," were the directions given to him.

But there were other houses to pass beside the rectory; one a small, verandahed dwelling, called—as he afterwards came to know—The Casket, from whence, though the lights were in the windows, he heard a pleasant sound of laughter from the hidden garden at its back. "Those are healthy folks," thought he, "who stay out to the last in the open-air." One pure laugh—it was Rose's—went to his very heart, for it reminded him of Gracie's mirth.

Wold Cottage, although so called from its proximity to the moor, was itself buried in trees, and would have been hard to find, but for the light it showed as he drew near, not at the window, but at the open door. There stood his mother, lamp in hand, which she had carried out from her little parlour at the first sound of his footstep; she had already given two wandering tramps the same fiery welcome, and they had cost her some alarm and a shilling, but here was her Hugh at last, in whose arrival all fear and mischances were forgotten. She was a little gray-haired woman, aged, but still vigorous, and with a bright look in her eyes—that the glad tears could not quench. For some time she was not very communicative, she uttered little else except, "My boy, my boy," which simple words, however, had a certain eloquence of their own, and occupied herself with an affectionate scrutiny of his face and limbs. Then finding him safe and sound, and unchanged in all respects—which was in her eyes equivalent to perfection—she began to talk a little.

"You have brought your uniform with you this time, my darling, I do hope."

"No, indeed, mother, I have not," returned he, laughing; "one doesn't wear one's uniform on survey, you know."

This was the only ground of discontent the old lady had ever had with her beloved son. He would not visit her in uniform, and she had never seen him in anything more gorgeous than the attire of a gentleman-cadet. It was so cruel of him not to take her to church one day, accoutred with his sword and shako. Thus apparelled, she felt sure he must look like an archangel.

"And how do you like your new house, mother?"

"It is perfect, dear, every way; only so much too big for you and me."

"Then it would hold another person, perhaps—another lady—if absolutely necessary? Eh?"

"Lor', Hugh, you don't say so! It's Gracie, of course!"

He nodded; and she threw her arms about his neck and blessed them both. She had been prepared for this piece of intelligence ever since he had begun to mention Gracie in his letters—now more than a year ago. And though she had never said a word to him on the matter, had guessed what use he would make of his "government post," as she called his modest appointment, should opportunity offer.

"And to think that I have never set eyes on your darling yet," said she, with a smile and a tear.

"I have her photograph in my pocket, mother; and you will see the original in a month or two."

To see her pore over Gracie's picture, and then compare it with Hugh's honest face, was as good as a play.

"I am sure I shall love her," said she. "And she's very pretty, very; but not quite pretty enough—that is, for you, dear."

"But she is quite pretty enough for me, I do assure you, mother; or for anybody else, for that matter."

"Oh, for anybody else, of course, Hugh; but—perhaps I'm partial——"

"Oh, I see. You mean that she is not so pretty as I am," cried Hugh, bursting into a roar of laughter. "Well, then, I do think you are just a little partial, mother."

The old lady shook her head as though in contradiction of this view; but we have reason to believe that her opinion was as her son had stated, and that it remained unshaken. Never was such a merry party

of two—considering they were, in years, as June and January—as those two that evening. Mrs. Darall had sent her one little maid to bed, so that they could sit up and chat as long as they pleased without interruption.

After the subject of Gracie had been exhausted, which, however, took a very long time, we may be sure, and even included a mapping out of the cottage, in contemplation of the new arrangements, the old lady began to talk of her own affairs. The village was charming; “but as for the people, my dear, of course, I know nothing of them as yet; nor should even have cared to know, perhaps—that is in the way of society—but for this change in your plans, which will of course render it necessary. The clergyman, a Mr. Welby, has called upon me, and was very kind and sociable. He says I shall find a certain Miss Helen Mytton most delightful, which I suppose means that he is in love with her; men—that is, some men,” added the old lady hurriedly, “take every goose for a swan under those circumstances.”

“I am afraid some mothers take the same view of their ganders,” observed Hugh, slyly.

“I believe they do,” answered the old lady, innocently; “and nothing is more ridiculous. How lovelily your moustache is getting on, my dear!”

“The gander’s down,” murmured Hugh; but she took no notice, her faith was of that exceptional kind which is not affected even by ridicule. “It was very good of Gracie,” she continued, “to let you come down to your old mother.”

“Gracie always does what is right,” returned Darall, simply. “Moreover, she is quite content to remain for the present where she is, thanks to the kindness of her friend Mrs. Landon.”

“There’s a Mrs. Landon here at Grant-ham, by-the-bye,” remarked the old lady; “a sister of that Miss Helen Mytton the vicar raves about; she was only married the other day, and is now on her wedding-trip. I suppose the next bride at Grant-ham will be Gracie.”

“Well, our wedding will take place in London, mother, since Gracie’s hostess is so good as to wish her to be married from her house, and her own home is out of the question. But we shall soon return hither; as we shall not have much money to spend in touring.”

“Mr. and Mrs. Landon make a short tour too,” observed the old lady, for whom

marriages had always an interest—as they do have with all good women—and had just now a special attraction by reason of Hugh’s engagement; “not because of a light purse, however, but because he has so much to do. He has to run all about the country, it seems, though the headquarters of his business are in London.”

Who has not experienced, from their dearest and nearest, and especially when they grow old, these uninteresting disquisitions upon young Mr. and Mrs. Jones, their neighbours, the narration of whose history makes us wish that happy pair dead, buried, and, above all, forgotten?

“It seems so curious,” continued Mrs. Darall, “that you should have come down straight from your Mrs. Landon’s house to a village like this, and find another Mrs. Landon.”

“It is not a very uncommon name, mother,” said Hugh, suppressing a yawn. “Is it not getting rather late?”

“Dear heart alive!” cried the old lady, consulting a venerable silver watch, “I daresay you are tired to death with your day’s journey.”

On the morrow, Hugh was taken out for what his mother called “a trot,” a word which had more significance, in an equine way, than she imagined; for no horse-dealer was ever more eager to trot out his four-legged property for the admiration of beholders, or would have been more eager to conceal its defects had any existed, than was this excellent old lady in the case of her son. As they passed by the Vicarage, Mr. Welby, who was at work in his garden, came out to greet Mrs. Darall and to claim an introduction to her soldier son.

He was very pleasant and cordial, and “you and your mother must come and dine with me next week to meet our bride and bridegroom,” were his parting words.

“Why does he call this Mrs. Landon ‘our bride?’ enquired Hugh, laughing; “will he use the possessive pronoun to Gracie also, I wonder?”

“Well, you see, he will be your clergyman, my dear,” replied the old lady, to whom the church and all connected with it was a matter of sincere though somewhat mystic adoration.

“Oh, I see, it’s a question of tithes,” returned Hugh, gravely. “Then he will only claim a tenth of her after all?”

“I suppose so,” said the old lady, simply. “But with respect to Mrs. Landon, he is very intimate with the family at The Casket; that is the name of their house,

and there it is. And, oh dear me! I suppose this is the famous Miss Helen."

It was indeed Helen herself, who, as they drew near the cottage, stepped out from the verandah and met them face to face.

She bowed, and held out her hand to the old lady. "I was about to do myself the pleasure of calling upon you, Mrs. Darall, this afternoon, and I must not pass you in the street without a word."

Then Hugh was introduced, and as their way lay in the same direction, the three walked on together quite socially. Mrs. Darall was a little nervous with strangers, but Helen's natural and gracious manner soon put her at her ease. When Helen spoke of the neighbourhood and its objects of interest, the old lady politely answered, "But you have left out your own house, The Casket, Miss Mytton, which Mr. Welby tells me is the prettiest place of all."

"Oh, but the vicar is not to be credited on that point," said Helen, laughing. "He is always wild about our cottage, because, I suppose, he gave it its name. However, such as it is, I hope you will soon come and judge for yourself. My sister, Mrs. Landon, and her husband return on Saturday, after which we shall hope to see our friends, old and new."

"My son has a great friend of the name of Landon," observed Mrs. Darall, looking towards Hugh.

"Oh, indeed," said Helen. "I don't think he can be related, however, unless very distantly; my brother-in-law has no near belongings."

"My friend's business is chiefly in town," observed Hugh; "though he has of late been much engaged in the country."

"Well, so far, there is a coincidence," smiled Helen. "My brother-in-law's headquarters are in Greythorn-street."

"Ah, his namesake's are in Wethermill-street. It is curious, because I have heard Cecil's father say that there was no other house of business in London of the same name."

"Cecil!" said Helen, stopping short. "Did you say Cecil?"

"Yes; my friend's name is Cecil."

"Well, that is remarkable; for my brother-in-law's second name is also Cecil, though he is always called by his first name, Henry. Indeed, I should not have known that he had a second, had I not seen him sign it in the marriage register."

"I never heard of Hugh's Cecil having

any second name," observed Mrs. Darall; "if he had, I should certainly have known it, for at one time—that was when he was a cadet at Woolwich—the boy talked of nobody else; I used to get quite jealous of Mr. Cecil Landon."

"He was the brightest and the most agreeable, if not the cleverest fellow I ever knew," observed Darall, thoughtfully.

"But he does not treat his wife well," put in the old lady; "and so he is just now, very properly, in disgrace with Hugh."

"You should not say that, mother," observed Darall, gravely; "one is rarely in a position to hold the scales between man and wife."

"That is true," said Helen; "one knows so little about the real circumstances of anybody."

It was an observation less pertinent than she was wont to make; her manner was abstracted, and she spoke with an effort very unusual with her. In a few minutes she stopped at a labourer's cottage, and made a visit there the excuse for taking leave of her two companions.

"Now I call that a very nice young woman," observed Mrs. Darall. "Mr. Welby says she is always doing good to somebody, and that the parish would miss her, if she left it, a good deal more than it would the vicar himself."

"That's why he wants to make her the vicarress, I suppose, and so secure her to the parish," remarked Hugh, smiling.

"I daresay it is," answered the old lady. "He seems a very unselfish sort of a man; but, then, every young woman is not bound to fall in love even with a clergyman for parochial reasons, though she might have much worse. Do you know, my dear, I am rather sorry I didn't tell her you were engaged?"

"Good heavens, why?" enquired Hugh.

"Well, I think it was rather hard upon the vicar. He's not very good-looking and not very young; and the contrast between you and him, my dear, could not fail to have struck her. Did you not notice how silent and thoughtful she seemed to grow all of a sudden; and yet she could not keep her eyes off you? That is very significant, in my opinion. I am sorry I did not tell her—of course in some indirect and delicate way—that you were engaged."

"Perhaps I had better carry a board to that effect, like the advertisers in the streets," observed Hugh, dryly. "I daresay

we can get one with 'Engaged' upon it, at the railway station."

CHAPTER XLIII. THE RECOGNITION.

MRS. DARALL had been right enough in her diagnosis of Helen's case so far as ten symptoms were concerned; she had grown silent and thoughtful in Hugh's company, while her eyes had strayed in his direction in spite of herself; but the old lady's notion that all this was caused by love at first sight—that the girl had fallen a captive to her son's charms, was, to say the least of it, premature. Helen had scarcely bestowed a thought on Hugh, except so far as a possible connection between him and her brother-in-law, Henry Landon, was concerned; but that idea had been overwhelming. That the christian-name of two Mr. Landons should in each case be Cecil, was rather remarkable; that they should both have their head-quarters in town, though their business lay much in the country, made the coincidence stronger; and these two circumstances, taken together, would have been quite sufficient to make Helen uneasy in her mind.

From the first moment she had made acquaintance with Landon, she had, as we have seen, mistrusted him; but when, contrary to her expectation, he had returned to Grantham, and given reasons more or less plausible for his change of purpose, Helen had endeavoured to persuade herself that jealousy upon her sister's account—the apprehension lest he should break up their happy little home—had set her against him. His account of his material position had satisfied Mr. Welby and the family lawyer, and even Helen herself was obliged to confess that the man was earnestly in love with Rose; that that was no passing fancy on his side, which was repaid with such blind confidence and devotion on the other. Under such conditions it was impossible to oppose the young people's union, and in due time—for it had been by no means what could be called "in haste"—they had been married. The interval had been marked by conduct on his part that was somewhat singular. Considering the independence of Mr. Landon's pecuniary position—which had itself been effected, even according to his own account, with unusual suddenness—his movements seemed to depend very much on other people. From the day of his engagement, he had established himself at the Stranger's Rest, but he seemed liable to be called away from Grantham at

a moment's notice. Even Rose observed of him that he was always "flying south" like Mr. Tennyson's swallow; and "the south" was generally the extent of the information vouchsafed to her as to where he was going. He had replied with such marked emphasis on one occasion "Not Wellborough," when someone had enquired whether he was bound for that town, that it was understood he did not like being questioned as to whither business called him. It was not known, therefore, how often he went to London, though he certainly had been there once to get the special license by which he had insisted on being married. The vicar was greatly scandalised that this had not been done by banns in the usual manner, but so far Helen had agreed with Landon, since it had saved her sister the being stared at, during "publication," by three Sunday congregations.

For the rest, Helen could not deny that her new brother-in-law was a very agreeable young fellow, though, for special reasons, he had failed to make a pleasant impression upon herself. And here again was another source of uneasiness to her, in the account Mr. Darall had given of Landon's namesake. "He was the brightest and most agreeable, if not the cleverest fellow I ever knew," he had said; which would have been a fair account, in a friend's mouth, of Cecil himself. So far, and by itself, this might have been only another coincidence, albeit it was the third; but taken in connection with the sentence previously spoken by Mrs. Darall, "for at one time—that was when he was a cadet at Woolwich—the boy talked of nobody else," it had for Helen a terrible significance. Rose, who laid up in her memory every word her lover had spoken to her, even at their first meeting, had told her sister that he had been educated "with some intention of being an engineer;" he was certainly a judge of drawing—though not in a very artistic way—and had often given Helen herself the benefit of his advice, which had been considerable, respecting her own calling. Up to this date, Helen had always concluded that the profession he had thus hinted at was that of civil engineering; but those simple words, "when he was a cadet at Woolwich," had opened a new door for suspicion, and thrown down at once all the slender barriers of comfort and security, which she had striven to erect for herself as respected Rose. If Rose's husband, being, as he

confessedly was, Cecil Landon, had also been a cadet at Woolwich, he must almost certainly be identical with Mr. Darall's friend, who was a married man. Of course, it was possible that her brother-in-law had not been at Woolwich, but the bare notion of it, with its appalling consequences, had so overwhelmed her, that she had taken the first opportunity of leaving her two companions, with whom she felt utterly unable to converse any longer. Her call at the labourer's cottage—though she was a constant visitor in such places—was a mere pretext for getting home, and considering this momentous matter in all its bearings.

Of Mrs. Darall's coming to Grantham, Landon knew nothing; Hugh's appointment had not been conferred for some months after he had received the promise of it, and the Wold Cottage had not been taken by its new tenant until after Landon's wedding. Upon his return, therefore, he would unexpectedly meet his friend—if his friend he really were—face to face. The *éclaircissement*, if such there was to be, was immediately impending; and Helen, alone at The Casket, had now to contemplate it, with what courage she might now possess. Courage she had, and also a good store of common sense; but it is doubtful, with her passionate devotion for her sister, if even with these aids she could have faced the consequences of the impending catastrophe, had she not still entertained hopes that it would not take place. Her reason bade her prepare for the worst; but sentiment came to her relief. She could not bring herself quite to believe that any man could be so infamously wicked as this Landon must needs be, if her suspicions were indeed correct; above all, she could not think it possible, that one so good and innocent as her darling Rose could be permitted by Providence to be the victim of such an infernal scheme, as her imagination had conjured up. She would take counsel of no one; for what could be the use of counsel, if the thing she feared were true? And, if it were not true, how shocking was the imputation that she would thus have falsely made against the man whom her darling Rose loved above all men. If she told Mr. Welby for example—and she had her reasons for not making him more of a confidant than necessary—what a revelation it would be to him of her real feeling towards her brother-in-law, for which, after all, there might be no just

grounds! No; she must bear this burthen of suspense on her own shoulders, with only a little hope to prevent it from being intolerable.

Had she dared to pay her promised visit that afternoon to the Wold Cottage, she might, indeed, have put an end to her suspense. One or two questions addressed directly to this Mr. Darall concerning his friend would, she was well convinced, have settled the matter one way or the other. But she did not dare to put them, lest it should be settled the wrong way, and doubt be ended by despair—for if her fears were justified, Rose was ruined.

So that day and the next "dragged their slow length along," and then came Saturday, on which the bridal pair were to return. Her sister, knowing how lonely Helen would feel, had written to her oftener than young women on their honeymoons generally find time to write, and her letters had been full of happiness. In her heart, it was clear, no doubt had arisen of the man with whom she had elected to share her lot in life. She spoke of him with rapture; but deplored the devotion to business which seemed to prevent "dearest Henry" from thoroughly enjoying anything, through anxiety lest matters should go wrong in his absence. "And yet, as you know, ours is an exceptionally short tour; and even the hardest-worked of mortals—as I tell him—gets a holiday when he is married."

This information, written perhaps to "fill up" a sheet of note paper, now weighed like lead upon poor Helen's heart; for might not this "anxiety" be the worst of all anxieties—namely, that arising from the fear of detection? She thought it also suspicious that, notwithstanding the press of business thus hinted at, not a single letter had arrived at Grantham for her brother-in-law; to prevent which, he must either have taken unusual precautions, or informed no one of his whereabouts; indeed, the letter was almost certain, since the landlady of the Stranger's Rest had volunteered the statement that, "even when the gentleman was there, he never got no letters."

But when Rose came home at last, looking so happy and so beautiful, and her husband all smiles and pleasant talk, Helen almost forgot her fears. It could not, could not be, that he was a heartless villain, and that all her Rose's bliss was doomed to be destroyed, like a flower blighted by sudden frost. The vicar had angled for an invitation to meet the young

people on that first evening of their return; not that he really cared to do so, but was pining to see Miss Helen, to whom, being alone at The Casket, he had not been able to pay his court as usual; but she had steadfastly refused the bait. Mr. Welby would have been almost certain to relate among his budget of news, that Mrs. Darall and her son had taken up their quarters in the village, and Helen did not wish her brother-in-law to be informed of that circumstance. To be "forewarned" with him—supposing him to be guilty—would be to be "forearmed," and he would be sure to make some excuse for not meeting the new-comers. At church, next day, both parties would be present, and she resolved carefully to watch for any sign of mutual recognition.

Mrs. Darall had been so far correct with respect to the impression made by her son on Helen, that it was a favourable one. She had judged him rightly to be frank, manly, and unused to the arts of deception; and if Landon were indeed his old friend and schoolmate, she felt sure that she should read as much in Darall's face.

Never had the little church at Grantham held a larger congregation than on the Sunday after the return of the bridal pair. Everybody who was on visiting terms at The Casket had brought their congratulations with them for presentation after service; all the others came to express the same, as far as it could be done by staring. Even the vicar on his way to the reading-desk, with cast-down eyes and folded palms, as is the orthodox manner, stole a glance of welcome towards The Casket pew with its three occupants.

It did but just hold three. Landon on the outside, looking very pleased and proud; Rose next to him; and then Helen, her eyes fixed anxiously on the white-washed gallery opposite, in which were the two "sittings" that "went with" the Wold Cottage. Their tenants were a little late, through Mrs. Darall having insisted upon coming in pattens—articles in those days used commonly enough on muddy roads, to the advantage of the wearer as to cleanliness, but rather to her detriment in the way of speed. Darall looked in his hat for the usual half-minute, and then took a survey of the edifice, while the bassoon and other antediluvian instruments, which did duty for an organ in the humble sanctuary, gave forth their preli-

minary strains. Helen watched his eyes wander over the pulpit with its old-fashioned sounding-board; the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue that hung above her pew, with ten fire-buckets—like a commentary—below them; and then elsewhere, over the font, with the children of the village school sitting around it, and the schoolmaster with his long hazel wand, with which, throughout the service, he would flick the most distant of his refractory pupils, as a dextrous coachman "touches up" his leaders, or a skillful angler throws his fly. If Mrs. Darall had been given to staring about her in church, she would certainly have noticed how Helen's eyes followed her Hugh's, and drawn a wholly wrong conclusion. At last his roving glance is suddenly attracted—as a needle leaps to the loadstone and there sticks—to the bridegroom, who, unconscious of his scrutiny, is stroking his moustachios, and wondering whether the vicar will allude in his sermon to the marriage in Cana.

Helen sees incredulity, astonishment, horror, take each in turn their place upon Darall's countenance, which is henceforth fixed upon the other's, as a bird is fascinated by the serpent, albeit the serpent does not, as yet, look his way. He must needs do so, however, presently; and Helen now watches him solely. She will know well enough, by the expression in his face, when his recognition of Darall shall, in its turn, have taken place. Now the priest prays, and now the people, and now again all join together in praiseful harmony, but poor Helen can neither pray nor sing. Even when she kneels upon her hassock, her eyes shoot athwart her unconscious sister—thanking heaven, perhaps, at that very moment in her pure heart, for so good a husband—and are riveted on her brother-in-law. The thing happens at last, while the congregation are singing. Landon is weary, and has just covered his mouth to hide a yawn; this is fortunate, for, as his glance wanders to the gallery, his jaw drops as though he were a dead man. For one instant, his eyes strive to start out of his head, and then are turned upon his book. His face is as white as the face of the dead. "God help us!" murmurs Helen, with a devotion that not all the concentrated piety of the congregation could have approached; "God help us, for this is indeed the man!"

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BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER XVI. WHAT NICK AND BASIL THOUGHT OF IT.

"WHAT I think is," said Nick, a reflective or a displeased frown denting his forehead, "that you have been in too great a hurry."

"You think I am too young to be married?"

"No, I don't say that."

"That I might have secured a more eligible husband?"

"I won't say that, either. But you ought not to have acted so entirely on your own responsibility. You seem to forget that there are other people in the world besides yourself—I mean people to whom you owe some deference."

"You mean yourself, Nick?"

"Well, yes; myself chiefly. You see I am older than you, and, of course, I have had very much more experience of life, and of the world, than you; and I am the head of the family. I feel that I haven't been treated properly. Really you've acted as though I did not exist. You make all your arrangements; you decide to do this, that, and the other, without the slightest regard to me, or to my opinion in the matter. I am not even spoken to on the subject. You don't take the trouble to communicate to me a word of your intentions. I am left to discover by the mere accident that you are engaged to be married. Now I don't call that treating me properly."

"I am very sorry, Nick; it was an oversight."

"Yes; but such oversights ought not to occur. I like things to be done regularly, and formally, and considerately. I am not at all sure that Mr. Leveridge ought not to have addressed himself to me in the first instance. I rather think he should have ascertained, before paying his addresses to you, that his doing so would be quite agreeable to me. It is, I fancy, the rule in these cases, before taking any active steps, to consult the heads of families, and ascertain their views and wishes."

"Yes. But though you're a few years older, Nick, that does not make you my legal guardian, or give you any distinct power over me."

"I don't know about being your legal guardian. Perhaps not. Still it ought not to be forgotten—you ought not to forget—that I am the eldest, and that respect should be paid to me on that account. Besides, I suppose, my opinion is worth having, especially on such a subject as this."

"No doubt, Nick. But have you anything to say against Mr. Leveridge?"

"Well, I don't know that I have."

"Am I wrong to accept him?"

"I won't say that. I think Mr. Leveridge is a very good sort of man."

"I think so too. It's true that he is old and ugly."

"He's not young, of course. I don't see that he's ugly, at least not very ugly."

"Do you think he's like Punch?"

"No, I don't see it. I couldn't see it years ago, when Basil first mentioned it. It was Basil's nonsense; he's too fond of nonsense. Mr. Leveridge's face is rather red, perhaps, and his features are large;

but they are not a bad shape. Besides, it doesn't much matter what a man's like. Women, of course, ought to be good-looking; with men it does not much signify."

"You would not marry a woman who was very old and plain?"

"I wouldn't."

"Not if she was very rich?"

"Not if she was ever so rich. But what's the good of asking me such questions? I'm going to marry Catalina."

"You are? Is it a settled thing? She's accepted you?"

"There you are again in a desperate hurry. It's a settled thing so far as I'm concerned, but not more than that. She has not accepted me, because in point of fact she's never been exactly asked to accept me. But of course she will accept me when the proper time arrives."

"When will that be, Nick?"

"I can't fix the date, if that's what you mean. But we're both young; and, by-and-by, I shall get on, and be in receipt of a salary upon which I can afford to marry. Then I shall ask Catalina to marry me."

"You take for granted that she'll accept you?"

"Why not?"

I could not answer him. I thought he was talking absurdly. But, after all, he might be right; she might accept him when, as he said, the proper time arrived. He was very handsome; and, if he was dull, he did not know it; and he was wonderfully resolute and self-reliant.

"And you think it doesn't matter much what a man is like?" I said presently.

"It ought not to matter. But, of course, there are many foolish women in the world, and some of them are quite capable of refusing a man—a thoroughly eligible person otherwise—simply because they don't like the shape of his nose, or the colour of his hair. I call that disgraceful nonsense."

"But you, Nick, you wouldn't marry a woman if her nose was of an ugly shape, or her hair was carrot?"

"That's different. A man only chooses someone he likes, or that takes his fancy for some reason or another. He asks for what he wants. Women can't do that, you know; it wouldn't be allowed for a moment. They have to sit still, and wait patiently, until an offer is made to them."

"But they are not bound to accept the offer when it is made?"

"Well, no; perhaps they are not abso-

lutely bound to accept it. But they ought to have very good reasons to show for rejecting it. For, you know, a woman ought to get married; it's her business to get married. I may almost say that that's what she's sent into the world for; and she ought to be very careful how she throws away a chance of obtaining a husband. There are not so very many husbands to be had, after all. They say every woman has a chance of a husband once in her life, at any rate. But we must not forget that there are many more women than men in the world. So, a woman ought to think twice before she says No. It's really almost her duty to say Yes. She mustn't set up for being so very particular."

"Well, you can't blame me, Nick; I haven't been so very particular."

"I don't blame you, except for being in such a desperate hurry. Of course, you are young and inexperienced, and did not think much about what you were doing. I approve of your saying Yes; but there's a sort of decency to be observed on these occasions. You were not obliged to decide on the instant. It would have looked better—more, what I should call, modest, you know, if you'd required a little time to consider. Of course I am taking it for granted that Mr. Leveridge did not bind you down to give him an answer then and there, all in a minute. I feel sure that he would have waited while you consulted your friends and relations; by which I mean myself chiefly."

"Well, Nick, I'm sorry it has so happened; but, as you have not really any objection to offer, I can't think 'my desperate hurry,' as you call it, is of much consequence."

"No; only there's a principle in these things which should not be lost sight of. I have not any objection to offer. I only wanted an opportunity of objecting if I had thought it advisable to object; but I have nothing to say against Mr. Leveridge. As we agreed just now, he's not young, and you consider him ugly. He's not handsome, certainly—we can't all be handsome. I can admit, indeed, that he's what I should call plain. But he's very well off; and, of course, that has to be considered. I had rather he wasn't an artist."

"You object to artists?"

"Well, I think artists are rather open to objection. They're not tradesmen exactly, and yet they are not quite profes-

sional men. And there's something about them and their ways of going on that isn't quite respectable, I always think. I don't profess to understand much about art and pictures; but all their fussing and muddling with brushes, and paint-pots, and varnish, seems to me rather childish and contemptible."

"But Mr. Leveridge is really a famous artist."

"So I'm told. And they say he sells his pictures for very large prices—for hundreds of pounds sometimes, which quite proves to me that there are a lot of very foolish people in the world. For my part, I cannot say I care about his works."

"You disapprove of them?"

"Well, if you ask me, I think them quite detestable. I don't think such things ought to be allowed. It's very well to talk about high art, and beauty of form, and so on; but while people wear clothes, they ought to be painted with them on. People are not always bathing. Nature, indeed! I'm sure it's much more natural to be dressed than to be undressed. I do hope, when you're married to Mr. Leveridge, Doris, you'll try and make him see the error of his way, and paint in a different way."

It was difficult to resist laughing; but Nick was as grave as a judge.

"I'm sure of your blessing, then, when I'm married, Nick?"

"Oh, certainly," he said with a certain solemnity of manner. "I shall be very happy to give you my blessing. And I shall make a point, at whatever inconvenience to myself, of being present in church to give you away. And while I'm upon the subject, I may say, Doris, that I should very much like to offer you something handsome and appropriate in the way of a wedding-gift. But, as you know, my means are not considerable. I do manage to put by a trifle now and then, and I've saved a small sum out of my salary. But then, that's for a particular object. I can't help looking forward to the time of my marriage with Catalina, when of course I shall want money to buy furniture, and things of that kind. Still I fully intend to give you something worth having, you know, Doris, even though its value may not be inordinate. I thought of a nice silk dress, and I daresay I could get one at wholesale price, for I've friends in the silk-mercantile and Manchester warehouse line of business. I should like to get a good, stout, serviceable silk. I don't

so much care about the colour, or the pattern; and, if it should be a little out of fashion, as to that I don't suppose it would be of so much consequence. You may rely upon my doing something for you of that kind, and I honestly wish I could do more. For I should not like it to be said, that your family did nothing for you upon such an occasion as your marriage. It's true you're marrying a rich man; but that's no reason why your friends and relations should not help you as far as they can. And now, I think I've said all I've got to say, and so I'll go."

Thereupon Nick kissed me with calm, and sober, and rather patronising affection, studied his watch carefully, drew on his gloves deliberately, and—went on his way.

Presently Basil arrived, looking pale—but then he usually looked pale—and somewhat worried. His manner displayed considerable nervous irritation.

"I've heard of this thing quite by chance, Doris," he said quickly.

"Nick has been telling me that I ought to have formally communicated the matter to my friends and relations, and especially to him, as the head of the family."

"I won't stop to discuss that. Nick is absurd, of course. He's been here, you say? Well, he's right-minded enough usually. He told you that this marriage ought not to be?"

"No, Basil, he said nothing of that."

Basil looked disappointed.

"It is a thing we might have foreseen," he said moodily. "It threatened. I may say, from the first. Not that I charge him with calculation in the matter. I do think he meant only, simply and honestly, to be kind. He was without plan or premeditation, or *arrière pensée*. Yet, what has happened was sure to happen. How could he be near you, Doris, day after day, and not love you? He could not but admire you, and he could not but love you. For his age—I don't know that age is so sure a defence against folly, as the world believes. A fool's cap too often clothes a gray head."

"You are angry, Basil?"

"Yes, I am angry, in a weak and helpless way. For I can but be weak and helpless in such a matter. Doris, be frank with me. Must this marriage be?"

"It seems so. I suppose it must."

"Don't, for Heaven's sake, be listless, or apathetic, or fatuous about it. My sister, you don't need to be told that your life's happiness is at stake."

"What have you to say against Mr. Leveridge?"

"Nothing, except that he should not be your husband. You don't pretend to say that you love him?"

"I don't pretend to say that I love him."

"You marry him because we are so poor?"

"Perhaps."

"That is the real curse of poverty! It tempts us to do unworthy, ignoble things to become rich. Doris, we can be poor and yet preserve our self-respect, however much we may forfeit the respect of others. For the world does not, it cannot perhaps, afford, to respect the poor."

"You forget, Basil, how kind Mr. Leveridge has been to us."

"I don't question his kindness. I shall never forget it."

"But you forget how long I have been dependent upon him."

"Too long, since this is to be the end of it. But it seemed so natural a thing, that he should hasten to befriend and assist us in our hour of keen trial. He was so much older; he belonged to a past generation; he was more than old enough to be a father to us; and had been—there is something absurd in the very mention of it now—the lover or the admirer of our mother before we were born. How could we think, when he offered himself as your guardian, that he was to present himself by-and-by as your husband? Doris, this thing makes me mad when I think of it."

"I'm very sorry that it should distress you, Basil."

"I jested about it when it seemed at a distance. Now, when it is really at hand, I own I am fairly ashamed. My sister, you believe that I love you?"

"I am sure that you do."

"You cannot be happy as this man's wife."

"Is that so sure?"

"Well, I can't deny that the ordinary and conventional means of happiness and comfort will be yours. So far as food, and raiment, and matters of that kind go, you will be well cared for. Nor would I do Mr. Leveridge injustice. I would not refuse homage to his many excellent qualities. He is kind to a fault; he is of tender nature; he is not capable of an unworthy thought. There is much, I may say, that seems to me ennobling in the occupation of his life, even though he may

be disposed to lay stress rather upon its mechanical than its intellectual conditions. Still, Doris, I cannot bring myself to believe that Mr. Leveridge should be your husband, that even any moderate proportion of happiness can possibly result from your marriage with him."

"Yours is a gloomy view of the case, Basil."

"Indeed, my view is more gloomy than I like to say. Even if you love no other, Doris—and that is so?"

"That is so."

"Still I must think that the time will come, when you will feel a cruel void in your heart, unfilled by your husband, or by your love for him. For of course you do not, you cannot, pretend to say that you love him. Does a woman, I wonder, tease herself with no vision of an ideal husband, as a man tortures himself with musing over an ideal wife? And when the ideal takes form and flesh, and becomes a real and breathing creature—what then?"

"But, Basil, it is folly to talk like this. What alternative is open to me? Say I break off this intended marriage; what then?"

"My sister, it is very hard to decide. I do so wish you to be happy. Yet on which side does happiness lie? Who can tell me? For alternative there is only this. Quit Mr. Leveridge; come to me. Share my life of poverty. I live the life of an artisan; I am content to earn bread and cheese, and to subsist upon what I earn. The times are very hard. My life is one almost of misery. All I can do is to offer to share it with you. Say you will entrust yourself to me and I will work myself to a thread paper, my fingers to the bone, but I will earn enough for the subsistence of both of us. This is a wretched offer to make to you. No one knows its wretchedness better than I do. Still, Doris, it is all I can do at present. The future may have happier days in store for me. Heaven grant that may be so. And I am not without hope of winning success, and even prosperity, in the days to come. But just now my life is what I have said. You have heard my offer. You shrink from it; it offends, it frightens you. Be it so then. I can do no more. God bless you, my sister. Be happy, if you can, in the way you have chosen. I hope, indeed, that happiness may be possible to you as the wife of Mr. Leveridge. Good-bye, dearest."

There were tears in his eyes as he stooped

and kissed me. And indeed our tears mingled literally. For his words were spoken in so tender and sympathetic a tone that I could not help crying like a child. And so he left me.

OLD FRENCH ACTORS.

PRÉVILLE.

It would be no easy task to determine the relative superiority of the three great tragedians who, at various periods, have illustrated the stage of the Comédie Française, Baron, Lekain, and Talma. With regard to the two first, we must be contented to rely on the appreciation handed down to us by their contemporaries, and, though many still exist who have known and admired the last of the trio, yet even these, however enthusiastically they may extol his merits, can, of course, only compare them with those of other actors they may have seen, without any reference beyond that of mere hearsay to his celebrated predecessors. Each of the three, indeed, appears to have possessed his own individuality, and to have attained his eminent position by the sheer force of genius, unaided by the example of any model worthy of imitation; the decease of Baron and the birth of Lekain having taken place in the same year, 1729, and the latter dying in 1778, at which date Talma was hardly fifteen years old. We will therefore conclude that each has fairly a right to be considered the best representative of tragedy during the period in which he lived, and being unable to assign to either the palm of supreme excellence, divide it equitably and impartially between them.

In comedy, the case is different; rich as the French theatre has always been in this particular speciality, it is acknowledged that, since its establishment in the Hôtel de Bourgogne to the present day, its annals record the name of no actor who has enjoyed during a career of upwards of thirty years a larger share of public favour than the subject of our notice, or whose claim to supremacy is so universally unquestioned and undisputed. Inseparably connected with the most important dramatic novelties of his time, endowed with a versatility enabling him to personate, with equal perfection, the entire range of comic characters from Molière to Beaumarchais, Prévillè has left behind him a reputation which has become proverbial, and which none of

his contemporaries, with the single exception of his still greater rival, our own inimitable Garrick, have succeeded in attaining.

Pierre Louis Dubus (the name of Prévillè having been subsequently assumed by him) was born in Paris, September 17 1721, and received his first rudiments of education at the Abbey of St. Antoine his father occupying the post of steward to the Abbess, Madame de Bourbon. Finding the paternal severity, and the extreme parsimony which regulated the expenses of the household, little to his taste, our hero, in concert with his four brothers, decamped at an early age from the family abode in the Rue des Mauvais Garçons, determined to exchange the strict discipline of a semi-monastic training for the uncontrolled delights of liberty. How his brethren fared is not stated; they probably discovered that penniless freedom has its inconveniences, and, perhaps, after a few weeks' experience of "la vache enragée," ultimately returned home. Pierre Louis, however, steadily pursued his idea of independence; and as soon as the trifling sum of money he had amassed by sou was exhausted, courageously began life as a mason.

A month or two of hard toil and almost nominal pay sufficed to convince him that the constant handling of bricks and mortar was more laborious than profitable and we find him ere long copying deeds in a notary's office, and already combating a vague leaning towards the theatre. This inclination, however, encouraged by divers visits to the gallery of the Comédie Italienne grew stronger and stronger, until, at length abandoning the legal profession with infinitely more satisfaction than he had felt on entering it, and turning a deaf ear to his father's angry remonstrances, he resolved to follow his own bent, and become an actor. Having once made up his mind as to his future profession, he set to work manfully, and by dint of persevering study under the practical superintendence of the clever comedian Dehesse was in due time qualified to join a company of strolling players, earning a precarious livelihood in the smaller towns and even villages of France.

Step by step, although by slow degrees he gradually improved his position; those who had seen him act mentioned him to others, and the success of the young debutant having been finally reported by certain influential amateurs to the manage

of the Dijon theatre, he immediately engaged him. Unfortunately for Prévile, the inhabitants of that mustard-producing locality, totally insensible to anything approaching finesse or delicacy of expression, had a peculiar relish for broad farce; and, in order to please them, exaggeration in its wildest form was indispensable. The new comer was therefore compelled in self-defence to sacrifice his artistic scruples to the Bœotian propensities of his audience, and would probably have eventually degenerated into a mere buffoon, had not a timely and advantageous opening at Rouen rescued him from this degradation.

The habit, however, of over-acting had so grown upon him that he was unable even there to restrain his mirth-provoking sallies within the bounds of good taste; more especially as the public of the Norman capital were, as regarded refinement, not a whit in advance of his Dijon patrons, but encouraged him by their applause to persist in what he himself felt to be a downright desecration of his art. One spectator alone, a little hunchback, had the courage to dissent from the general verdict. Invariably occupying a seat in the same box, and never missing a single performance, he continually, while Prévile was on the stage, held his thumb downwards as a sign of disapprobation, after the manner of the frequenters of the Roman amphitheatre, when the vanquished gladiator in vain implored their mercy. This strange pantomime puzzled our hero, and he resolved to ascertain the motive of his critic's displeasure; nor had he long to wait for an explanation. One evening, after the curtain had fallen, the little hunchback came behind the scenes, and addressed a few complimentary remarks to each of the actors in turn, with the single exception of Prévile, who, annoyed at the slight cast upon him, boldly asked the visitor why he had passed him over in so contemptuous a fashion. The hunchback eyed him for a moment in silence, then taking him aside, said in a low tone; "Nature has been more than ordinarily bountiful to you, but you are doing all in your power to render her gifts of no avail. If you wish to know what I mean, come and see me to-morrow, and I will tell you." Such a chance of unravelling the mystery was not to be neglected, and Prévile was punctual at the rendezvous. The interview lasted some time, and at its conclusion the actor, convinced that he had hitherto

chosen the wrong path, determined in future to adopt the suggestions of his friendly adviser, and reform his style altogether. On his next appearance, his altered manner, and studied sobriety of tone and gesture, were evidently not to the taste of the audience, who looked at each other in amazement, and seemed more inclined to hiss than applaud; the little hunchback, on the contrary, enraptured with the docility of his pupil, evinced his satisfaction by repeated manifestations of approval. As, however, notwithstanding his mentor's enthusiasm, it was impossible for Prévile to risk displeasing the entire public for the sake of a solitary individual, he was reluctantly compelled during the remainder of his stay at Rouen to return to his original mode of acting; but he never forgot the lesson he had received, and in after life frequently referred to it as one of the most fortunate incidents in his career.

From Normandy he went to Lyons, and while exercising the twofold functions of manager and actor in that city, was summoned to Paris, where the death of Poisson had left a vacancy in his particular line of parts at the Théâtre Français. A month later, September 20, 1753, he appeared there as Crispin in the *Légataire*; and, in spite of the popularity of his predecessor, at once satisfied the connoisseurs that they were not likely to be losers by the change.

The difference, indeed, between the two artists was sufficiently striking; Poisson, ugly and awkwardly built, but endowed with so marvellously comic a face that his very aspect threw the house into convulsions of laughter, had adopted a habit of stuttering, the effect of which, added to his singular physiognomy, was irresistibly droll; his humour was broad, unctuous and genial, but wholly wanting in delicacy and refinement. His successor, on the other hand, had the advantage of a pleasing countenance, and a slight but well-proportioned figure; the easy grace of his movements, and the infinite variety of expression in voice, look, and gesture, contrasted not unfavourably with the shambling gait and indistinct delivery of the former Crispin, and any doubt the Parisians might still have entertained as to their relative merits, was speedily set at rest by the exclamation of an amateur in the pit: "Poisson est mort, vive Prévile!"

To this important event in theatrical

circles, Dorat, in his poem, *La Déclamation*, has the following apropos allusion :

Poisson, qui si longtemps amusa tout Paris,
Descendait dans la tombe escorté par les Ris.
Préville vient, paraît; il ranime la scène,
Et Momus aisément fait oublier Silène.
Préville! Ennuis, fuyez! fuyez, Soucis affreux!
Son nom est un signal pour rallier les Jeux.
Il reçut le grelot des mains de la Folie,
Et bégayant encore, il vola vers Thalie.

A similar triumph to that obtained on his first essay by the new recruit attended his successive personations of Crispin in *Les Folies Amoureuses*, and Sganarelle in *Le Médecin malgré lui*; and subsequently in *Le Mercure Galant*, where he displayed his rare versatility in six different characters, the enthusiasm of the public knew no bounds, and he was unanimously pronounced to be the most accomplished actor that had hitherto trod the French stage. On October 20th he performed in the last-named piece before Louis the Fifteenth, and so enchanted the monarch that he immediately exempted him from any further début, directing the Maréchal de Richelieu, the lord in waiting on the occasion, to announce to him at once his reception among the Comédiens du Roi.

Two anecdotes, relating to Larissolle, one of the six characters in question, are worth recording. A soldier in the Prince de Conti's cavalry regiment, passing a few weeks on leave in Paris, happened to see Préville play *Maugrebleu*, a trooper of his own stamp, in *Les Vacances des Procureurs*, and was so delighted with his evening's entertainment, that as soon as the curtain had fallen he found his way behind the scenes, and grasping the astonished Préville by the hand, embraced him with the most cordial demonstrations of affection. "Ah! Monsieur Préville," he exclaimed, "if I knew anyone inclined to do you an injury, I would snuff him out like a candle!" Our hero, as in duty bound, thanked his new acquaintance for this highly flattering offer, and they parted with mutual assurances of goodwill. A few days after, the bills announced the repetition of *Le Mercure Galant*; and the trooper, or to give him his right name, Jolibois, took his station in the pit among the first, and awaited with anxiety the entrance of his friend. As the piece progressed his enthusiasm increased, until the moment when Préville reappeared in the uniform of Larissolle; Jolibois stared as if he could not believe his eyes. "Ah, le chien!" he cried, rushing out of the theatre in a transport of despair; "he

has deserted from the cavalry, and enlisted in the infantry!"

The other incident occurred at Fontainebleau during the representation of the same comedy. A sentinel, placed at one of the side-scenes, perceiving an apparently drunken soldier with a pipe in his mouth on the point of passing him, strove in the most urgent manner to prevent him from advancing. "For heaven's sake, comrade," he whispered, "keep back, unless you wish me to be marched off to prison." Larissolle, or rather Préville, with some difficulty succeeded in forcing his way on to the stage, where his entry was the signal for a tumultuous burst of applause, a dénouement certainly little expected by the conscientious sentry.

From the date of his reception to his final retirement, a period of thirty-three years, this unrivalled comedian not only sustained with a success hitherto unexampled the leading comic parts in the ancient répertoire, but created an inconceivable variety of types in the works of contemporary authors. He was the original Figaro in *Le Barbier de Séville*, Antoine in *Sedaine's Philopseph sans le savoir*, Géronte in Goldoni's *Bourru Bienfaisant*, and Brid'oison in *Le Mariage de Figaro*. Whatever he attempted was a fresh addition to the long list of his triumphs, and it is difficult to imagine how the same actor could represent with such consummate ability characters so entirely opposite, as Freeport in *Voltaire's Ecossaise*, Stukely in *Saurin's Beverley*, and Michau in *Collé's Partie de Chasse*. The last-named writer speaks of him as being "admirable, astonishing, even for those whose age renders them less susceptible of astonishment." Horace Walpole alludes to him in 1774 as "always perfection;" and the accomplished painter, Madame Lebrun, has the following passage concerning him in her *Recollections*. "His acting was so true to nature, that those who have since tried to imitate him have only succeeded in producing an imperfect caricature." But, perhaps, the most exact and appropriate eulogy of his talent is comprised in the subjoined extract from the *Memoirs* of his comrade Fleury. "Préville was a model for actors, as Mademoiselle Dangeville had been for actresses. A graceful exterior, profound intelligence, gaiety, sensibility, and vivacity, he possessed them all. He acted comedy as Molière wrote it."

And yet, notwithstanding his popularity, and the consciousness of having fairly

earned it, Prévile was not wholly satisfied with the result of his labours; far from being contented with the laurels he had already attained, he perpetually aspired to a still greater degree of perfection; and ascribed what he considered his comparative inefficacy to the over-indulgence of the public. One evening, when surrounded by a circle of admirers in the foyer of the Théâtre Français, he expressed his regret that hissing was no longer allowed in the pit. "I have witnessed more than one instance," he said, "where an actor has been applauded, when he ought to have been soundly hissed. Nay, I even confess to have myself occasionally indulged in buffoonery for the sake of exciting a laugh. If the first time I so far forgot myself, some well-meaning spectator had treated me as I deserved, the lesson would not have been lost, and I should now be a better comedian than I am."

In M. de Pixérécourt's celebrated collection of autographs, dispersed many years ago, one of the most curious items was a document in four pages folio, entirely in Prévile's handwriting, and embodying his ideas how the character of Tartuffe should be played. The result of these reflections may be given in his own words: "Il faut jouer Tartuffe comme Molière l'a fait. Est-ce un ecclésiastique? Non. Molière était trop sage pour attaquer ce corps respectable. Est-ce un homme de robe? Non. La même raison s'y oppose. Est-ce un bourgeois? Non encore. C'est un personnage général. Il est donc défendu à un acteur d'affecter à ce rôle une sorte de condition, et de le vêtir en conséquence."

From this it will be seen that Prévile, in the midst of his multifarious occupations, found ample leisure for the practical study of his art; a portion of his time was also devoted to the instruction of the younger actors, and his successor Dazincourt—of whom he is reported to have said that he was "an excellent comedian"—relates an example of the wholesome severity of his counsels. "I had just left the stage, and the applause of the public was still ringing in my ear, when I met Prévile, looking more than usually serious. 'Are you aware of what you have been doing?' he asked; to which I replied, that I had endeavoured to act my very best. He shook his head. 'You are writing your name on sand,' he said; 'extravagant gestures and false intonations may attract the vulgar, but they are repugnant to the man of taste. Re-

member, that a smile of approbation from a real connoisseur is worth all the inane enthusiasm of the multitude; the one is a tribute to your intelligence, the other, a rebuke to your folly.'"

Unlike many of his fellow-performers, he was always ready to sacrifice his own individual interest to the general effect of the ensemble, and bestowed as much attention on the personation of an insignificant part, as if the entire piece depended upon it; whatever character might be assigned him, he carefully analysed it before coming to rehearsal, and, on being cast for Freeport in Voltaire's *Ecossoise*, suggested several alterations to the author, which the latter, convinced of their utility, adopted without hesitation.

Beaumarchais had been most anxious that Prévile should follow up his success in the *Barbier de Séville*, by undertaking *Figaro in La Folle Journée* (better known as *Le Mariage de Figaro*); the increasing infirmities of age, however, compelled him to decline it in favour of his pupil Dazincourt, and content himself with the relatively unimportant part of *Brid'oison*. To this Beaumarchais alludes in a letter dated March 31st, 1784, nearly a month previous to the first representation of the comedy. "We were both mistaken, old friend," he says; "I was afraid that you might retire before Easter, and you imagined that the *Marriage of Figaro* would never be played. . . . Two years ago, my friend Prévile would have ensured the success of my five acts; and, even now, the charm conferred by him on a smaller part will make every one regret that he does not play the leading one." We may add, apropos of this famous piece, that, after the opening performance, Prévile ran up to *Mademoiselle Contat*, the *Suzanne* of the night, and cordially embraced her, exclaiming, "This is my first and only infidelity to *Mademoiselle Dangeville!*"

Lekain often reproached Prévile for his carelessness in financial matters, and urged him to economise, and retire from the stage, as soon as he had amassed a sufficient independence; enjoining him at the same time not to count on the durability of popular favour, and reminding him that those who applauded him to-day would be equally inclined to hiss him to-morrow, if he failed to amuse them. Prévile acknowledged the wisdom of this advice; but such was his natural easiness of disposition, and inability to resist the impulse of the moment, that he wholly neglected to follow it, and

spent his salary as he received it, less, it must be owned, for his own enjoyment, than for that of others. His servant, who lived with him for thirty years, and who, luckily for Prévaille, was honesty itself, had no regular wages, but asked him for money as he wanted it. This singular personage considered himself as part of the family, and was so extremely jealous of his master's reputation, that, on one occasion when the latter was invited to a social gathering, he gravely put his veto upon it, saying, "Monsieur forgets that we play the *Barbier de Séville* and the *Mercure Galant* to-morrow; monsieur must be careful, or we shall not do ourselves justice."

The following instance of Prévaille's good-natured simplicity in worldly matters is too characteristic to be omitted. A provincial actor out of engagement, named St. Amand, came to him one evening and solicited a lodging for the night. His request was immediately granted, and finding his quarters to his taste, he deferred his departure from day to day, much to the annoyance of Madame Prévaille, who warned her husband that he would never get rid of the unwelcome guest. "Poor fellow!" he replied, "let him remain as long as he likes!" Seventeen years later, St. Amand was still an inmate of the identical room in which he had been installed on the night of his arrival, and only left it on his succeeding to a small inheritance, which obliged him to quit Paris.

Prévaille's retirement took place in 1786, the piece selected for his farewell performance being Collé's *Partiede Chasse*, in which the veteran, although sixty-five years of age, acted Michau with the gaiety and spirit of his youthful days. Shortly after he took up his abode at Senlis, where he enjoyed a pension from the *Comédie Française*, and another from Louis the Sixteenth, amounting together to nearly five thousand livres. This separation, however, from the theatre he had so long and so gloriously illustrated by his talent was not definitive; in 1791 his comrades, already suffering from the effects of the Revolution, and straining every nerve to attract the public, rightly judged that the name of Prévaille would still possess its wonted influence on the receipts, and despatched Fleury to Senlis with a petition signed by the united members of the company, earnestly beseeching him to return. The appeal was not made in vain, and on November 26th of the same year the bills announced the revival of *La Partie de Chasse*, Collé's

popular comedy having been chosen for his reappearance by Prévaille's express desire. His reception was a perfect triumph, and each of his subsequent performances in the principal characters of his répertoire was hailed with universal delight. During the stormy period of the Reign of Terror he lived in comparative retirement, but again rejoined his old companions in 1794, and for a few months devoted his gradually failing powers to the interest of the theatre. Early in the ensuing year, his memory, weakened by age and over-exertion, at length gave way, and he felt himself incapable of further effort. "I have played for the last time," he said, after once more undertaking his most popular personation, *Le Mercure Galant*, and he kept his word.

His wife, whose maiden name was Madeleine Angélique Drouin, and whom theatrical annals deservedly record as one of the best actresses of her day, died in 1798; and of the three children of their union, one daughter alone survived, married to M. Guesdon, Treasurer of the Département de l'Oise. In her residence at Beauvais, the retired comedian passed happily and peacefully the remaining years of his life, and finally breathed his last towards the beginning of 1800, at the ripe old age of seventy-nine. Shortly after his death, M. de Cambry, Prefect of the Département, caused a monument to be erected at Beauvais to his memory; and a piece, written by Messrs. Chazet and Dupaty, and entitled, *Le Buste de Prévaille*, subsequently afforded the Parisians an opportunity of paying a farewell tribute of homage to their time-honoured favourite.

Among the numerous portraits existing of this celebrated actor may be mentioned one in the part of Crispin, painter and engraver unknown, underneath which is the following quatrain:

A voir Prévaille et la manière aisée
Qui règne dans sa voix, son geste et son regard,
On dit; sous le manteau de l'art
C'est la nature déguisée.

He is also represented, together with his wife, in a scene from Destouches's *Tambour Nocturne*; the original painting on vellum by Fesch, now in the possession of an English collector, is a little artistic gem. The best, however, both as regards resemblance and execution, is the one drawn and engraved by Romanet; beneath it are inscribed Boileau's lines to Molière, for whose name that of the comedian has

been intentionally substituted. They are equally applicable to both :

Préville avec utilité
Dit plaisamment la vérité ;
Chacun profite à son école !
Tout en est beau, tout en est bon ;
Et sa plus burlesque parole
Est souvent un docte sermon.

ROUND THE WORLD.

WE are progressing. That, I suppose, is by this time a pretty-generally recognised fact. Personally, however, I don't know that it has ever been brought, as the saying is, much more home to me than it was this morning, when the postman brought me, in answer to enquiries respecting a certain advertisement which had caught my fancy, a polite invitation from Messrs. Grindlay and Co., to a little "yachting voyage round the world." It is something—not much—more than a quarter of a century since I last took that pleasant little journey. The Great Exhibition was still open when I sailed, the Great Duke just dead when I returned. Those five-and-twenty years have made a considerable difference in many things; but looking now at my old log of 1851-2, now at my just-received invitation for 1877-8, I am inclined to doubt if they have produced many stranger contrasts than that which has flavoured my coffee this morning.

A voyage round the world was a "big thing" in those days, and involved some preparation. I was a youngster then, just home from school, with my sleeves half-way to my elbows, and my inexpressibles half-way to my knees, and a considerable gap between the latter and the lower edge of my waistcoat; and the doctors, despairing of quinine and iron—"steel" we used to call it in those days—and sulphuric acid, and all the rest of it, had come to the conclusion that the only way of dealing with a young gentleman who, at sixteen years of age, persisted in standing six-feet-five in his stockings, was to pack him off on a voyage of, at least, proportionate length. It didn't take much knowledge of geography to point out that New Zealand was the only part of the world at all capable of fulfilling this condition; so to New Zealand it was promptly decided that I was to go. If I didn't grow an inch or two taller on the spot, it was simply because my frame had happily no potentiality of growth left in it.

And then, for some three months or so, my approaching voyage became the centre

round which our little household world revolved. Dear me! if one of Messrs. Grindlay's beautiful hot-pressed circulars had only come to hand then, how quickly the carriage would have been ordered round, and at what a pace my poor old dad would have driven up to town, to secure a berth on board the Sumatra. But little steam-yachts, of some two or three thousand tons, didn't go on pleasure-trips round the world in those days, and at least a month's anxious search was necessary before the parent birds could quite satisfy themselves as to the particular ark, in which they could trust their long-legged fledgeling to the flood. And when they had found her, she wasn't three thousand tons, by any means, but just eight hundred, and a big ship too, as ships went then. And when the ship was found, there was the outfit—and something like an outfit too—for the good ship Canterbury did not propose to spend a day at Bordeaux and another at Corunna, and two or three more at Lisbon, and so on, surveying the world, or the coast-line thereof, not only from China to Peru, but from Peru back again to China the other way. There was no prospect then of getting a clean shirt at Penang, or just stepping ashore for a paper-collar at Yokohama. Three months, at least, must be calculated upon—four months we managed to make it—between Gravesend and Port Cooper, and not a washerwoman or a tub of soapsuds all the way. I believe, if the ship had not sailed till now, some fresh item of absolute necessity would still be turning up for that outfit every day.

And so at last we got to sea; and, as we stuck our nose out beyond the Foreland, the strong westerly breeze came dancing up to meet us, and the good ship, skittishly disposed, no doubt, after her long confinement in the dingy dock, was nothing loath to accept the invitation; and a shower of books and biscuit-tins, and other light articles from without, combined with equally unmistakable admonitions from within to warn me that neither the one class nor the other of my belongings were by any means so thoroughly "cleated down" as they ought to be. They settled down, however, before we got to New Zealand, the inner man especially recuperating in a surprising manner, and developing powers of assimilation, which, towards the end of the voyage, when the fresh provisions were all gone, and crew and passengers alike reduced to a some-

what limited menu of salt horse and pea-soup made with sea-water, became rather inconvenient. Taken altogether, indeed, a voyage round the world was not at that time seasoned as the Sumatra's is to be, by a "cuisine similar to that found at the best hotels." I hear great things of Australian preserved beef and mutton nowadays, and have received more than one invitation to civic and other feasts composed entirely of these succulent comestibles. But, in my time, the popular superstition was, that the masses of warm stringy substance, which even a sea-going stomach stoutly refused to assimilate, were manufactured chiefly at Coldbath-fields—of oakum not sufficiently well picked to serve any other purpose. On the whole, I think I have met with popular superstitions which had less apparent foundation.

Looking back through the old log, it is astounding and, perhaps, a trifle humiliating, to find how large a proportion of it is occupied with matters of this kind. To be sure, when you are four months at sea, without setting eyes upon so much as another ship for more than three of them, the ministry of the interior is apt to assume more importance than that of foreign affairs. It will be a different thing on board the Sumatra, no doubt, hardly ever out of sight of land, and with at least half-a-dozen days ashore in some new place of interest for every week afloat. But when breakfast and dinner are the sole events of the day, the most philosophic mind may be pardoned for taking some interest in the question of what they will consist. And, accordingly, I find my "principal events" run much as follows: "Such a day; lat. so and so; long. so much; killed our last sheep." "Such another day and so forth; killed our last pig." Or again: "Cow run dry, no more milk." Or yet again, and this evidently the most painful incident of all: "Capt. So-and-so just bought up the last half-dozen of brandy for his own drinking. Indignation meeting in the cuddy!" Think of that, ye sybarites, sipping your iced champagne in the luxurious saloon of the Sumatra!

Nor was it only on the outward voyage that these little contretemps would occur. Quite otherwise. We weren't half-way from New Zealand to Australia, when everything on board, except the salt-beef, gave out altogether; and the salt-beef was what the knowing hands in the fore-castle recognised as "fine old crusted Port Philip,

five years in cask." One of the men, a handy fellow, who had spent a good portion of his life on board a Greenland whaler, offered to carve snuffboxes out of it at a shilling apiece; but as there was never enough to go quite round the table, his genius languished for lack of material. And yet again, going up through the Pacific to San Francisco, with a highly "assorted" cargo of coals and time-expired convicts, we managed to go a little farther yet, and just succeeded in beating into Honolulu harbour, not only with hardly a pound of meat of any kind on board, but without a pint of water either.

And yet, what fun it all was! How we supplied the warmth which should have been drawn from the missing brandy, by stamping vigorously, hour after hour, up and down the deck just over the cabin of the enterprising passenger who had secured that last half-dozen! With what a splendid appetite did my friend E. and I sit down on the night of our arrival in Melbourne, to that quarter of a lamb, which we at once voted as not worth carving; and how heartily did we enjoy the astonished face of the waiter as, after a quarter of an hour or so of steady, almost silent, work, we looked up—E., from his polished shoulder-blade, and I, from my equally-denuded ribs—and demanded cold meat! What a triumph it was when—turned out of our hotel into the street, after spending our last sixpence in waiting week after week for the ship in which we had taken our passage to San Francisco—we drove the agent by a peremptory demand for the return of our passage-money into a solemn—say, affidavit—that she would be off the very next morning, and, taking him at his word, went on board that afternoon and lived there at free-quarters for a fortnight or more before she really sailed. How we enjoyed the row which arose when, by-and-by, we crossed the meridian, and the distinguished passengers in the steerage insisted, in the forcible dialect of their tribe, that the skipper's announcement—that the "Tuesday, May 8th," which had just passed, would be followed not by Wednesday, May 9th, as usual, but by another Tuesday, May 8th, again—was a swindle dictated by a paltry desire to economise his particled pork, and swore lustily that there never had been eight days in any week since they were foaled, and that, by so and so, and so and so, there shouldn't be now. And then when the crisis came,

and we in the cabin—there were only three of us—knew that the last bit of grub had been served out, and the last allowance of water drunk, and that unless we could manage to beat our way into Honolulu before night fell, the hundred and fifty or so old convicts in the steerage must know it too. Phew! That was running it rather fine; but there was an excitement about it after all.

Excitement too there was, and plenty of it, in the three days lying-to under a scrap of tarpaulin seized in the mizen rigging, and with the huge seas tumbling in on the decks of the ill-found, over-loaded little barque, which reeled and staggered under them as though every plunge would be her last. Excitement in that somewhat vaguely directed fortnight's run, with the only officer of the ship available for duty, quite content happy-go-lucky Yankee that he was, to take his "lats. and longs." from my amateur observations, which indeed—to judge from the perfect gravity with which he on one occasion accepted my experimental assertion, that I had "got on" my sextant a hundred and three degrees—were, perhaps, after all, of at least equal value with his own. Excitement when our little "wheelbarrow" steamer stuck fast on a snag as we shot the Castillo rapids, on our way across the Isthmus, and seemed more than likely to stay there, till the packet on the other side had sailed, and left us stranded among the mosquitoes and alligators of that pleasant stream for another month at least. Finally, very decided excitement in the ever-recurring question, would the fast lightning-purse hold out until we got fairly home; in the desperate struggle to make the two ends of our voyage meet somehow at last; in that ultimate triumphal landing at Liverpool in the ragged coat and continuations which alone represented the gorgeous outfit of fifteen months back, a clean shirt borrowed from a returning gold-digger on board, and just enough money in one's pocket to pay one's second-class fare to town with a fourpenny piece over for refreshment on the way!

That was the way we travelled round the world in those days, and, as I have said, there was fun in it too. "Forsan et hæc olim" E. and I used sententiously to quote for each other's comfort, when an unusually heavy sea had knocked us gasping into the lee-scuppers, or when that internal vacuum which nature—human nature at all events—abhorreth so far beyond all others, was

setting up a more than commonly clamorous and ineffectual demand. And now that the olim has come, these little contretemps certainly are not unpleasant to look back upon. On the whole, however, if I do make up my mind to go "round the world" again, I am inclined to think that Messrs. Grindlay's floating hotel will be an improvement in the way of doing it.

THE STORY OF A BANK-NOTE.

THE pedigree of a Bank of England note is to be traced as distinctly as that of all celebrated horses, and some celebrated men. Fibre won, after much soaking, bleaching, and other rough treatment, from the flax-plant, is woven in due course into linen cloth; and it is from the fragments of this fabric that the celebrated Bank of England note-paper is manufactured. To say that it is made from rags conveys hardly a just idea to the mind. Rags suggest the basket of the chiffonnier, the dust-heap, the gutter, and tell stories strange enough to those who have keen ears; stories of wealth and luxury, of sordid garrets, of purblind needlewomen, of gay parade, of wedding-bells, of poverty, of tears, and of death. But the romance of the rag-bag is foreign to that eminently respectable "institution" the bank-note. It is not made of rags which have seen better days, but of clean, fresh cuttings—innocent of human contact and devoid of human interest—not portions of actual garments, but the snippings, square, oblong, or triangular, which, when the utmost skill of the cutter of clothes or of shoes has been applied to his work, remain over and above the adaptable material: the winnings, as it were, of fine linen and coarser duck, not without some admixture of cotton. These cuttings are not all of English growth, many being imported from the Continent, whence they arrive packed in huge sacks, and find their way down to a sweet little Hampshire village between ancient Basing and busy Andover, surrounded by smiling farms, and watered by one of those clear and fresh rivulets of "troutful" water, accounted among the "chief commodities" of Hampshire. Here is made, and has been made since its first adoption by the Bank of England, that beautifully crisp, thin, tough, elaborately-watermarked, and musically-rustling paper, on which are printed those promises to pay

“on demand,” which are received with implicit faith in almost every corner of the civilised world.

All the paper made in England previous to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was of the “whity-brown sort—coarse and inelegant.” Such as it was, it had been made at Dartford since the day of that astute German, Sir John Spielman, jeweller to Queen Elizabeth, who built a mill on the precise spot now occupied by Messrs. Pigou and Wilks’s powder manufactory, and, moreover, obtained from her Majesty one of the monopolies she was so fond of granting—to wit, a license “for the sole gathering, for ten years, of all rags, &c., necessary for the making of such paper.” Paper-making and lime-trees are said to have been introduced to this country by Sir John; but, although the trees flourished, the paper was poor stuff until reformed by the exiled paper-makers of the Angoumois. Up to the date of the Dragonnades all the best sorts of paper were imported from abroad, mostly from France; but shortly afterwards the import of paper ceased, the refugees being able to supply as good an article as could be produced elsewhere. According to Mr. Smiles, the first manufactory for fine paper was established in London in 1685; but other mills were shortly after started in Kent—at Maidstone and along the Darent—as well as in other parts of England. That the leading workmen employed in the first fine paper-mills were French and Flemish is shown by the terms still in use in the trade. Thus, in Kent, the man who lays the sheets on the felts is the “concher;” the fateman or vat-man is the Flemish “fassman,” and the room wherein certain operations are performed is still called the “salle.”

Among the refugee paper manufacturers was Henri de Portal, of an ancient and noble family in the south of France, of Albigenese descent. For many centuries Toulouse was the home of the Portals, several of whom were in succession elected “capitoul,” a position of great dignity and power in that city. When the persecution of the Albigeneses set in, the Portals took up arms for their faith, but were scattered by the Crusaders under De Montfort and Dominic. They fled from Toulouse in different directions; some to Nismes, others into the Gironde. Their heresy appears to have been a family tradition; for several of them perished in the massacres, which occurred throughout France

subsequently to the Eve of St. Bartholomew. Under the Edict of Nantes they enjoyed but scant measure of justice, and even that was withdrawn, at last, altogether by Louis the Fourteenth. At the commencement of the Dragonnades Louis de Portal was residing at his Château de la Portalerie, seven leagues from Bordeaux. Endeavouring to escape from the brutal soldiery which had been let loose on the defenceless inhabitants, he set out with his wife and five children, to take refuge on his estate in the Cevennes. The dragoons pursued the family to their retreat, overtook them, cut down the father and mother and one of the children, and burnt to the ground the house in which they had taken refuge. The remaining four children had concealed themselves in an oven outside the building, and escaped, to wander, helpless and footsore, back to Bordeaux, in the hope of escaping from France by sea. They were fortunate enough to secure a passage by a merchant vessel, on board of which they were shipped, concealed in barrels. They were among the last of the refugees who escaped previous to the issue of the infamous order to fumigate all departing vessels, so as to stifle any Protestant fugitives who might be concealed among the cargo. The young Portals reached Holland in safety, where they found friends and foster-parents. Miss Portal became governess in the family of the Countess Finkenstein, and afterwards married M. Lenormant, a refugee settled at Amsterdam; while Henry and William followed the fortunes of the Prince of Orange, accompanied him to England, and established their family on the spot occupied by them ever since.

William subsequently went into the church. Henry, the elder brother, was a proficient in the art of paper-making, and started a mill of his own at Laverstoke, on the River Test, near Whitechurch, in Hampshire—a stream of delicious purity, rising in the range of chalk hills half-a-dozen miles away. Gathering round him the best French and Dutch workmen, he soon achieved high reputation as a paper manufacturer; producing such excellent work, that the Bank of England gave him the privilege of supplying the paper for bank-notes, ever since continued to his descendants, and now enjoyed by Mr. Wyndham S. Portal, whose dwelling-house is historic Malshanger—the house of the Warhams.

Concerning the pellucid Test, bluff

William Cobbett moralises in his quaintest strain. The Test is the "foundation of England's fictitious prosperity," a rivulet, apparently pure, but really Phlegethonic. "There runs that stream which turns the mill of Squire Portal, and which mill makes the Bank of England note-paper! Talk of the Thames and the Hudson, with their forests of masts; talk of the Nile and the Delaware, bearing the food of millions on their bosoms; talk of the Ganges and the Mississippi, sending forth over the world their silks and their cottons; talk of the Rio de La Plata and other rivers, their beds pebbled with gold, and silver, and diamonds. What, as to their effect upon the condition of mankind, as to the virtues, the vices, the enjoyments, and the sufferings of men—what are all these rivers put together, compared with the river of Whitechurch, which a man of threescore may jump across dry shod, and, to look at, is of far less importance than any gutter in the Wen! Yet this same river, by merely turning a wheel, which wheel sets some rag-tearers, and grinders, and washers, and re-compressers in motion, has produced a greater effect on the condition of man, than has been produced on that condition by all the other rivers, all the seas, all the mines, and all the continents in the world." Thus the fervent hater of "rag-money," infuriated at the lessening numbers of his favourite yeomanry, and the tendency of society (by no means weakened since his day) to split into two great divisions—rich and poor. Cobbett was for ever testifying against rag-money, and ascribed to the bank-note nearly all the poverty which existed in his time. The troutful Test, which had the effect of raising the tribune's ire, still supplies the motive power to Laverstoke Mills, through a turbine of very perfect and beautiful construction. As we ring the factory-bell a door suddenly opens, and we are confronted by a magnificent specimen of the English policeman. At first it is not easy to see what a policeman should want in a paper-mill, but the place we have entered is no common paper-mill. There are legends current in the country-side, that the workpeople who once enter its precincts, like those of the old porcelain manufactory at Meissen, never leave it again alive; the proof of the contrary, if it were wanted, being supplied by the prettiest row of workmen's cottages in England, with library and cricket-ground attached. The authority of the present policeman was formerly

exercised by a Bank clerk who dwelt at Laverstoke, and was, by a pleasant fiction, supposed to keep an eye on Mr. Portal and his establishment; that useful organ being more often employed either in watching a trout-fly, or in taking aim at a rabbit. The majesty of the law is now supposed to be safe in the hands of a single police-officer, and the potentiality expressed by a row of special constables' staves.

Following a cargo of rags across the courtyard, we see the great sacks hoisted into a room where some score or more of women are occupied in picking, sorting, and shredding. Each worker sits before a table, in which is fixed an upright blade, like the oyster-opener of New York. Swiftly she shakes the cuttings apart, picks out every vestige of coloured stuff, and casts it aside, as perfect whiteness and purity are absolute conditions of the dainty goods made at Laverstoke. She also, by the help of the fixed upright blade, cuts and tears the larger pieces down to a convenient size. This picked stuff is again overlooked, and the linen carefully sorted from the cotton, so far as the ingenuity of textile manufacturers will permit. Finally passed as eligible material by the forewoman, the rags are piled in enormous bins, and carefully covered over to exclude dust. They are next subjected to a tremendous soaking and washing, the water for which is not drawn from the Test—even that beautiful rivulet not being considered clear enough for this purpose—but from a magnificent well plunging deep down into the chalk. When thoroughly washed, the material is passed on to the pulping mill, wherein it is ground very small indeed. Some four or five hours' pulping reduce the mass to the consistency of porridge, and in a couple more it becomes creamy-looking, and the fibre is considered to be sufficiently disintegrated. A spoonful of this pulp, if thrown into a glass of water, and shaken up, separates immediately into particles of exceeding minuteness, giving the water a delicately clouded, almost opaline, appearance when held up to the light. Having been tested in this way, the pulp finds its way into a strainer of exquisite fineness, where it is met by a stream of water, which dilutes it to the proper consistency—that of weak milk-and-water. Running through the strainer, the fluid reaches a tank, on either side of which stands a workman. One of these, the dipper, is armed with a frame, concerning which a few words of explanation are necessary.

On this frame no little care and ingenuity have been expended. Its size is not very great, being only that of eight bank-notes, or four sheets of paper—each sheet making two notes. Acute observers will recollect that a genuine note has always three ragged or “deckel” edges—so called from the rim of the frame—and one cut edge; as a “right-hand” five-pound note has a blunt corner, and tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands, variously placed indentations in the “right-hand” deckel edge. In mentioning these latter peculiarities, we must—lest we cause a panic—insist particularly that they are only observable on “right-hand” notes; but that the three rough edges and one cut edge are on every genuine Bank of England note. Years ago the moulds on which the water-mark, or rather wire-mark, depends, were made of fine copper wire and wire gauze, stitched together at great expenditure of time. Since the introduction of the larger Britannia in the corner, a more workman-like method has been introduced for ensuring perfect uniformity. A thin sheet of copper is forced into a die, and is then shaved or rasped down till, the lines in relief being cut away, the remainder presents the appearance of a wire model of the familiar water-mark. By this method, the water-mark of one note is not only like, but the exact counterpart of another, and the manufacture of precisely similar notes goes on for ever. That great effects can be produced by a combination of die-sinking, copper sheeting, and wire gauze, is proved by the superb collection of water-mark papers exhibited by Mr. Portal on various occasions, and notably at Vienna in 1872. One of these is of very large size, with Britannia in the centre, surrounded by elaborate designs of grapes and vine-leaves, oak and acorn. Not so perfect, but more interesting, perhaps, are the many specimens of strange water-marks—some with colours interwoven in their fabric—devised from time to time to defeat the persistent forgers of the “one-pound note,” so much easier to “utter” among persons of small means and imperfect education, than the “fiver” which finds its way into the hands of persons of greater wealth, and presumed of more highly-trained intelligence. The experience of a score of years proved that bank-notes of low value will be forged in spite of the gallows, and the issue of these was abandoned in consequence.

When the work of the mould-maker is

finished, the double moulds are fixed in the frame, which we left in the hands of the workman standing by his tank of sky-blue mixture. Holding the frame horizontally, he plunges it into the tank, and, after giving it a shake or two, lets it rest for a few seconds to drain off the water on one edge of the tank, slightly raised for that purpose. This rest is a tell-tale. Yielding to the slightest touch, it communicates with a dial which records every dip as creating eight notes, or rather, four sheets of double note-paper—the count being kept at Laverstoke in sheets. When five hundred—or one ream—is recorded on the dial, the bell rings, and work ceases at the tank for a minute or two. The second workman, who receives the frame from the dipper, has all this time been occupied in performing an operation requiring apparently some considerable dexterity. Seizing the frame with both hands he turns it over deftly on to a piece of fine felting, and, by a sudden movement, detaches it from the frame, and “couches” it on its woollen bed. As the bell rings, announcing the completion of a ream—his work is represented by a pile of felting, between the folds of which lie concealed the thin films of the future notes, in which the water-mark is distinctly perceptible. This pile is now subjected to a pressure of a hundred tons. After this ordeal, the notes are almost dry, and singularly strong, but are further dried by being passed between rollers. They are yet only in their blotting-paper stage of existence, but are already articles of value, and carefully counted by hand and machine. At every stage of growth, the bank-note is carefully counted, checked, and entered, the book-keeping involved in its production being enormous. Each ream is also weighed at the completion of its blotting-paper period, and the workmen—who are paid on a combined system of time, piece, and premiums—receive a premium for every ream which approaches within certain limits the standard of perfection. This is about thirty-five grains for ordinary, and thirty-eight for Indian notes, made thicker to stand the wear and tear of a hot climate. Every ream is ticketed and docketed, with the name of the workman, the date of production, the letter of the vat; and so forth, and these, with its weight, are entered in a book. Then it is counted by hand, and put to rest in an iron-bound chamber. On its release it is examined; sheet by sheet being keenly scrutinised by quick-

female eyes, to detect any holes, weak spots, and thick places, or any excess of weight. Every note judged defective is put aside as a "spoil," and must be properly accounted for. These spoils give a great deal of trouble, as it would be a premium on forgery to allow rejected notes to leave the mills. They are therefore made up into parcels, perforated by a machine, kept careful count of, and finally reduced to pulp again. In olden times they were burned—a solemn auto-da-fé being held now and then in the presence of the Bank Argus previously referred to—but of late years this wasteful process has been superseded by that of resolving the imperfect notes into their original fibre. After due examination, the notes are again made up into reams, the edges are rubbed down, and they are ready for a bath of size. Like all raw material used at Laverstoke, the size is as good as can be made. The notes, between layers of flannel, are passed through a tank full of size at a temperature of a hundred and twenty degrees, and, after being pressed between rollers, are again dried between blankets. There is now more counting by hand and machine, and a final examination. All spoils having thus at last been got rid of, the sheets are laid between leaves of metal, and passed under rollers—in fact, calendered. Perfect at last, they are made up into oblong packages, stored, booked, and finally sent to Threadneedle-street in great heavily-padded boxes, under the charge of the proper officer. Our double bank-note sheet is now complete in all things save printing. In the water-mark are the well-known words, and in addition, the mysterious letters and numerals which record the vat from which the sheet was made, and the date of its production. All the beautiful processes we have barely space to indicate are conducted with singular swiftness, and yet with careful haste, for although the life of every note is watched and recorded from its very birth in the dipper's frame, the Bank of England requires Mr. Portal to produce twenty millions of notes per annum.

Duly water-marked, dried, and packed in reams of five hundred sheets, equivalent to a thousand notes, the paper arrives at the Bank in cases, and is immediately handed over to the Store Department, entered in books kept for the purpose, and stowed away in presses securely locked. Before being served out to the printer every ream is counted—actually counted by human hand and eye. Placing the

ream before him, the counter "fans," in the language of stationers—that is, turns up one angle of the little pile of paper sheets before him so as to throw the corners out into a fan-like form. Long practice enables a skilled counter to tell off as many as four reams per hour, and it is curious to mark how well and how happy these counters appear. To persons who cannot make a dozen fair copies of any given document without making a blunder, this work seems soul-crushing. To sit the live-long day, and tell over and over again reams of embryo bank-notes—money for other people—should be work reducing the operator to melancholy madness, but there is no gleam of insanity in the quick eyes of the tellers. When the tale is found good the reams are handed over to the printer, Mr. Coe, who is bound to return a similar number to his taskmasters. Bank-note paper requires no preliminary damping, but receives the impress which gives it value in a state of perfect dryness. In olden times notes were really genuine copperplate engravings, as can be seen from the curious specimens hanging in Mr. Coe's office. Here we have the primeval bank-note of 1699—its slender framework of print filled in with manuscript—and the now extinct notes for thirty and forty, for two pounds and for one. The latter is an elegant specimen of engraving, but never took hold of popular feeling, as the song, "I'd rather have a guinea than a one-pound note," testifies. In the far North, where money is not, or rather was not, plentiful, local one-pound notes endure till this day; but the southron "pockpadding"—whatever that word of offence may precisely connote—has ever been averse to notes of low value. The Scot, however, seems to carry the world with him, for we have in our travels to and fro encountered many odd specimens of "rag-money"—Austrian notes of the olden times, cut up into fragments to represent fractional currency, and American "shin plasters," postal currency, and wild-cat bills galore. Small monetary deer of this kind encourage the forger, for we recollect that, during our residence in America, the fifty-cent "stamps" were under so much suspicion, that desperation begot confidence and they were "taken freely," good and bad, on the principle that life is not long enough to criticise the merits of half-a-dollar. The English mind has ever abhorred these vanities of paper currency, preferring to repose on a background of solid bullion.

It is now several years since Bank of England notes ceased to be copperplate engravings, strictly so called. They are now produced by surface printing, as it is called; that is to say, from a metal block raised like the box one used in engraving. An ordinary English note requires two impressions, an Indian note three, on account of the green colour introduced into the latter. At the first impression the framework without the date or number is printed, at the second the date, number, and signature are put in. Now, as notes are printed in series of a hundred thousand—save one—a simple but ingenious device, fixed in the plate, revolves as each note is printed off, from the initial ace to ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine. For this reason, and also to increase the difficulty of forgery, five figures are always employed; as, for instance, number one of a series is represented thus, 00001. It may also be added that for convenience the hundred thousandth note is printed by machinery in every respect except the number, which is put in by hand. This note is retained, and is never issued by the Bank. All the printing operations are accompanied by elaborate checks and tallies like those at Laverstoke.

So exactly does all the mechanism work, that in the case of "spoils" a rigid account must be kept, and the few sheets, now and then awkwardly printed, delivered up with the perfect specimens. The printing of a bank-note is prepared for with great care, the "make-ready" for ensuring a perfect impression as to strength and light and shade being particularly elaborate.

The account kept by Mr. Coe is not less remarkable. The days in the Calendar are divided into five-pound days, ten-pound days, and so forth, and this arrangement is so strictly observed that not the slightest difficulty is felt in tracing the individual note to its series. It is, so to speak, pigeon-holed from the very outset and under strict surveillance during the whole of its natural life. Forgery is thus met by the difficulty that there can never be more than one note of a certain value, date, or number, and that when this one has returned, as the vast majority of notes do return, swiftly to its home, any others of like value, date, and number which may be presented must of a necessity be forgeries. Yet in order to make a possible note, that is to say, of the right date for its value,

to do: to produce duplicates of a note already in existence with the absolute certainty that the fraud will be discovered at head-quarters. It may be answered that this is of comparatively little consequence to the forger, who would pass his notes at other places than Threadneedle-street, and become a singularly remote entity at the moment his fraud was detected. This is true enough, but as practice has shown, the difficulty of imitating the water-mark and engraving, and the certainty of detection supplied by the method of printing in series, effectually bar any attempt at fraud on a large scale, such as that perpetrated by the ingenious Mathison, who, about a hundred years ago, was in the habit of taking his own forgeries to the Bank itself, changing them for good notes and carrying off the latter for imitation. He was, it is true, a great man, and would have died in wealth and honour, had he not allowed pride to get the better of discretion and committed himself to an authoritative opinion as to the genuineness of a note in the very Bank itself, thus attracting suspicion and twisting a rope for his own neck. It is said that he offered to give up his secret of imitating the water-mark if his life were spared, but the authorities declined the bargain, thinking probably that his secret would be safer with him in the world beyond Tyburn.

Printing over, the notes, now complete and negotiable, are handed over to the order of the Treasury Department of the Bank of England, and are then stowed in the room in which so many people have experienced a curious joy at being allowed to hold in their hand a million sterling, i.e., two small packages, representing together a ream of Laverstoke paper, inscribed with a thousand promises to "pay on demand" the sum of one thousand pounds.

It is not our purpose to follow the course of a bank-note when it is turned loose upon the world to shift for itself. Often its life is short but eminently respectable, being passed entirely in the strong boxes of bankers until paid in to the Bank itself, whence it is rarely re-issued. In a few cases it gets into strange company; passes through greasy pockets and dirty hands; goes down to race-courses, and becomes familiar with Tattersall's on Monday afternoons. But sooner or later it comes back, either crisp and smiling, murmuring softly with its pleasant voice, or limp and torn, hacked limb from limb and

and bedraggled—a very tattered demalion to look upon; but not a penniless prodigal, for the “promise to pay on demand,” barely legible upon its grimy face, will be kept most assuredly. Then the work of the bank-note is over, and it is gathered to its fellows, to enjoy a dignified retirement in a species of asylum for six years, at the expiration of which period its life is brought to a fiery end in the Moloch chamber of the Bank of England.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF “LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,” “AT HER MERBY,”
“HALVES,” &c.

CHAPTER XLIV. THE BRIDEGROOM.

“WELL, Hugh, and what did you think of the bride?” enquired Mrs. Darall, as, steadied by her son’s strong arm, she clattered on her pattens home from church.

“I scarcely looked her way,” returned the young man, in grave preoccupied tones.

“Well, of course, not during the service, but did you not notice afterwards how everybody was pressing about the porch to speak to her? She is perfectly lovely, and looks so simple and innocent. She is a blonde, however, which it seems is not your taste. Bless me, what a difference it makes to a young man when he has once made his choice; he has no eyes for anybody else, has he?”

“At all events he ought not to have, mother!”

“Well, of course not; though I shouldn’t have seen any harm in your admiring Mrs. Landon. Her husband is a fine handsome young gentleman, only very pale, and, as it seemed to me, not so happy-looking as a bridegroom should be.”

“I see I must be careful to look my best, mother, when I get married, since you are inclined to be so critical.”

It was very difficult for Hugh to carry on this conversation, slight as it was, or even to catch the meaning of what his mother said. His thoughts were monopolised by the monstrous fact that he had just seen Cecil Landon—the husband of his Gracie’s friend, with another woman by his side—his bride. There was no possible escape from this terrible complication. This, then, was the explanation of Cecil’s continuous absence from his wife and home; he had committed bigamy!

Such was the simple fashion in which Hugh’s thoughts arranged themselves; but the indignation of his soul was none the less that he indulged himself in no mental

objurgations. Darall’s character was eminently just, and at that moment he thought less of his friend and of his crime, than of the consequences which it must needs entail upon the innocent. He would have stuck to his friend in trouble “closer than a brother;” nay, he would stick to him, perhaps, under punishment for his crime; but now, while his friend was, as it were, triumphing in his villany, his sympathy was given wholly to those whom he had wronged. He had wronged Ella, shamefully, cruelly, for one; but he had wronged the second girl infinitely worse. Darall had noticed Rose—though, as he had said, he had scarcely looked her way, his attention being so taken up with Cecil—and agreed with his mother that she was pretty, simple, and innocent; but to do him justice, he needed not her good looks to recommend her to his pity. His heart bled for her, while it flamed with indignation against Cecil. The man who had been his friend was, he acknowledged to himself, a villain and a traitor. For the present it did not even seem to him that there was any mitigation of his offence in the fact that he was also, in some sort, a madman. For who but a madman could suppose that a crime of his sort could escape discovery? It had been found out to-day, as it happened, by him, Hugh Darall; but, if not, it would have been found out to-morrow by somebody else. And now it was found out, what duty devolved upon him, the discoverer?

Some philosophers aver that we are all conscious of what is the right thing to be done in any case, whatever may be the urgency of our reasons for not doing it; but in this case Darall really did not know what to do, and far less, as the phrase goes, what to do “for the best,” since action in any direction must needs end in ruin. Moreover, to remain passive was only to defer the catastrophe. And what would be thought of him when it did occur, and it should turn out that he was aware of Cecil’s crime, but “had not thought it worth while”—as was observed by an important witness in a certain famous murder case—“to mention it?” Unfortunately, Hugh had little or no sense of humour, so that the comicality of this quandary did not at all mitigate the horror of it.

Of one thing, amid all his shifting thoughts and fears, he felt assured—namely, that Landon would seek the very first opportunity of speaking with him in private, and endeavouring to keep his mouth shut. Promptness of that kind was

natural to the man; and as Darall remembered that, and how deception had once been as alien to him as suspense was hateful, he could not but reflect upon the incongruity of Landon's crime with the man's character. He must have been drunk with misplaced love, indeed, to have riaked so much—and, above all, so long—for its gratification. Hugh, however, was not one of those mandlin sentimentalists who consider that drunkenness excuses crime.

He said to himself, "This man is a villain, and I shall tell him so."

He had not long to wait for the opportunity. After their early dinner, to which, to his mother's great trouble, he could do but little justice, Hugh endeavoured to calm the fever of his mind by tobacco. He might as well have tried to stop a cannon-ball with his hat; but the occupation gave him some excuse for silence, and, while his mother talked, he glanced occasionally in the direction of the cottage-gate. Before he had replenished his pipe a second time, he saw Cecil pass by—alone.

"Why, surely that was Mr. Landon!" exclaimed the old lady.

"Very likely," replied her son, with an indifferent air. "He is probably taking a constitutional, and, if you will excuse me, I think I shall do the same."

"But you will be back in time for afternoon church, Hugh?"

"Perhaps, mother; I am not sure."

There was a gravity in the young man's tone that forbid discussion upon that topic. He did not attach that supreme importance to going twice to church upon a Sunday, that it had in his mother's eyes; but then, on the other hand, thought she, he was so good that he didn't require it so much as other people.

When Darall got into the road he saw Landon dawdling up the hill, and felt that it was his intention to be overtaken, albeit he did not know that the other had passed the cottage twice, before he had caught sight of him. When Hugh came quite close, Cecil turned round with an "Hallo, old fellow!" and held his hand out. But Darall kept his hands in his pockets.

"Who on earth would have thought of seeing you here?" continued Cecil, with affected gaiety. The perturbation of his mind could hardly have shown itself more distinctly than by such an ill-judged speech.

"Nay," returned Darall, quickly, "who would have thought of seeing you? May I ask if that young lady, by whose side you stood in church this morning, is aware that you are a married man?"

"My dear Darall," stammered the other, "I am aware that in your eyes I must appear in a most anomalous position——"

"I don't know about anomalous," interrupted Hugh, scornfully; "you appear to me to be a most infernal scoundrel."

For an instant it seemed as though Landon would have made short work of what life was left to their friendship by a blow, but he restrained himself.

"You should not use such words as those to me, Darall, without grave reason—without being sure, I mean, that I have deserved them."

"Since you have persuaded Miss Mytton to marry you, you must deserve them. You have acted a base and cowardly lie, and you deserve all you will get for it."

"And what is that?"

"Penal servitude."

Cecil, who was ghastly pale before, turned to a leaden hue, and laughed a laugh that was worse to listen to than his face was to look at.

"You think I have committed bigamy, I suppose?" he said.

Then it struck Darall that, perhaps, Landon was not really married to Rose; that she understood his real position (for he had read of such infatuation in women), and was content to deceive her friends. His mother, it is true, had led him to believe that Rose had been married at Grantham, in which case there could have been no deception; but in this, as it had been hearsay, she might have been mistaken.

"It is possible," said Darall, coldly, "that you may have so arranged matters as to save your own skin; but whether you have sacrificed this girl to your pleasure, or allowed her to sacrifice herself, your position is the same in the eyes of every honest man—and it is infamous."

"It appears to me, Darall, that you have lost your old love of justice, thus to condemn a man—and your old friend too—unheard."

"I am ready to hear what you have to say for yourself," replied Hugh, in icy tones.

"Listen, then: you know, I daresay, that I have been living for some time apart from—from Ella."

"I know that you have quarrelled with your wife."

"Ah, there is your mistake. I quarrelled with her because she was not my wife."

"What?"

"There, you see, you have taken too much for granted. I was never married to Ella, though I thought I was. She

deceived me at the altar by using a feigned name, which invalidated the ceremony."

"And does she know that?"

Landon hung his head, and poked the ground with the end of his walking-stick. "No; it is true that I have been wrong there. I had not the moral courage to tell her. I confess that I have been a coward."

"You are paying yourself a compliment in saying so," answered Darall; the memory of poor Ella's recent kindness, and of the love that Gracie had told him her friend still entertained for this lost wretch, kindling his heart with rage. "I dare say you have also hidden from your second wife the story of your first."

"I have," said Cecil, in despairing tones. "Call me any name you please."

Here Landon, although unconsciously, was playing his best cards. Darall was touched, in spite of himself, by the humiliation and wretchedness of the man that had been once his friend.

"And what is it you mean to do," enquired he in softened tones, "as respects Ella?"

"Heaven knows—if heaven has anything to do with such a man as I," replied Landon, bitterly. "I will do anything—everything—that is possible. Reparation is out of my power. I cannot remarry Ella; I cannot unmarry Rose. What a villain you must think me!"

"It is impossible to think otherwise, Landon."

"Still, if you had known my position, Darall; how hateful my first union had become to me, and how deep and genuine was my love for Rose——"

"That is all lies and wicked rubbish," broke in Hugh, impatiently. "You have nothing to say for yourself except, 'I am a scoundrel.'"

"And has my old friend nothing else to say for me? Oh, Darall, for the sake of the old times, have mercy on me."

"It is not of me you should ask mercy. What is it you would have me do?"

"Nothing—that is all I ask of you. Do not expose me. Give me yet a little time, and I will confess my sin—my crime, if you will—to both these women. You have not told your mother that it was I you saw in church this morning?"

"No; I have become for your sake a liar like yourself. I will give you twelve hours to make your peace—if it be possible—with those whom you have wronged."

"Give me twenty-four, Hugh. To-morrow we have promised to join the

vicar on some excursion. I cannot tell Rose till we return. Give me twenty-four hours."

"I will do that; and, in the meantime, let me see no more of you."

Darall turned upon his heel and began to retrace his steps; the church-bell was giving its last call to afternoon service, and he knew that he should have an hour or so to think over this wretched matter at home—alone. As he expected, his mother had gone to church, but no sooner had he lit his pipe in the dining-room, than there came a knock at the front door.

"Missus is out," he heard the servant-girl reply to the visitor; but the next moment she entered the room with a young lady at her heels.

It was Helen Mytton.

"My mother is at church," he began confusedly.

"I know it, Mr. Darall," was the calm reply. "I am come to have a few words with you alone. Do not put out your pipe, I am used to tobacco; and I am here, as you may judge, upon no visit of ceremony."

He bowed, and handed her a chair. He knew what she had come about at once, and his heart died within him.

"You have just parted from my brother-in-law, I believe," said she very quietly, but with evident effort.

"Yes, I have been talking with him for a few minutes on the road."

"You find that he is no stranger, but your old friend, Cecil Landon?"

"Yes."

There was a moment's pause; she had expected that reply, of course, but it moved her nevertheless. He had put down his pipe at once, notwithstanding her protest, but she seemed to suffer from want of air, and he threw back the window.

"Forgive me, if I seem weak and foolish," said she gently. "My whole happiness—my life itself—is bound up with that of my sister; and she must be my excuse for all. What I am come to ask for is the truth—however terrible it may be. You will not deceive me, Mr. Darall?"

"I will not," said he, nor did he intend to do so. His promise to Cecil had reference only to any voluntary statement upon his part. He would be no party to further fraud. And as for exposure, his refusal to answer Helen's questions would be equivalent to full confession. Nevertheless, he did add, "At the same time, Miss Mytton, I must needs say that, for this day and to-morrow at least, I have passed my word

to say nothing that I can avoid saying to your brother-in-law's prejudice."

"That one word, 'brother-in-law,' Mr. Darall, keeps alive the only hope I have still left. If you can confirm it, I shall owe you an endless debt of gratitude. Is Henry Landon, in law as well as in the sight of God, my sister's husband?"

"I do believe, madam, upon my honour, that he is."

"And yet, but the day before yesterday, I heard you speak of Cecil Landon—that is of this same man—as being a married man!"

"I did speak of him as such, because I believed him to be so. I knew the lady; as pure and good a woman"—for Helen's lip had curled—"let me add, in justice to her, as your sister herself. But Landon now tells me that there was some informality in his first marriage, which renders it null and void; and that in the eye of the law he was a bachelor."

"But so false a wretch will say anything."

"I am not defending Cecil Landon, Miss Mytton; he has, in my opinion, no defence; but I feel sure he was not lying to me in this instance. When he married your sister he was, in the law's sight, free to marry her."

"Thank heaven for that," murmured Helen. "He has disgraced himself alone; not her—you sigh, Mr. Darall. Is there more bad news to come?"

"No, madam; no more—or at least no worse—as respects your sister."

He was thinking of Ella, upon whom disgrace and ruin would fall for certain. Helen's self-congratulation, natural though it was, offended him.

"You have taken a heavy load off my heart, Mr. Darall, although much remains. Is it too much to ask of you—a stranger, and also this man's friend—to advise me in this matter? I feel unequal to the burthen of this frightful secret; yet to tell it, prematurely, may be to make matters even worse. Perhaps after to-morrow—you said 'after to-morrow' you would be free to speak—I might take counsel with you? I have no right, of course, to ask it; but you seem kind and true, and I have no helper."

"I feel for you, and pity your sad strait, Miss Mytton," returned Darall, gravely. "If help of mine can avail you or yours, you shall have it; but I warn you that in the evil days which must needs be close at hand, I shall have other interests to defend than those of your unhappy sister."

"Is it possible, then, that this man—in

calling whom your friend, a few moments back, I felt that I had done you wrong—still possesses your sympathies, Mr. Darall? and that in case his interests, forsooth, should seem antagonistic to those of his injured wife, that you will act to her disadvantage?"

"I did not say that, madam, nor did I mean to imply so much, though the friendship that has withered away retains some dearness still. I was not alluding to your brother-in-law; but to another whose position is even more pitiable than that of your sister."

"You are speaking of the woman who—"

"I am speaking of the lady, madam," put in Hugh quietly, "who, at this moment, believes herself to be Cecil Landon's wife as firmly as does your sister, and whom someone will have to undeceive. Rather than undertake that task, I, for one, would have this hand cut off. Forgive me, Miss Mytton, if I appear to you a partisan. I have no part or lot in the matter, nor may I be called upon to so much as say one word in it; but if it must be said, rest assured it shall not be to your sister's detriment."

"I thank you with all my heart," said Helen, rising from her chair. "You are just, it seems, as well as kind; and since my sister's cause is that of justice, you will be its champion."

He shook his head.

"Well, at all events, you have been a friend to me, and I am deeply your debtor."

He answered only with a grave, sad smile, and they shook hands in silence.

"If my sister had chosen a man like this," thought Helen, with a bitter sigh, "her happiness would have been in safe keeping."

CHAPTER XLV. THE MEETING IN THE LOCK.

THE circumstance which interfered, and, as Landon weakly imagined, fortunately interfered, with the immediate confession of his position, was a certain water excursion organised by the vicar, in the special honour of the newly-married couple, and to which Rose was looking forward with childish expectation. It was to take place on the Thames, a river with whose beauties she was wholly unacquainted, and involved a journey by railway of considerable length. To Helen, the notion of taking part in any amusement under such circumstances was simply ghastly and repulsive; but she could hardly absent herself, save upon some

plea of indisposition, which would have been certain to keep Rose at home, or to spoil her pleasure. To Cecil it was a day of reprieve, which to some minds, at least, is preferable to the one of execution. His mind was too much preoccupied by the consideration of how events would shape themselves, when his confession should have been made, to note how Helen shrank from him; he was thinking of Ella's passion, her love for him changed to hate, and her quick thoughts bent upon revenge. He knew her well—the more shame to him for so treating her—and could calculate the force with which such a blow would strike her, and the effects it would produce. She would move heaven and earth, to right herself in the world's eyes and get him punished. She would invoke the law for certain, and when that failed, as he was well assured it would fail, she might even try other means of vengeance. She was not one to sit down quiet under so cruel an injury. He did not think it impossible that, in her wild rage, she might even play the Eleanor to his fair Rosamond. Then he pictured to himself his Rose's anguish with all the pillars of domestic peace in ruins about her; and his heart sank within him. His punishment had indeed begun.

It was so far fortunate that, in consideration of the excursion having been planned in Rose's honour, the vicar, for once, paid her peculiar attention, and left Helen in Cecil's charge; otherwise Rose must needs have noticed her husband's gloomy looks and absent air. To Helen, who guessed the cause only too well, his silence during the railway journey was welcome, since it permitted her to think her own sad thoughts without molestation. At the river-side, however, the vicar had prepared some compensation for himself. Instead of a large boat for the accommodation of the party, he had bespoken two skiffs, in which they were to row some miles down the stream, and dine at a certain house of entertainment. It would never do, he said, to separate bride and bridegroom; so Helen was to go with him, and Rose with her husband. Under other circumstances, Cecil would have accepted this arrangement willingly enough; he much preferred his wife's company to that of her sister, for whom he entertained an intuitive dread, which did not, however, prevent him from slyly bantering her on the subject of the vicar's devotion. On this occasion, however, he was in no

mood for banter; but took the place assigned to him without a word.

He was a good oarsman, but the sculls felt in his hand like lead, as he pulled out from shore. Rose, on the contrary, was full of spirits. She had never been on the water with him before, or seen him in the boating-dress which became him so admirably. The wooded reach, down which they sped so swiftly, delighted her with its unaccustomed charms. The changing leaf from its fiery red to soberest brown, walled them in on both sides with its varied tapestry; above them was the autumn sky with its isles of fleecy cloud. Hamlet and hall, church and mill, the sounding lasher and the echoing look, were feasts to her eye and ear; and when her glance, surfeited with the gorgeous panorama, sought some more quiet bliss, it rested on her husband.

"How soft and soothing is the very motion of the boat, and all these sights and sounds," said she to Cecil. "It seems almost a sin to talk."

"That is not everybody's feeling," answered he, smiling. "Listen!"

He poised the oars upon the rowlocks and let the skiff glide on, when, instantly, a far-off sound of talk and laughter broke upon their ears.

"There is a merry party on ahead. What is it, Rose?"

Rose, of course, was looking forward, and he the other way; a bend of the river had hitherto concealed these persons from her view, but now she caught sight of them.

"There is a large pleasure-boat full of people," said she. "And it has six oars. What a pace they go!"

"I think we can catch them, however, before they reach the lock," observed Cecil, looking round.

"Welby, can you spurt?" cried he to the vicar, whose skiff was but a few yards behind them.

"Try me," answered the other, with a slight ring of boastfulness in his tone.

He was not so young as Landon, but, in his college-days, the vicar had cloven the waters of that very river with no little credit to himself and his college-club. That "Try me" in fact was the acceptance of a challenge, and no sooner had the words been uttered than both skiffs began to fly. For the sense of speed and the delight that accompanies it, there is nothing like "spurting"—to the steerer—and Rose was in the seventh heaven of happiness.

"The boat ahead has quickened its stroke," cried she, clapping her hands with glee. "We are going to have a race with them too."

In the way of emulation—else so many husbands would not be ruined—the female is even more greedy of triumph than the male.

A six-oared boat, with four ladies in it under an awning, has commonly but a small chance, even with a start, against a skiff, with one lady and no awning, rowed by a powerful oarsman; but in the present case the six were picked men—young gentlemen from London, whose home in summer was on the river, and whose hearts were there even when the claims of the law, the public service, or of their relations, called them elsewhere. On this occasion, in presence of their ladies, these cavaliers acquitted themselves to admiration; and Rose beheld the awning raised and more than one fair flushed face look forth, to mark the progress of the pursuers. As for Cecil, he was "putting his back into it," and saw nothing but his own knees.

The three boats reached the lock-gates, opened wide for their reception, almost at the same instant; and then, of course, the respective athletes ignored the existence of their rivals, and looked—or rather tried to look, for they were hot, breathless, and "pumped out"—as though there had been no race at all. The six-oared boat took one side of the lock and the skiffs—that of Landon being in advance of the rector—the other; the men holding by the chains as the waters sank. If the gentlemen ignored one another, however, the ladies made up for it, by scanning each other very narrowly; not a feature of Rose's or Helen's, not a brooch, nor a bow, nor a stray lock of their hair, escaped the notice of the tenants of the awning; and though the two sisters were less curious in their behaviour, it is probable they could have made out a pretty exact inventory of their late rivals and their apparel after the first half-second.

One lady of the four especially attracted Rose's attention; she was of dark, indeed, almost Spanish, complexion, and of great beauty; her dress, though a little too handsome for the occasion, was in excellent taste. But it was neither her personal charms, nor her apparel, which riveted Rose's gaze; but the way in which she stared at Rose's husband. Just as Helen had seen them in Darall's face at church the preceding day, so now Rose marked Incredulity, Astonishment, Horror,

arise in this woman's, and finally uncontrollable Passion—the rage of the tigress Landon, as I have said, was busy with his lengthening chain and with keeping the frail boat away from the wet wall, and observed nothing of this, until presently a voice rang through the echoing lock startling every ear, and chilling him to the very marrow—"Cecil!"

He turned his face—a moment before aglow with toil, but now aghast with fear—and met Ella's piercing eyes.

"Cecil!"

She had repeated his name, but still he answered nothing. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; his despairing eye sought the dark waters, as though beneath them alone were to be found release and escape. Yet he was somehow conscious—perhaps he saw her reflection in the stream—that Ella was standing up and pointing to Rose.

"Cecil! Who is that woman?"

Then with a sharp pain he looked up at Rose. Pale as a river lily, she sat confronting Ella, and in a firm quiet voice replied:

"I am his wife, madam."

"His wife? Then who am I? I speak to you, sir."

Cecil was well aware she spoke to him. He also knew that the lock-gates were opening behind him, and giving, as it seemed, a glimpse of light and life. Up to that time he had felt like a rat in a hole, but without the pluck of the rat. Now there was freedom—for the moment at least—before him; he thrust the skiff from the wall, plunged his sculls into the water, and shot out into the sunlight like an arrow from a bow. No confession of defeat and guilt could have been more complete; and poor Rose fell back in her seat—which was fortunately fenced round, a usual, like an arm-chair—and fainted away.

The air and her quick motion through it, however, revived her, and she presently came to herself, though only with a dim consciousness of what had happened.

Cecil, on the other hand, had by the time summoned all his wits about him and met her wondering glance with a affectionate smile.

"You are better now, darling, are you not? I am so deeply sorry for what has happened!"

"What has happened?" sighed she then, with a deep flush she added, "Ah that woman! I remember now. She called you 'Cecil'—said she was your wife."

"Yes, dear; she did. But it was all untrue."

"All?"

"Well, no; not all, of course, love. I have behaved very ill; but that was before I knew you, Rose."

It was curious, considering the base subterfuges to which he had already sunk, that Cecil thus shrank from saying anything to Ella's disparagement. To do him justice, it was quite as much remorse as fear that had kept him silent under her questioning in the lock. When she had cried out to him, on Rose's saying that she was his wife, "Then, who am I, sir?" he had not had the heart—that is to say, he had lacked the brutality as well as the courage—to deny the tie between them. Rose's simplicity and ignorance of the world were such that she had, hitherto, imagined that no image of another woman had ever occupied the place of her own in her husband's breast. She had imagined it to be a sort of sanctuary, which had remained pure and void until he saw her, and set her up in it as its idol. But now that she perceived this had not been the case, she at once grasped the fact that men in general are far from being immaculate. It was out of the question that her husband should be an exception, save upon the side of virtue; it was evident, therefore, that he had given way to vice under a great temptation. She was not angry with him, as some women would have been, for taking all the blame upon himself, and saying nothing against his seducer; but she was by no means more inclined upon that account to take a charitable view of the young person in the six-oared galley. Her impudence had certainly been beyond all belief; but then young persons of that description must necessarily be impudent; nor was Rose even without a suspicion that poor Ella was intoxicated. Perhaps, what annoyed Rose most, was the fact that this unfortunate and amazing rencontre had taken place in the presence of her sister and Mr. Welby.

Neither spoke again till they drew near a pretty riverside inn, about a mile below the lock. Then Cecil mildly said:

"We are to get out here, love."

"Why?" cried Rose, with a little shudder, and a half-glance behind her.

She would have preferred him to row on at the same rate for an indefinite time,

so as altogether to distance that six-oared galley, with the young person in it who called her husband "Cecil."

"We are to dine here, darling," said he persuasively.

"Dine!" she echoed, not scornfully, but with the air of one who never looks to enjoy dinner again. Perhaps, thought she, the occupants of that galley were about to dine there also, a notion that made her shiver.

However, she got out, and they were ushered into the sitting-room that had been prepared for them. It looked on to the river, of course, which was itself an element of horror; and in a minute or two the measured stroke of the six-oared boat was heard, as it came down the stream.

Rose, seated on the sofa, as far from the window as possible, grew once more deadly pale; she had taken up some newspaper to hide her face from the waiter, and Cecil noticed how it trembled in her hand. Then his eyes turned to the mirror above the mantelpiece; the brightly-painted boat, with its gay-coloured awning, which happily hid those beneath it, crossed its surface like a glittering pageant seen in a magic glass—for him full of baleful menace—and passed away in a breath.

Landon drew a deep sigh of relief.

"Has it gone by?" asked Rose, in a tremulous whisper.

"Yes, dearest; it has gone by."

Then came the beat of sculls; and in the mirror Cecil saw pale Helen, and the vicar with troubled brow. It was, above all things, necessary that he should make his peace with Rose before those others came.

"Can you not forgive me, darling?" he whispered tenderly.

"I have forgiven you," she answered. "Let us forget it. Never let us speak of it more."

He kissed her, but said nothing; his heart misgave him that that last wish was vain indeed; that this evil day was but the beginning of troubles. But it was something to have obtained her pardon.

The next moment their two companions entered the room.

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BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK II. THE CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER XVII. THE PORTRAIT.

MR. LEVERIDGE was engaged upon a portrait of his "affianced bride," as Miss Leveridge was now fond of calling me. She had proposed, indeed, that I should be represented in bridal veil, white satin, and orange blossoms; but that I had resolutely opposed, and Mr. Leveridge had not favoured the project. "My Doris must not look like a figure in a fashion-book," he had said. So I was to be very simply arrayed, while a certain fanciful character was, nevertheless, to be given to the picture. It was not to look like a "common portrait," Mr. Leveridge declared. There was to be what he called "a poetical background." I was to be seen emerging from a dark grove, brightened by star-like myrtle blossoms; a gauze scarf was to curve or float in the air; my hair was to fall in a tangled mass upon my shoulders. Yet, as I understood, the picture was really to be like me.

The first sketch was made in Powis-place. But the artist complained of the light; and it was clear that he worked at a disadvantage. So the canvas was removed to the river-side studio.

I confess that the visits to the studio were pleasant enough, although I found "sitting" rather an irksome occupation. Mr. Leveridge was apt to be very silent while he worked. He might begin in a talkative mood, but presently he would become more and more sparing of speech,

until he seemed scarcely to know what he was saying, or whether he was saying anything or nothing. I was forgotten. I watched him as he moved to and fro in front of the canvas—swaying his head to obtain better views of his work—now plying boldly a large brush, now with one of delicate size bent upon dexterously tender touches, until I grew weary, dispirited, and, at times, extremely drowsy.

Still the studio was a change of scene. I escaped for awhile from Powis-place and Miss Leveridge. At first she made faint offers to accompany me, influenced by the thought, perhaps, that, under the circumstances, I needed the protection of a duenna. But she was well content, I think, that her services were not required. Indeed, I declined them very distinctly.

Mr. Leveridge laid stress upon my visits: describing them as signal compliments to his art, and to himself. He received me with a sort of fervid politeness, was most tender in his treatment of me; he rewarded me for my patience with pretty baskets of fruit or bouquets of flowers; he spoke hopefully of the portrait.

M. Riel did not appear. I had not seen him now for some weeks. Was he still one of Mr. Leveridge's assistants? I knew not. I will own that I wished to know; yet I could not bring myself to question Mr. Leveridge upon the subject.

It was a sultry afternoon. I felt fatigued, oppressed, by the heat of the weather, by the overpowering scent of the flowers Mr. Leveridge had bestowed on me so profusely. I fell asleep. I remember in a confused way the dull tapping sound, like weak beats upon a muffled drum, of Mr. Leveridge's brush upon the strained canvas of my picture.

Then came a blank. I awoke with a start. For a moment all was confusion. When consciousness returned, and I could distinctly note things about me, I found that Mr. Leveridge was absent from the studio. His place in front of the portrait was occupied by—M. Riel!

He was studying the picture with very intent eyes. He looked very pale and thin; he wore an air of ill-health, and physical suffering. There was a deep frown marking his forehead; his slender, nervous hand moved tremulously about his moustache.

"M. Riel," I said, softly. He started and turned towards me.

"Pardon me if I have disturbed you, Miss Doris."

"Where is Mr. Leveridge? Do you know?"

"He was compelled to leave the studio for a few minutes. One of his patrons called, the Duke of Southernwood. He left his painting, of course, to wait upon the duke. I took advantage of his absence to enter."

"You are ill, M. Riel?"

"I thank you. I am never very well, and of late I have suffered a good deal. But I disturb you; you were sleeping so calmly, so happily, a moment ago; and you formed so exquisite a picture. But I desired to see this portrait Mr. Leveridge has been painting of you; no, that's not true," he added, in a lower tone. "I longed to see you. Oh, if you knew how I have longed to see you, Miss Doris!"

There was something conveying a sense of passion but half subdued, in the tremor of his voice, in the quivering expression of his face. He seemed to control himself with great difficulty. I had never seen him so moved before.

"You like the portrait?" I said.

"I like it? I think it detestable, execrable. The professor, he is an artist of skill, of experience, of genius, if you will, but he cannot paint your portrait. You do not like it yourself?"

"I have scarcely been allowed to look at it. Mr. Leveridge was anxious I should not see it until it approached completion. He feared I should not be just to the unfinished picture. And it is difficult, of course, to judge of a work of art in an early stage of its existence."

"Sometimes. But not in this case. This is a failure from beginning to end; it can never be a good picture; it can never be anything but a hopelessly, irre-

trievably bad picture. I long to slash it to ribbons with my knife."

"M. Riel!"

"Have no fear; I will not injure it, nor you; though you have been very cruel to me, Miss Doris."

"I have been cruel to you, M. Riel? How? When?"

"Well, well, we will not speak of that now. It is too late, too late. Let us speak of the picture. Well, it is bright of colour, let us grant that. It is boldly painted, with coarse breadth and resolute execution. The professor's hand is firm as ever; but his sense of refinement, of the delicacies of expression, of the sentiment that should give character and value and elevation to a work of art, this seems lost to him. In truth he is ceasing to be an artist; he is fast becoming a mere painter. He should not attempt your portrait. He cannot rise to that height; he has grovelled too long. Let him keep to his capering fauns and grinning satyrs, to his goddesses from Tottenham-court-road, and his nymphs from the New-cut; success of a sort is assured to him there. But here, it is failure and humiliation that he is preparing for himself. This picture is an artistic crime, for it is vulgar. And yet you set for it; it affects to be your portrait! The professor is losing his senses."

"I own I do not like it," I said. In truth the painting seemed to me very much what M. Riel had described it to be—a garish, showy, and rather coarse performance.

"You cannot like it, for it is a libel, an outrage upon yourself. And yet, what is it to me? you will ask. I have no right to say such things. I forget myself. I owe too much to the professor. I owe too much to you, Miss Doris. Yet, if I might speak——"

"I don't understand you, M. Riel."

"If I had the right, or dared assume the right to speak, I would ask, why have you done this thing, Doris? I may call you Doris for this once?"

"If you will, you may," I said, scarcely knowing what I said.

"Why have you done this thing, Doris?"

"What thing, M. Riel?"

"What thing? You have given yourself to the professor; you have promised to become his wife."

"Well?"

"No, it is not well. I know—I know I should not address you in this way. I

know I have no right to speak on the subject but that your beauty gives me, your worth, your excellence, yes, and this other right—the right that is mine because of my love for you.”

“Your love for me!”

“You have known it. You must have known it—for it could not, it cannot be questioned.”

“M. Riel, what are you saying? Indeed, I knew nothing of this. You have been to me always so cold, so distant, so silent; it is impossible to believe that you have really cared for me.”

“I have seemed cold and distant? Ah well,” he said, with a strange smile, “perhaps it was because I tried to starve you into surrender. But that’s folly. It was because I dared not to do otherwise. It was best for your sake and for mine. I loved you—but to tell you so was to risk your displeasure. I dreaded lest a word from my lips should break the spell; I knew that a whisper might dissolve the enchantment, which brought me happiness for the moment. For it was happiness to love you, even though my love might be unknown, unsanctioned, unrequited. It was happiness to be near you, to see you, to listen to you—or even to dream of you, and adore you from a distance.”

“M. Riel,” I cried, endeavouring to stay his further speech—for I perceived the imprudence and the wrongfulness of our interview, seeing the strange turn it had taken. But it was difficult to restrain the passionate volubility with which he spoke. And, I own, a certain longing possessed me to listen to him to the end; his words stirred unexpected echoes in the recesses of my heart, and I found myself trembling with sympathetic excitement.

“Do not question my love,” he cried; “it was yours absolutely. You were my idol—I bowed at your feet. I was content in that I was permitted to worship you. How could I think that you could descend from your pedestal to the low depth of his level—that you would consent to become the wife of this dotard professor! Shame on you, Doris!”

“Be just to him,” I said.

“Yes, of course, it is treason to speak against him. Well,” he added with a laugh, “that is nothing after all. I am accustomed to talk treason; it is almost the occupation of my life. But—he is not worthy to be your husband—I will say no more than that, for indeed I feel his kindnesses pressing against my mouth when I

would open it to revile him. Still, this should not be your fate, Doris—to sink into the wife of this declining painter—at no time in his life could he have merited the boon you would bestow upon him now, in his age and his decrepitude. But again I forget how he has served me, and that he is your betrothed husband. Must this thing be, Doris? It is dreadful to think of.”

“You forget yourself, M. Riel. You censure my conduct without understanding it, and again I say that I did not know of your love.”

“If you had known it, Doris, would you have acted differently?”

I could not answer. I tried to turn from him; but some spell seemed to bind me to the place I occupied.

“Ah, Doris, in this consists your cruelty to me, that you have listened to him, that you have consented to become his wife, that you have sold yourself to him for his gold. It is to me something incredible, monstrous, horrible, that you could descend to this. You were my idol; I have bent before you as before a shrine. If you had but remained worthy of my love, of my devotion, I had been content. It was not so much that I asked. I only wanted you to be yourself, pure, good, beautiful always. It seemed to me impossible that you could be mercenary, heartless, cruel; that you could be bought for a price, such as this old man was prepared to pay. What am I to think now? You tell me I should not say such things. I should not indeed; for it wounds me to utter them, far more than it wounds you to hear them. It breaks my heart to speak to you like this. But why have you given me cause—why have you given me cause?”

He had yielded to a wild excitement; his voice throbbed and broke; he looked at me with plaintive, piteous eyes; his outstretched hands trembled and twitched convulsively. He had thrown away the English composure, the severe self-restraint, he usually affected. His bearing, his method of speaking, were now thoroughly French. There was even a decided increase of foreign accent in his speech.

“You say you love me, M. Riel. Yet you can speak to me like this!”

“Because I love you, Doris. Let that be my excuse.”

“Too late, too late!” I said in a low tone.

“I should have spoken sooner, is that what you mean? Ah, if I had dared; and the words have been on my lips a

score of times—it seemed to me that you could almost see them there. But—my love! It was all I had to give, and I gave it. I loved you, Doris, and you did not, you would not know it. What could I expect? You knew the poverty, the misery of my way of life. You had surveyed this with your own eyes—not unkindly. I do not say that. No, no, there was real pity in your eyes—I know it well—when you sought me out in Soho, and it was with true kindness you came to me. But you saw then what I was (if you had not seen it completely before)—an exile, a political offender hunted from my own country, a conspirator, a refugee, living—one can scarce say how—now by doing this, now that, a drudge in a studio for the sake of buying bread. If I had spoken to you of my love, you would have thought me mad.”

“Not so, M. Riel.”

“You would have looked surprised, startled—as well you might be—and then you would have thanked me, pitied me, told me to end my dream, that what I had hoped for could never be; and so have gone your way, and left me to my misery and my despair. There could be no end but that. I had no future to offer you. I could not ask you to share my fate. How could I ask you to give me your love?”

“You do not know me, after all, M. Riel.”

I was much moved by the passion of his words, by the plaintive tones of his voice. I felt that my eyes were filling with tears. And I knew for the first time, or I began to know, that Paul Riel was dearer to me than I had believed possible. I was greatly troubled. My head grew giddy, and the things about me seemed to lose firmness of outline, and to assume uncertain forms.

“I do not know you, Doris; ah, you mean that you love me!”

He had thrown himself at my feet, and was covering my hand with kisses.

“You love me, Doris, you love me!”

I could not answer him.

“Hush! There is a footstep.”

“Mr. Leveridge is returning. Let me go,” I said. For he was pressing me to his heart.

“Promise one thing.”

“What is it? Let me go.”

“You will not marry this man?”

“I will not marry him. Now please let me go.”

“One thing more, Doris.”

“Oh, please don’t.”

“You love me?”

“I love you.”

He kissed me again and again. Then, with a light, noiseless step he left the studio by one door, as Mr. Leveridge entered by the other.

“I am sorry to have been so long. But the duke came—and he is the veriest of old gossips. There was no getting rid of him. But he’s bought my Venus disarming Cupid, at my own price. I call that a good morning’s work.”

“Who has been here?” he asked suddenly.

“M. Riel.”

It was best I thought to tell him the truth so far.

“I thought I heard voices. And my palette’s been moved. I left it on that chair. Poor Riel! I don’t know whether I shall be able to make anything of Riel. He works very well—but in such an uncertain, intermittent way. And his health is not very good, I think.”

It was clear that he had no suspicion of what had happened.

“And now for half an hour more of the picture, Doris, and then we’ll finish work for to-day. Your head a little more to the right, please. Not quite so much. Thank you. That’s better. That will do very nicely.”

CHAPTER XVIII. MY MADNESS.

I HAVE not spared myself in this confession; certainly, I have not tried to spare myself. Nor do I now seek to urge anything in excuse of myself. I am fully sensible that I am open to severe censure; I plead guilty to cowardice, falsehood, and treachery. Only those placed as I was placed, or who can fully imagine themselves so placed, can in any degree understand my feelings on the subject, or feel the slightest sympathy with my failings. I know what I ought to have done; but I could not do it.

It was impossible for me, or so I persuaded myself, to go to Mr. Leveridge and to tell him plainly, in so many words, that our engagement, which had been brought about almost as a matter of accident, must now be ended and annulled—that I could not, and would not, marry him. It was not that I dreaded his reproaches on the score of fickleness and irresolution; I felt, indeed I knew, that he would not reproach me. But I shrank from inflicting upon him what I was assured would be acute pain. And, indeed, it would have

been very hard to inform him that the shipwreck of his hopes and of his happiness was imminent—was certain to occur. So I allowed him to drift on to the rocks, to discover his misfortune—for so he would count it—as best he might, or when it had really come to pass.

I saw Paul Riel frequently. Concealing from everyone the fact of our interviews, we met usually by appointment at the National Gallery, in front of the Bacchus and Ariadne of Titian. I corresponded with him furtively. It was agreed between us that our love should be kept secret. I was conscious of the perfidy of this; and yet I must own that my clandestine meetings, and correspondence with Paul Riel, were to me the source of extreme happiness.

In truth, I had not known that I loved him. Knowledge of that love came upon me as a sudden revelation. Does a woman's love always wake into life, and take form and substance in so instantaneous a way, upon her becoming conscious, or her being assured, that she is loved? Until he spoke of his love for me, I did not know that there was love in my heart for him. If, sometimes, I had suspected the state of my feelings in regard to him, I had shrunk back from such thoughts. I had sought to repress them; I had turned, as it were, a deaf ear to them. But, now, it was as the opening of a flood-gate—my love flowed forth, freely avowed, an irrepressible and overwhelming torrent.

It was infatuation; it was madness. Paul Riel was all in all to me. I seemed to move, and breathe, and live only in accordance with his volition. I was his abject slave.

He had besought me to fly with him. I had consented, while conscious of my rashness, my error, in doing so; while foreseeing, in great part, the trouble, the misery, I was preparing for myself. It was enough for me that the proposal came from him; to question its wisdom, its propriety, its prudence, was not then possible to me. Had he asked of me something ten times more foolish, I believe I should have done it; I have so poor an opinion of my condition of mind at the time of which I am writing.

If I despise myself for my folly, I hate myself for my wickedness—for the system of shameful duplicity I so long maintained; for I suffered it to be understood that I was pledged to marry Mr. Leveridge. In Powis-place I was for ever being re-

minded by Miss Leveridge that I was about to become her sister-in-law, and I was besought to address her by her christian-name of Deborah. I wore the engaged-ring Mr. Leveridge had given me; he came to see me very frequently; he was for ever bringing me presents—earrings, and bracelets, and necklaces, costly and exquisitely beautiful, and yet how worthless and odious they seemed to me! He treated me with exceeding kindness; he seemed quite devoted to me, in a tender, reverential way. I was very thankful to him for his forbearance. When he kissed me, it was upon my forehead or my hand. He was more like a very fond indulgent father than a lover.

He was most tolerant of my temper, which did not exhibit itself to advantage. I tried to keep watch and ward over myself: but I was ill, and wearied, and worried. Petulant words would escape me; frowns came upon my face, and my voice acquired a strange sharpness of tone. I hated myself at times; I had no love for anyone but Paul. My situation disgusted me. Miss Leveridge looked at me occasionally with alarmed, surprised eyes. Was poor Dick's happiness to be at the mercy of such a vixen? she probably asked herself.

Sometimes I was in hopes that Mr. Leveridge would for himself perceive the unwisdom of his project of marriage—would take offence at my caprices and querulousness, and forthwith terminate an engagement that never should have been entered into. He must have known, if he had not known before, that happiness could not result from such a union as ours; that I was as unsuited to be his wife as he was unsuited to be my husband.

But no; he was blind to my faults, though heaven knows they were manifest and numerous enough. The infatuation of his love for me was as absolute as the infatuation of my love for Paul Riel. He would not be offended with me. All that I did was right. Everything I said was wise. In his eyes I was perfection simply. I despised him for the fatuity of his fondness, the while I pitied him because of the cruel falsity of which he was the victim.

The arrangements for my marriage proceeded. The house was becoming strewed with millinery and finery I was to wear as a wife. No date had been fixed for the ceremony. I was resolute in deferring

this, in avoiding all question of it as much as possible. Thereupon I was credited with a maidenly coyness, to which, in truth, I could scarcely lay claim.

At last I told Paul I could endure it no longer. I grew sick and wan with shame. I must make an end of the degrading farce, in which I had been playing so prominent a part. Paul agreed that the time had come for action. He had been waiting, he said, only until he could obtain payment of a certain sum of money due to him on account of a picture painted for the Hon. Pierce Plumer, a patron of the fine arts, who was apt to be dilatory in rewarding the artists he affected to benefit.

I had given no hint to Nick or to Basil of the mad step I purposed taking.

I left Powis-place one morning at a very early hour, but it was in the summer time, and the sun was already up and shining brightly. The servants had not yet risen; Miss Leveridge was sleeping soundly. I passed down the staircase as noiselessly as I could, carrying only a small leather bag. I closed the street door after me, a little dismayed at the unavoidable noise, and the click of the lock which rendered return impossible. But I did not contemplate return. I was rejoiced at the thought of quitting Powis-place for ever. I trembled all over with excitement. Indeed I was painfully agitated.

It was pleasant to feel the fresh morning breeze fanning my hot cheeks. There was something exhilarating in the brightness and sweetness of the air. As yet smoke did not canopy the streets; and the outlines and angles of the houses were sharply defined in the clear light still tinged with the golden orange of sunrise. All the familiar objects of the dreary neighbourhood acquired a new and more cheery aspect, seen under the conditions of early morning.

I had but a little way to go; to pass along by the top of Queen-square, and then through the paved court that leads into Southampton-row. There Paul was to meet me.

I was not likely to meet anyone save perhaps a flower-girl or a milk-woman. I was too early, even for the little liveried old man who preserved order in Queen-square. Some workmen passed along, walking briskly, on their way to the scene of their daily labours. They took no note of me. The public-house in the court had not yet opened its doors.

Stay, who was this approaching? Some-

one I knew, and who clearly recognised me. There was no escaping him.

It was Junius Griadale. How unfortunate! What had brought the old man out so early? He took off his hat and made me an old-fashioned bow; there seemed something of irony in his obsequiousness under the circumstances. I scanned his sad, lined, worn old face. No; some surprise there might be at his meeting me, but there was no suspicion.

"Good morning, Miss Doris. You are up with the lark; you look as fresh as the morning, as bright as the flowers. Ah, if Lucius were here he would know so much better what to say, for he's a poet in his way, is Lucius. He would liken you to Aurora, mounting her chariot, opening with her rosy fingers the portals of the east; Aurora, the forerunner of the sun, dispersing the stars and putting to flight Night and Sleep, and so on; something very pretty and appropriate; yes, and classical—a subject, indeed, such as Mr. Leveridge would like to paint. How is Mr. Leveridge, by-the-bye?"

"He is quite well, thank you; that is, I believe so, I hope so."

"You hope so, of course. For he's to be your husband. To think of that now! He's to carry you off as Pluto carried off Proserpine while she was gathering flowers. Another classical subject. There's an opera, you know, by Winter, that deals with the story of Proserpine. Let me see, you are an artist, I think?"

"Yes; I am out early to make some sketches."

"Ah!" he said, rather incredulously, as he glanced at my black leather bag. How could I have told such a stupid story!

"I've been to Covent-garden Market. It's Lina's birthday; that brought me out. I wanted some flowers for her, the best and freshest I could get. She likes nothing so much as flowers. I always give her some on her birthday. She says I could not give her a nicer present. And that's fortunate, you see; for I am poor and flowers are cheap at this time of the year; one can buy quite a large bunch for a few pence, although, if they were ten times dearer than they are, I should contrive to get some for Lina's birthday. Shall I give her your love?"

"Yes; please do. And wish her, for me, many happy returns of the day. Tell her I hope she may be happy, very happy, always. I wish I had known it was her birthday. I wish I had a present to send her."

"My dear, she'll be well content with your love. I'll be sure to give your message. Presents are very nice, but love is best of all. You're not unhappy yourself, are you?"

"No; why should you think so, Mr. Gridale?"

"Oh, nothing, for no reason. It was just a passing thought that occurred to me. But it was absurd, of course. I shall see Basil to-night, yes, and Nick too very likely. Have you any message for them?"

"No; no message, thank you; only my love."

"You're quite sure? only your love; just so. I'll be sure to give it them. Your love; and you're not unhappy—that's entirely my mistake. And you're going sketching. Well, well, I mustn't detain you, and I'll say good-bye. So good-bye, Miss Doris, and take care of yourself, and God bless you."

We parted, the old man bowing again ceremoniously; then he walked away quickly with Lina's birthday-bouquet in his hand. A moment after I had turned into Southampton-row. Paul was waiting for me.

We interchanged hurried, eager greetings. Then Paul called a cab and we drove off.

What had I done? I had surrendered my life and happiness into Paul Riel's keeping.

UNINTENDED BLAZES OF TRIUMPH.

THE recent frightful catastrophe at the Brooklyn Theatre, New York, wherein many hundreds of persons were burnt or crushed to death, or overwhelmed with rubbish from beneath which they could not be extricated till life was extinct, calls to mind the many disasters to which theatres and opera-houses have been exposed, similar in character, though less appalling in the loss of life. Why such buildings are so much in peril of these calamities well deserves attention; but, before offering a few remarks on the subject, it may be useful to furnish proof of the frequency of these visitations in the past.

Of the destruction of foreign theatres by fire, we have, of course, not so much available testimony as in regard to those of our own country; but among the examples have been those of the Munich New Court Theatre in 1823; the Paris Opera House in 1838, when M. Severini was killed while

attempting to escape from the fourth storey of the building; the Berlin Opera House in 1843; the Karlsruhe Grand Ducal Theatre in 1847, when more than a hundred persons were overwhelmed in the falling ruins, and thirty lives lost; Niblo's Theatre at New York in 1872; the old Paris Opera House in 1873, and, worst of all, the Brooklyn Theatre only a few weeks ago. Among the theatres destroyed by fire in our own provincial towns may be enumerated those of Glasgow and Ramsgate in the same year; Manchester a little over thirty years ago; Hull about sixteen or eighteen years ago, and again later; Bath soon afterwards; Glasgow a second and a third time; Edinburgh more recently, twice; Cheltenham, Sheffield, &c.

But it is the metropolis, with its more immediate surroundings, that supplies the most instructive list of theatre-fires. As far back as the reign of James the First, the historically-famous Globe Theatre at Bankside was burnt. Ben Jonson was present, as well as a brilliant assemblage of more wealthy but less-gifted people. Sir Henry Wotton, in a letter written a few days afterwards, gave a curious account of this fire and its origin. The King's Players, as the performers at that theatre were called, brought out a new piece relating to some of the events in the reign of Henry the Eighth, with more than usual pomp and glitter. "Now King Henry making a mask at Cardinal Wolsey's house, and certain cannons being shot off at the entry, some of the paper or other stuff wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch; where being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly and ran round like a train, consuming, within less than an hour, the whole house to the very ground. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabric, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks; only one man had his breeches set on fire, that perhaps had broiled him, if he had not, by the benefit of a provident wit, put it out with bottle ale." In the time of Charles the Second, the Duke's Theatre in Dorset-gardens was burnt down; as was also the first Drury-lane Theatre, known as the Cockpit, in reference to an amusement of which we in these days know very little; it was rebuilt from the design of no less a man than Sir Christopher Wren.

When we advance to the next following century, there were of course more nume-

rous cases of theatre-destruction by fire; but only three of them need be mentioned here. The King's Theatre, the forerunner of Her Majesty's Theatre, just now resuscitated as an opera-house, was burned down eighty-eight years ago. Three years afterwards occurred a fire at the Pantheon in Oxford-street—a structure which, in its various forms, has gone through the singular vicissitudes of a concert-room, a theatre, a fancy bazaar, and now a wine-merchant's stores. Shortly before the close of the century, the famous and favourite Astley's Circus was destroyed by fire, with great loss of property of various kinds.

Scarcely had the present century commenced, when Astley's was burnt down a second time. Then came a more serious conflagration, that of Covent-garden Theatre in 1808. On a September morning in that year, some time before day-break, the building was found to be in flames. Subsequent enquiries led to a belief that, during the previous evening's performances, the wadding of a gun fired in one of the scenes of Pizarro had become lodged in or among some of the scenery, where it produced a smouldering fire which afterwards burst out into flame. The whole interior of the house was destroyed in three or four hours. Nearly all the scenery, wardrobe, musical and dramatic library, and properties, became a prey to the flames. The account-books and cash-box were rescued by Mr. Hughes, the treasurer. Fire-engines arrived, but there was very little water to supply them. The roof fell in; burning pieces of wood were blown with a strong wind towards the south-east; and the roof of Drury-lane Theatre was watched by men, told off to remove any of the brands that might alight thereon. A strong body of firemen broke open the great door of Covent-garden Theatre under the piazza, and having introduced one of their engines, directed a stream of water towards the galleries. While thus engaged, the burning roof of the corridor fell upon them, and buried them and several other persons who had rushed in to render assistance. When a clear opening could be made, the mangled bodies of dead and dying appeared among the rubbish; eleven dead bodies were carried to the churchyard of St. Paul, Covent-garden, and the wounded to various hospitals. The fine organ, left as a legacy to the theatre by Handel, and estimated to be worth one thousand guineas, was de-

stroyed. So also was a violin of rare merit and price, belonging to Mr. Wade, leader of the band; he had taken it home with him every night for three years, but had unfortunately neglected to do so on this critical evening. Mr. Munden's wardrobe, which had cost him three hundred pounds, was sacrificed; as were Miss Bolton's jewels. The property was not insured to one-fourth of its value, inasmuch that the loss to owners, lessees, performers, &c., was very heavy. Mr. Taylor generously offered the use of the King's Theatre to Mr. Harris and the Covent-garden company, in order that they might carry on their performances during the rebuilding of the destroyed edifice.

The burning of Drury-lane Theatre in the year next following was still more memorable in its character, on account of the almost unprecedented body of flame which attracted all London; though happily less sad in regard to the sacrifice of human life. On one evening in February, fire was discovered near the lobby in Brydges-street. It being a Friday in Lent, when there was no performance, only four or five persons were in the house; these were speedily on the alert. The whole building was full of smoke; and in half an hour a vast body of flame shot up. By a fatality which often attends these occurrences, there was scarcely any water in the reservoir on the roof; fire-engines were of little avail. The main structure was not brick partitioned with timber, but timber ribs filled in with brick; an admired piece of carpentry, but a speedy prey to the flames. The roof fell within an hour of the discovery of the fire. Almost the only articles saved were the treasurer's account-books and a bureau in Mrs. Jordan's dressing-room. Bodies of foot-guards, horse-guards, and volunteers arrived to keep order in the neighbouring streets. Sheridan was in the House of Commons at the time; a considerate proposal was made to adjourn, but he preferred to leave the House quietly, and go to witness the later stages of a catastrophe by which he was sure to be a heavy loser. The property was only in part insured. The loss to the performers was twofold—the destruction of nearly everything they possessed in the theatre, and the lapse of professional employment for a long time afterwards.

As years rolled on, gradual additions appeared in the list of London theatres destroyed by fire—the Royalty, the Lyceum, Astley's for a third time. The last was a

serious calamity; for Mr. and Mrs. Ducrow nearly lost their lives in the act of escaping, and the destruction of theatre, properties, trained animals, &c., was so complete that Ducrow's loss was estimated at thirty thousand pounds. The Garrick Theatre fell a victim to a piece of burning wadding, the result of a performance of the *Battle of Waterloo*. A much more sad calamity occurred about the same time; not a theatre on fire, but a loss of life occasioned by one of the contingencies of theatre-routine. We speak of the death of Miss Clara Webster, a dancer in high favour with the public. It was about thirty-two years ago when the *Revolt of the Harem* was being performed at Drury-lane Theatre, that this hapless lady, as a principal performer in the piece, suddenly discovered that her dress had caught fire by coming in contact with one of the gas-jets. Terrified screams arose; a stage-carpenter strove to extinguish the flames, but too late, and poor Miss Webster died in agony three days afterwards. This disaster is noticeable, because it was one of those that suggested the adoption, or at any rate, the recommendation of precautions, to which we shall have occasion to advert presently.

We need not dwell at any length on the fate of other theatres, cut short in their fortunes by flames. The *Olympic* was among the number, but happily under circumstances which arrested a possible catastrophe of a much more serious character, for the stage-manager discovered the fire just as the performers were preparing for their evening's duties. The *Rosemary Branch* was not a theatre in the usual sense; but when a fire occurred there, about thirty-four years ago, seven trained horses and eleven dogs were destroyed. The *Pavilion* was consumed in 1856. A much more serious calamity was the burning of *Covent-garden Theatre* in the same year. On all sides this was a subject of vexation. Mr. Gye let the theatre (at a time when not wanted for operatic performances) to Mr. Anderson the conjurer, the self-styled *Wizard of the North*. A pantomime was produced, with a fairly successful result; and Mr. Anderson decided to wind up his enterprise with a two-days' entertainment of extraordinary character, comprising opera, drama, pantomime, burletta, melodrama, and *bal masqué*. Mr. Gye, though at first unwilling, permitted this, being on the *Continent* at the time, and not aware

how the details were carried out. Well would it have been if he had forbidden the *bal masqué*. At four or five in the morning the theatre had become a scene of disorder. Mr. Anderson gave a signal to the band to wind up with the *National Anthem*, when flames were seen to issue from the floor of the carpenters' workshop. The few remaining maskers, in a condition ill-fitted for steady collectedness, rushed precipitately to the various entrances; several were trampled on, and some carried out fainting. "There was something hideous," said a chronicler of the calamity, "in this sudden change from mad revelry to ghastly fear; already the rush of air towards the roof had fanned the fire into brighter light and fiercer energy; the musicians leaped up from their seats and fled, many without saving their cherished instruments." No lives were lost, but the greater part of the theatre was reduced to a heap of ruins. The veteran *Braham* had three remarkable associations with *Covent-garden Theatre*; he made his *début* there in 1787, witnessed the destruction of that building in 1808, and just lived to see the burning of the next structure in 1856.

Next came the fire at *St. Martin's Hall*, now a theatre, but at that time a concert-room under the management of Mr. *Hullah*, who was a heavy loser by the calamity. And then that of the *Surrey Music Hall*, not at the time used as a place of entertainment, but (if we remember rightly) as a chapel under Mr. *Spurgeon*: the event is chiefly remarkable for the number of lives lost, consequent on the giving way of a staircase down which the congregation rushed. Then the *Surrey Theatre*, then the *Standard*; then two music-halls in succession. A portion of the *Crystal Palace* also suffered severely in 1866. Her Majesty's fell a prey to the flames in 1869, when *Mdlle. Titien*s lost jewellery to the value of a thousand pounds. Most recent of all was the destruction of the *Alexandra Palace* in 1873, not comprising a theatre at that time, although one on a large scale has been constructed as part of the building now existing. The origin of the fire illustrated those instances of carelessness which have led to the destruction of so many fine edifices: lighted coal from a plumber's brazier fell through a crevice among easily inflammable materials, and all was soon over.

It will thus be seen that London has had its full share of such calamities. Let

us now touch on recent and present proceedings, consequent partly on a perusal of the frightful details concerning the catastrophe at Brooklyn, and partly on the known fact that such disasters on a much smaller scale have often occurred in this country, and are likely to occur again.

The Lord Chamberlain has recently issued directions and warnings to the managers of such of the London theatres as come under his somewhat anomalous jurisdiction. Theatrical managers and their sureties are already required, by a statute passed thirty-four years ago, to execute a bond as one condition of being granted a license, defining the personal responsibilities they incur in regard to the safety of the public. The new rules are only a little more stringent than those which were laid down by this statute; but printed copies are now sent to the managers; and the rules will in future be annexed to all licenses issued, with such alterations as experience may show to be necessary or desirable. Well indeed may this functionary deem it important to "impress upon managers the very serious responsibility under which they must personally be held with regard to the safety of the public and of the artists engaged in their theatres, in case of fire, or panic arising from an alarm of fire; and the consequent importance to them, by every means in their power, of carrying out the rules for free exit from the theatres in any such contingency."

Of the thirty-one rules promulgated by the Lord Chamberlain, and referred to in the above remark, those more immediately and intimately connected with the present subject may be usefully summarised in a concise form:—All doors and barriers of theatres to open outward, or else to be fixed back during the times when the public are within the auditorium. All passages and staircases intended for the exit of the audience to be kept free from obstruction, whether permanent or temporary. No part of the auditorium to have less than two means of exit. All doors not habitually used for exit, but available in case of alarm, to be indicated by printed placards. An ample water-supply, with hose or pipes, to be laid on and ready in all parts of the house. All fixed and ordinary gas-burners to be furnished with efficient screens or guards. Movable and occasional lights either to be similarly protected or well watched. No white-metal gas-pipes to be used. The

foot-lights or floats to be provided with a wire gauze. The first ground-line, in the interior arrangement of the stage and wings, to be always without gas, and unconnected with gas whether at the wings or elsewhere. Passages and avenues not to be too narrow for safety between rows or lines of jets; and these rows not to reach within four feet of the level of the stage. Wet blankets or rugs, and filled buckets or water-pots, to be always kept at the wings. Hatchets and hooks to be in readiness to cut or drag down hanging scenery in case of fire. Printed copies of the instructions to be posted up and made generally known to all persons employed; and neglect of them to be made punishable by fine or dismissal. An annual inspection of every theatre to be made, in regard to all the above-named matters. All alterations suggested for the safety and convenience of the public to be carried into effect before the renewal of the annual license. No structural alterations to be made in the theatre without the sanction of the Lord Chamberlain; and plans of any proposed alterations must be sent to his office. Theatre licenses to be granted only for buildings in which these regulations can be carried out, and with a full comprehension by the licensee of the responsibility resting on him.

Captain Shaw, the experienced and energetic superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Establishment, has for many years sought to impress upon the managers of theatres the desirability—nay, the absolute necessity—of making better arrangements than those hitherto adopted for guarding against dire calamities. It is easy to see that the Lord Chamberlain has embodied many of the suggestions in his list of recommendations, with a view of giving official sanction to them. The following are among the points to which Captain Shaw draws attention: That fixed rules should be laid down and enforced as to the amount of space to be allowed, according to the number of the audience and the number and width of exits; that a complete party-wall, or fire-wall, should be built across the whole building, except the open space for the stage; that there should be a metal curtain, to shut off the stage on any alarm of fire; that the lobbies, corridors, and landings should, in like manner, be kept distinct from the auditorium; that there should be in constant readiness a supply of water under a pressure capable of forcing it to

any part of the building, and a rising main with hydrants, or fire-cocks, distributed throughout the building. He, furthermore, recommended that all inflammable materials should be washed or soaked in a mixture of alum and water, to check combustion; and that every theatre should be regularly watched by thoroughly-drilled firemen.

Everyone will see, on a moment's consideration of the subject, that there are two distinct sources of peril to an audience in an ill-constructed or ill-managed theatre—an actual conflagration, and a panic arising from a sudden alarm of fire, whether well-founded or not. The latter is, in effect, more frequently disastrous than the former; and, unless the regulations adequately provide for both, dire misery is likely to be the consequence some time or other. One recommendation thrown out by the Lord Chamberlain, though not formulated among his imperative rules, is, that every manager should establish some kind of system among all the persons employed in the theatre, by which every individual would be told off to an appointed station in case of fire or alarm, so as to avert hesitation or confusion, and to facilitate the safe and quiet departure of the audience.

It has been judiciously remarked that, if the public knew, or believed, that available precautions are taken for their safety, it would effect much towards checking the unreasoning panics which are so fruitful of disaster. If the crowd in a theatre were assured that they would have a choice of means of escape, by duplicate passages, corridors, doorways, &c., and that the persons employed in the establishment had accepted appointed duties if sudden peril should arise, they would be far less likely to yield to a panic of terror than when they see actors, workmen, servants, and audience all alike rushing hither and thither, in ignorance what to do or whither to go for the best.

EARLY WORKERS.

AT SACKS.

THE sacks subject to the handling of Early Workers (girls) have a second, and more distinctive title, Gunny Bags. Under whichever name, they have an identity of purpose. They cover up and hold together sugar, gums, cotton, oil-seeds, cinnamon, pepper, dye-stuffs, manures, guano, rice; also oats, wheat, and other home-grown

grains. Before all, it is right it should be made known that they are not the sacks of the sort that carry coal. A sooty alien is that sack, of far superior strength and solidity; constructed to bear much greater inequality of strain, produced with much stricter workmanship, at a much higher cost. In short, it must be discarded from consideration altogether; and when this is done, and the mind allowed to be deposited solely upon the gunny bag, all will be well.

An Early Worker can make one sack in one minute. After all the processes have been gone through to make the material for the sack, and when the material has been placed in the Early Worker's hand, that is the extent of the time that perfection of management and the best precision have need to allow her. And there is nothing stinted, it shall be at once stated, in the size of the sack, to account for this rapid manufacture. It is orthodox—being a yard long about, being half a yard wide when doubled over, ready. The sewing-machine, of course, as may be expected, is the secret of this speed. It accounts for the first magic stitch insinuated, it goes the whole length along of the yard and a half or so of stitches that are completed in the sixty seconds. In addition, the sewing-machines at work under the managing of Early Workers at sacks, are tools or implements, worthy of the name. Steam-power moves them, they are positively machines, therefore, in the modern engineering sense; and they have a bite or gauge, that marks a stitch a good quarter of an inch long, and that carries a thread along with it almost as solid and thick as twine. A whole hall full of machines are worked at the same moment, by the same engine too, enabling quite a little settlement of Early Workers to be seen under one roof; each girl on her own territory, with her own apparatus—capable of being disconnected and connected again by a touch of her hand—each girl with her younger girl-helper to hand up and carry off, and with the sacks she is to make, in a dwindling pile on one side of her, and the sacks she has finished making, in an increasing heap upon the other. Apart though from this giant-size and this steam motive-power alluded to, these sewing-machines are identical in form and in principle with the most dainty and decorated little articles wrought in fine woods and bright metal, for a rich lady in a rich boudoir. The material under their harrow, or perforation, must be

accurately guided, the line of stitches must be kept even; there must be a careful eye that the thread is not snapped off. When this guiding is done, however, and there has been attentive setting in, and as attentive a watch at the easy getting off, this work of sack-making is completed—and it cannot be said that the work is hard. A girl's strength is not over-ried by it; she sits with a good light full upon her; in plenty of space; in fair air; under fairly cheerful conditions. As she is paid, also, for what she does by the piece, if she works extra diligently there is the reward that some of the benefit comes to herself as well as some to her employer; and if she dallies and hangs fire, she is reminded of her dalliance, and reproved for it, by the unpleasant fact that the wages she carries away at the weekly hour of payment amount to very little; and it must be seen that there is no better stimulus than this, no more excellent hint and lesson. It works on such a scale with a girl at sacks, that, with the sack material brought already cut into lengths into her apartment, and with the sack pieces laid already doubled to her hand, she can put them under the needles, and direct them along the right line—never stopping to sever one sack from another, letting one sack pursue its preceding sack, with only a finger's length of thread as frail division—till sack is on sack in a curious growing coil, and till the girl has finished that one sack in a minute that has been recorded, making five hundred sacks a day, and she has earned at the week's end as much as fourteen shillings. Now, fourteen shillings a week is a good sum for a girl of not more, possibly, than as many years; so also is the payment good to the younger girls still, who are under the machinist and wait upon her, although it may only come to half the superior's money, or a little less. But it must be understood that sack-making, to yield these good results, is no "fancy" affair, to be taken up and laid down at inclination, to be assumed when it is convenient, and put aside when the worker is "indisposed." Factory hours have to be kept over it, and factory discipline; and as factory hours mean a beginning at six o'clock in the morning, sharp, through dark winters as well as in invigorating summers, it is evident that early rising is a necessity, and it is no less evident that "hands" ought to have no long distance to travel, before arriving at their work at six o'clock, but should live within easy distance of

the factory-gates. A point is made of this, because an impression was current a short time since that, as girls were wanted for sack-making and for making sack material, it would be well to make this fact known by means of the press that women and girls see, in order for supply to meet demand, and for a section of girls to come to an end of the forced idleness that was their misery and their complaint. With the real circumstances of sack-making known, no such announcement could ever be thought appropriate to the need. Sack-making is local; it must always continue to be local. To girls accustomed to a factory, to girls near about a factory, the intimation that they can turn to sacks is all very well; to others it entails emigration, uprooting from home, with separate keep and lodging, and the increased cost of it. That sack-makers are a perpetual want there is no doubt—so are sack-material makers—but as long as work for girls means procuring work that can be done at home in the intervals of household labour, when family duties are ended, or can be put aside, and as long as work for girls means procuring work that, being done at these snatches and in this fashion, shall yet have solid pay to it, then sack-making and sack-material making must be cast aside at once and for ever, for they bear no relation to the circumstances, and could only bring disappointment.

For all this, all sack-making is not done inside a factory or by machine and steam. Material can be made into a sack in an Early Worker's home; and material to a very great extent is so made. One factory alone can employ as many as three hundred outside "hands." These make about eighty thousand sacks a week; and, working as they do, mother and girl together in co-operation, they can earn, as a pair and on an average, fifteen shillings. These work by hand, of course, and the work is, for sewing, as hard and laborious as it can well be. Let a thought be given, too, as to what sack-making means in the small and cumbered room that would be an Early Worker's "home." Every movement of the sack-pieces would bring dust and fluff; all furniture and inmates must be covered with it; every drawing through of a needleful of thread, in the sewing of the sack, must increase this fluff to the worker herself almost to oppression. A sack is a heavy article also; a score of sacks, however straightly folded in a

bundle, would require for the lifting some considerable strength. For this reason is it that, on nearing a sack-factory, a visitor may be certain there has been no missing of the road, by the trail of women wheeling trucks or barrows, on which made and unmade sacks are heaped up high. Their arms cannot hold many—it is not worth while to visit a factory only with these; yet carriage must be done, and the convenience of a barrow is at once seen. At the same time, it confines sack-making to a roughish set of people: the women, slatterns; the girls, too surely set to follow their example; and it is this weight of the sack-pieces, again, that causes sack-making by hand, in comparison with other sempstresses' work, to be such rough and severe labour. Then, in connection with the fluffiness and fibre-distributing faculty of the sack-material, there comes the fact that, though the workers like to do their work out-of-doors—and are occasionally seen in the fascinating publicity of a door-step—this relaxation is obliged to be forbidden, for the reason that too much sun spoils the glossiness of the new sacks, and that the slightest rain is of positive injury. Other circumstances relating to sack-making are that, if the sacks are to contain guano, they must be sewn with tarred twine; and that they are all, whether for one purpose or another,—whether sewn inside the walls or out—of three marked sizes or varieties. One of these is, technically, bagging, used for such an article as rice; the second is, technically, sacking, used for wheat and oats; the third is, technically, Hessian, used for such things as sugar and guano, and being chiefly double, that is, two bags absolutely one inside the other, the outer one having the name of "casing." All sacks when made are deposited in the sack warehouse, where, if required by the dealers who have ordered them, they are stamped, by means of large zinc plates and "stencilling," with their owners' names. In this warehouse also, they are carefully looked over by girls—whose wages are nine shillings and sixpence per week—to see if they are right in number and properly sewn; after which they are pressed into packages by immensely concentrated steam-power; the pressure forces them till they are as hard and tight as wood; and, with that process they are finished, and are at last ready to be sent away.

The question that now comes is, What is this sack-material that is in such plentiful

and perpetual use? In the time of the illustrious Jack of house-building celebrity, the sacks that held the malt were made of hemp. That hemp came from Russia, chiefly; the growth of it was dear, the carriage of it was dear, the market-value was always kept high, because it was ever being purchased for sails, for cordage, and other purposes requiring material especially tough and strong; and, whenever Jack ordered new envelopes or wrappers for his historic commodity, the order was always followed by a stiff bill, that made Jack put his hand in his pocket and bring out a heavy and serious sum of money. Moreover, this large cost necessitated a rigid economy. In Ireland, and probably elsewhere, at the present day, this is effected, even with the reduced price of sacks—made there as here by Early Workers—by a mode of hiring them instead of buying, which allows the smallest demand on capital possible, and thereby adds a very trifling cost to grain for the necessary wrapperage. In Jack's time, the same result had to be obtained in a different way. A sack was used and returned; used and returned again; was sent to town and town, jogging along by waggon, and being jogged back once more, till Jack felt he had, to a certain extent, been repaid some of the original cost of it. Naturally, this recurrent use of a sack had many disadvantages. The material became soft by passage from shoulder to shoulder, and thump from waggon to ground; became rotten by damp; became torn by accident; gave facilities in many ways for ravenous rats to eat the malt confined in it. A sack, too, and scores upon scores of sacks, would get lost upon some journey, and consequently never get back to Jack to console him for what he had spent. And as this was so with malt sacks, so was it with sacks to contain all produce else. They were a severe item in an original invoice; if they could reappear under the head of "empties" after they had been collected and successfully returned, they formed an agreeable deduction. And, meanwhile, what was happening? Gunny bags were being brought into this country by ship-load and shipload, week by week, and year by year. Gunny bags that were stained, "native," scented, were being landed from India, carrying rice, sugar, pepper, and so forth, and were being looked at, handled, emptied, and thrown aside, just as rushes, matting, paper, or any other cheap casing might be thrown aside, without a thought

of the cost, the utility, the composition. But they were not always to remain thus. The mind of the British manufacturer was aroused at last; the genealogy of the gunny bag was searched for and discovered; it was found to be of the lowest birth; so far that it was of very inconsiderable cost, and was capable of almost universal application; it was found that it could be imported raw here, could be dressed, spun, made, all at a final cost that was only a third that of the time-known sack of hemp; and, in the year 1830, the first experimental manufacture in Great Britain was begun. Jute, in commercial parlance, is the name of this comparatively new importation; in botany it rises to the style of *Corchorus capsularis*. It is Asiatic chiefly—though some two or three out of its forty or fifty species are found in most tropical countries of both hemispheres, or in the latitudes bordering close upon them—and it is of the farthest antiquity. Indeed, there is little reason to dismiss the surmise that when Delilah bound Samson with “the seven green withs that had never been dried,” the Philistines had given her jute-withs, and she was just using an ordinary appliance, the one most ready to hand. The basis for this supposition is the fact that the word translated “withs” is in the Hebrew reading *jeter*—that means, cordage, or roping stuff, of any kind. It is quite common for the name of a specified individual thing to be affixed to a whole race or tribe; and jute happens to be precisely one of these cordages or roping stuffs used for all manner of tying purposes all over the East, right down to the present day. It grows full twelve feet in height, the thickness of the little finger, of the cane or cylindrical form; and cords are made of it (and of other fibrous plants) by simply twisting a cluster of the stalks together, as English farm-servants twist bands of hay. Used as it is being supposed Delilah used it, just as it grows, new and raw, “green” and full of sap, it is by nature a tough band or ligature, and it is tied as a tether round the legs of new-caught elephants and other beasts of the chase, it is bound round packages, it makes rough harnessing—in short, it is a rope, and can have occasions found for it just the same as ropes of any other kind. It is the length of jute that pointed it out in this special manner for cordage. A soft silky fibre, pliable as a tress of hair, of annual growth (like a magnified and flowering ear of wheat or

oats), being twelve feet in height—think of four yards of ready-made ribbon at a stretch!—as thick as a finger if one stalk were used, or as an arm if a great many were woven or made into a plait, it was little likely it would be overlooked when dawning civilisation brought the need of tying, without much chance of handicraft or selection; and it was to cordage, also, that the British manufacture of jute naturally turned. But jute is quickly injured by wet, it will snap if friction follows it; and jute, whilst used in Great Britain, is ever amidst wet; ashore, from the rain that falls, from the damp that shrouds it in, on shipboard, from these and the rivers and the seas in which ropes must inevitably be soaked; so jute in that connection with these conditions had to be laid aside. This caused a division of appropriation in the end—hemp for ropes and sail-cloth, jute for the gunny bag—and this was an appropriation that was of double worth, for the reasons that it set hemp free for those stronger purposes where only hemp would do, and that it brought in jute for the great mass of sacking-work, where jute could make three sacks for the price of one, and take rank with a hemp sack equally. And the importation of jute into this country increased with wonderful rapidity after this. In 1858, after some twenty years of acquaintance, seven hundred and thirty-eight thousand and eighty-five hundred-weight came into port, with an outlay of six hundred and nineteen thousand, six hundred and sixty-eight pounds; in 1871, the sum paid by merchants for the bales (each one three hundredweight) they took into their factories, reached two millions, nine hundred and twenty-two thousand, three hundred and four pounds.

It is not only in Great Britain either, that jute as jute, or made up into the gunny bag, has ready sale. The United States, for cotton, for rice and so on, do business direct with India, about similar in magnitude to our own; and other countries follow, with only a less amount because the nature of their products brings them a less need. Neither is it only for gunny bags that jute, here or elsewhere, has manufacturing value. The cloth they are made from is in large demand for box-covers, for packing, for wrapping-sheets, and purposes of that kind; the jute fibre, span, is used for the ground-work of matting, coarse carpeting, and floor-cloth. Creeping in, too, to supply the place of cotton,

during the cotton famine, in all fabrics where one fibre could be substituted for the other, the price of jute rose fifty per cent., and the lucky holders flourished. The colour of jute, though, will always keep it within certain limits. It is the familiar "whity-brown"—with the brown decidedly predominating—and as it will only bleach with great difficulty (and difficulties entail expense, and raise the selling price) it can never be applied where a material is wanted both cheap and white. This same bleaching obstruction, too, lessens the value of jute-cloth, in the piece as well as the bag, when it has run its life, and is thrown aside as waste. Linen rags and cotton rags, and linen and cotton cuttings, can be reduced to pulp, and reproduced as fine polished paper; jute rags are capable of the pulping, but as they dislike to part with their native dinginess, the dark paper that is made from them can only be used for wrapping, and is, besides, friable and coarse. However, jute does not refuse the dye; it can take black and deep-stained colours, and any, provided they are not too delicately pale; and in this new complexion is it that it appears as common carpeting, and that—as a far extreme—by means of its softness and power of separation into fine fibre or fragments, it has even been used for ladies' hair-puffs or chignons.

As a fabric-fibre, jute is cultivated in Malacca and China, as well as by the Hindoos; as a plant, it is grown in Egypt, Syria, the West Indies, and South America. From the *Corchorus capsularis* of Hindoostan, taking the waste ends of the stem, there has been distilled a kind of whisky, resembling a corn spirit; from the *Corchorus olitorius* (also yielding some part of the jute of commerce), taking the young shoots as they come, there is obtained a pot herb, of so much use among the Jews that it has been nicknamed Jews-mallows; from the *Corchorus siliquosus* of the Western Hemisphere, the natives get besoms, and make an infusion of the young leaves that they use as a drink, and call by the Chinese name of tea. *Corchorus* itself, with its some half-a-hundred species, includes the British plant pimpernel or chickweed; but, although that other species has had the second name given to it of Jews-mallows, it is in no way identical with the British mallow, or marsh-mallow, or *Malva sylvestris*, nor is it the same plant referred to in Job, "they cut up mallows by the bushes"—set down

to be a variety of mesambryanthemum, or ice-plant, much valued in hot countries for its power of retaining moisture. The true *Corchorus capsularis*, or ordinary jute, has been grown in England, under glass, as a curiosity. It attained the rare height of fourteen feet, too, and its seeds formed; but as these would not ripen, and it is of no peculiar beauty in a single specimen, the growth was abandoned. In India, at certain seasons, under its native skies, and in the mass, jute affords a magnificent sight. The railway, driving through the land from Calcutta to Bombay, takes its travellers past fields and fields of it, with all the beautiful effect of being driven through fields of newly-fallen snow; and surely it would be well if Early Workers spinning the jute fibre, or sewing the jute cloth into sacks, were told a few of these facts. From the well-known character of many jute factory owners, and their constant philanthropic endeavours, it is not too much to suppose that if the idea were suggested to them of giving lectures to their "hands," upon the fabric they handle, the lectures would very efficiently be given. And they may be sure the Early Workers would find them of great interest.

A JAPANESE NEWSPAPER.

TURNING over the leaves of a diminutive blue-book of no particular interest, we lighted upon a translation of the six hundred and thirty-third number of the Yokohama Daily News, published on the 20th day, 2nd month, 6th year of Meiji, 20th day of 2nd month of Solar Calendar; that is to say, Thursday, February 20th, 1873. The date is not of the freshest, but the contents of the paper have lost none of their savour by keeping.

Compared with more familiar journals, our Japanese newspaper is but lightly laden. Immediately after the date comes the announcement: "Weather fine. Thermometer at noon, fifty-two degrees." This is followed by an official communication from Inouye Kaora, vice-minister of the treasury, setting forth the number and description of the ships at anchor in the bay of Yokohama, the amount of Customs receipts for the preceding day, the rates of exchange, and a notification that the Budget of News, the Daily Intelligence Association News, and the Yokohama Daily News, being

conductive, "be it in ever so slight a degree," to energy and progress, by furnishing correct information about home and foreign affairs, it is ordered that these journals be forwarded daily to every Fen and Ken—city and district—in the Empire.

His Excellency not only helps the circulation of the favoured newspapers; he seems to supply them with no small portion of their "copy." In the number before us he reminds "the three cities and thirty-six districts," that although it had hitherto been usual when the government disposed of mansions, residences, and offices with the sites thereto belonging, for the purchasers to pay the price of the standing edifices to the Board of Buildings, and the price of the ground sites to the Board of Revenue, for the future all such payments were to be paid to the last-named. Then, by way of warning to ill-disposed folks, the minister furnishes a copy of a report from the Wakamatsu Ken respecting a conspiracy hatched by Toyoji, son of Manyo, of Shiogawa village, township of Aidyn, province of Iwashiro. This report is merely the deposition of Toyoji, prefaced by a letter signed by Washio Takamitsu, Okabi Isunanori, and Yasuda Narinori, respectively governor, vice-governor, and acting-vice-governor of the Ken, enclosing a list of eight individuals implicated in the plot, for whom "most diligent search is being made."

Like many a plotter before him, Toyoji tries to clear himself at the expense of his fellow-plotters, but whether his statement (a long and uninteresting one), in which he solemnly declared there was not one word of untruth, did him much service, we doubt. If he got off scot free, he was a luckier fellow than the penitent rabbit-dealer of Kanagawa, who humbly acknowledged in the columns of the Yokohama Daily News, that, when he petitioned His Excellency Governor Oye Taku for leave to commence business, he was cautioned that assemblies would not be allowed; that, notwithstanding, he hired the parlour of Iida Kichigemon, and there held an assembly, and the governor's suspicion lighting upon him, he was found out. He was consequently filled with fear. He had again been admonished that, if ever he held any more assemblies, he would be severely reprov'd; and respectfully received, and promised to observe, the admonition. To the unfortunate rabbit-dealer's confession is appended an order

signed by Oye Taku: "As this man has acted in an unprincipled manner by violating the conditions prescribed to him when leave was given to him to carry on business as a rabbit-dealer, he is hereby forbidden to carry on that business any longer."

As at least one and a half of the four pages of the modest-sized sheet are devoted to advertisements, the editor of the Yokohama Daily News has very little space at his disposal for chronicling the events of the day. We find only one accident recorded in its columns, but that is a strange one. A Japanese boat in distress being sighted off O'Shima by a British steamer, the captain put his ship about and picked up the six occupants of the boat, just in time to save them from drowning. One of the rescued Japanese, who appeared more dead than alive, had his whole body so scorched and inflamed, that his shirt was sticking to his flesh, and could not be peeled off him. Upon the captain questioning his companions, they stated that, as their boat was running before the wind about noon, this man and another were sitting facing each other, when, all of a sudden, a flash of lightning struck the boat, stunning the scorched man, while the one opposite him was hit right in the head by the lightning, smashed into little bits, and disappeared in the sea. "Foreigners," is the editorial comment, "have a contrivance for warding off lightning strokes, not only at sea, where there is no shelter at hand, but also on everyone of their houses. Therefore, our countrymen should adopt this system without delay; if this is done, we shall have no more loss of life and destruction of houses by lightning, such as have heretofore been frequent."

Our journalist gives us a better taste of his quality, when he deals with a bit of social scandal, airing his morality in quaint fashion, as he relates the story of a frail dame, the course of whose love ran anything but smoothly: "Near the Imado-bridge, in Asakusa, Yokiyo, there was a restaurant known as the Zumeiro, the proprietress of which was named O'Kiku. This lady, though fully forty years of age, is uncommonly handsome, and of very attractive manners. She is, however, of a fickle disposition, and some years ago was free of her favours to the play-actor, Suwamuro Dossho, in consequence of which she lost her lawful husband, and brought confusion on the

household. Still she paid but little regard to the censure of the world; and, about four years ago, the pair started off for Esaka, intending to become man and wife. As she had slipped away from home on the sly, the lady was followed, and was overtaken and brought back by the pursuers when they had got as far as Sogayeki. Thus their intercourse was interrupted for that time. But within the last year or so they drew together again; and, as love brooks no denial, the lady called in her go-between, and arrangements were made for the marriage. However, on the very night before, a fire broke out in her house, and it, together with four or five houses adjoining, was burned to the ground. In consequence, the bridal preparations have had to be postponed. It is said that O'Kiku cares very little either for her own or her neighbours' losses by the fire, but that she is inconsolable because the mischance has marred her nuptials. As regards the tender passion between the sexes, it were useless to enter upon the question of wisdom or folly. Just as in old times, so now, the cleverer the man the greater fool he makes himself; but when women like the O'Kiku, whose brows are beginning to wrinkle with age, forget, for the sake of a young spark, their family and household ties, Heaven visits them either with a fire, as in this case, or with some other calamity. As for Dossbo, his family cognomen of Edderburnhouse is only too likely to be changed into Wed-her-burnt-house. Surely a man ought to guard against so scathing a fire as that!"

The Daily News complains that lottery-boxes, called "your fortune," are allowed to be placed outside fanes and temples, out of which a numbered stick is shaken, and a ticket marked with the same number, foretelling good or bad luck, sold to the devotee; while close at hand stands a fortune-reader, prepared to explain the drift of the lot, who, by talking confidently about life and death, so frightens ignorant folk that he can extort money from them at his pleasure. "Unless these fellows," says the Daily News, "are put down by the Government, it is not likely that this superstitious abuse will cease." "Such improper things as fortune-telling and saying prayers ought, as a matter of course, to be suppressed." With this bold protest against a popular superstitious folly, the Japanese journalist puts down his pen for the day and leaves the rest of

the paper to the advertisers, of whose contributions the translator gives only a few specimens—of too commonplace and familiar a character to justify quotation.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MARRINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER XLVI. ARRESTED.

ONLY a mile or so, as I have said, had intervened between the lock and the inn, but during that interval much had passed between Helen and the vicar. The former had at once identified Ella with the person whom Darall had described to her as having been deserted by Landon.

The latter regarded the rencontre—making allowance for the difference of his sex—in the same light as Rose; that is, as a most wretched and embarrassing scandal. The flight of Landon from the presence of her to whom he had manifestly been "something less than kin and more than kind," had struck him at the moment as dastardly and contemptible; yet on reflection, as he allowed, what could the poor man do, thus confronted with such an enemy, and impeded for all purposes of showing fight by the companionship of Rose? The whole affair was simply one of those unavoidable disgraces which attach to past misbehaviour, and that unhappily punish others besides the real delinquent.

A very high degree of satisfaction had doubtless been imparted by the scene to its less interested witnesses—the ladies and gentlemen on board the six-oar, which the vicar looked upon as a sort of Cleopatra's galley, Youth at the prow, and Pleasure (in the form of License) under the awning; the lock-keeper and his family, and a couple of roughs who happened to be on the towing-path—but to himself it had given unmitigated distress of mind. Unhappily, too, now that it was over, it was utterly impossible to ignore it; Helen and he could scarcely paddle on together, and join the fugitives at the inn, without a word of remark upon such an occurrence. He let the hateful galley draw well away from them, however—which it did in silence, except for the sweep of its oar-blades, not a word nor a laugh breaking from one of its inmates—before he opened his lips; while Helen remained silent too, looking unutterably pained and wretched.

"We must not make more of this miserable adventure than is necessary," observed he, soothingly. "We know nothing of the circumstances; the woman who spoke to your brother-in-law in that manner may be mad, for what we know, as most certainly what she suggested was untrue."

"She did not appear to me like a woman who was speaking an untruth," answered Helen, gravely.

"Good heavens! do you mean it is possible that she could have been his wife?" enquired the vicar, in horrified astonishment.

"I mean that she seemed to me to believe what she said, Mr. Welby. I believe she believes that she is his wife."

"Oh, pray don't say that, Miss Helen," pleaded the vicar, "because you are almost always right. And if you should turn out to be right in this case—I mean if there was really any ground for such a mistake on her part, it would argue—don't you see—duplicity and wrong on that of your brother-in-law towards her."

"I take both for granted," answered she, coldly.

"Oh, Miss Helen, this is too terrible! I am well acquainted, of course, with your feelings towards Landon; you have never liked him"—she shook her head—"or, rather, you have always been suspicious of him"—she nodded—"and, therefore, I am compelled to accept your opinion with an unaccustomed reserve. I think this condemnation of your brother-in-law unheard, upon an unsupported charge brought against him in the way we have just witnessed, is really most unjustifiable, unless you are acquainted with other facts."

She interrupted him with an icy look.

"I am unhappily acquainted with such facts; I have heard enough from the lips of his friend, Mr. Darall, to make me fear that much—very much—of trouble may ensue to us—to Rose—from—from yonder woman."

"How should Mr. Darall know?"

"He has known Mr. Landon from his boyhood, it seems; but that is a long story. We shall have to listen to it, and much else, I fear, before long. In the meantime what presses is, to put the best face on the matter as respects dear Rose. If she knew even so much as I know, it is my deliberate conviction that she would pine, and fade, and die, Mr. Welby."

"God forbid!" answered the vicar.

"Amen, and amen!" said Helen, covering her face with reverent hands. When she looked up again it was very set and still, and full of purpose. "For the present, Mr. Welby, I will strive to say a few words of comfort to poor Rose; it will not be difficult, since she has confidence where I have none; and you, for your part, must take in hand this man. Upon the first opportunity, you will find out from him how matters really stand—he will lie, no doubt; but Mr. Darall will check his statements, and, when we know our true position, we shall better know how to act. That action will be necessary, I am certain."

Here they reached the inn, where, as they anticipated, they found Landon and Rose awaiting them. Helen took away her sister under pretence of taking off their bonnets and cloaks, and the vicar was left alone with Cecil.

"What has happened to-day, Mr. Landon," commenced the former, stiffly, "will have to be enquired into——"

"By those who have the right to do so," put in the other quickly.

"As Mrs. Landon's intimate friend, who, moreover, gave her away to you at the altar, I consider I have such a right, sir, and I mean to exert it."

The vicar, though he prostrated himself so readily under the wheels of Juggernaut, in the person of his female divinity, was not to be bullied by anyone of his own sex. Cecil saw that he had mistaken his man, and altered his tone at once.

"I had forgotten that you had so grave a claim upon me," said he, quietly; "I have already, however, explained my former position, as respects the lady who addressed me in the lock, to Mrs. Landon. It was a humiliation of course; but I have confessed my weakness and have been forgiven."

"Still, I must needs ask you—indeed, in this I am but the mouthpiece of your sister-in-law—does that lady of whom you speak believe herself to be your lawful wife?"

Cecil hesitated; but presently replied:

"It is possible that she may believe it; but, of course, it is not the case."

"Some form of marriage, then, has been gone through between you?"

"We were married in church in the usual way; but the ceremony was invalid."

"You are positively certain of that?"

"I am."

"Then, when you married Rose, you

had not the courage to inform this—other person of the fact?”

“I did not inform her.”

The vicar moved away to the other side of the room.

“I have not got the plague, sir,” cried Landon, angrily, for that movement was very significant, and the more so, that it was evidently involuntary. “You are a clergyman, but you have not always been a saint, I suppose?”

“No; but I hope I have always been a gentleman.”

Here the sisters came in, looking very grave and quiet; and then the whilom little pleasure-party sat down to dinner—or, rather, at the dinner-table. The meal was a mere stage banquet to all except the vicar, who possessed the excellent appetite of his cloth, and had his gentler emotions too well under control to suffer them to interfere with digestion. It was not quite the same with his temper. Cruelty and cowardice, especially when united, always excited in him the utmost indignation; but he was sorry that he had suffered this base and heartless fellow—as he judged Landon to be—to strike sparks of fire from him. It was important to keep on seeming good terms with him, since they must needs have much to do with one another. It was easy enough, however, for the vicar to effect a reconciliation. Landon could afford to quarrel with nobody, and had not as yet reached that pitch of recklessness at which a man delights in quarrel.

The party were very silent for the rest of the day; but some little talk was attempted, and especially between the two men. When they got back home and the ladies had retired to their rooms, Mr. Welby resumed the conversation which had been broken off so summarily in the hotel-parlour.

“Whatever may be my opinion of your conduct, Mr. Landon, I am bound by very dear ties to be your partisan. And I beg you will be open with me, as respects all, at least, that may concern your wife. Do you apprehend that there will be any trouble for us with regard”—he hesitated, being at a loss for a proper word, that should also express his disapprobation, to describe poor Ella; but Cecil understood him well enough.

“Frankly, then, Mr. Welby, I do apprehend it.”

“Would it not be better to offer the lady terms; although in that you must, of course, be very cautious?”

Landon shook his head, and smiled a sickly smile.

“No; but I have made up my mind to write to my father!”

“Your father! Why we did not know you had a father!”

“I am like other people, however, in that respect,” answered Cecil, gloomily. “It will be better that he should explain matters.”

“What, to—the lady?” exclaimed the vicar, in astonishment. “Then, this illegal marriage of yours had actually your father’s sanction?”

“He did not know it was illegal; nor did I until lately.”

“And she does not know it now?”

“I have told you that already,” said Cecil, sulkily. “It is no use crying over spilt milk. I am very sorry and very much ashamed of myself, and there’s an end of it. What can I say more?”

“You can say nothing more, indeed; but I am afraid this is not the end of it,” returned the vicar, naively.

“At all events it is not our place to move in the matter.”

“That is true,” mused the vicar; “if there be any action, it will originate from the other side.”

“I tell you any action is out of the question,” exclaimed Cecil, irritably; and not quite catching what the other said. “They have no ground to stand upon, far less to move.”

“You have taken counsel’s opinion on the matter, I suppose?”

“Yes, I have,” said Cecil, thinking of his conversation at the inn at Wellborough with the man of law. The vicar nodded approval; but it was confined to the fact and not the sentiment. Every word that Landon uttered made him appear more base and vile in the other’s eye.

“Well, we must keep quiet and hope for the best,” said Mr. Welby, rising. “It is growing late, so I will wish you ‘good-night,’ Mr. Landon.”

He so contrived his leave-taking, however, by dexterous manipulation of his hat and stick, as to avoid shaking hands.

“Phew!” said he, as he found himself alone in the open air, “the atmosphere about that man is absolutely poisonous.” He looked back at the pleasant cottage, now bathed in the pale moonbeams, with a sigh. “How vile a serpent is this to have crept into so fair an Eden! Helen, as usual, was right about him from the

first. A most ineffable scoundrel! I suppose he is really safe—that is, that his poor wife is—so far as the law is concerned. And yet there is no believing such a liar. It is but ten o'clock; I will just walk down to the Wold Cottage and see if I can have a word or two with this Mr. Darall."

Darall, though an early man both night and morning, was still up, smoking his last pipe after his mother's departure for what that old-fashioned dame was wont to call "Bedfordshire." Her solitary retainer had also retired to rest, so Hugh opened the door to the vicar with his own hands. There was something in the other's face that would have forewarned him of the nature of his errand, even had not his first words been these:

"You must excuse this untimely visit, Mr. Darall, but I am come about Mr. Landon's affairs. There is no further need, I am sorry to say, for any reticence on your part with regard to your friend's interests, because Rose and—that unfortunate person—have met face to face."

"What! Is Mrs. Landon here then?"

"Mrs. Landon is here of course, at her own home," answered the vicar, coldly. "The other lady—has, I believe, returned to town."

"God help them both!" ejaculated Hugh, fervently. "Come in, sir, and sit down." The morning light was breaking before the two men had parted; and the vicar took his way through the silent village home. He had in his vocation witnessed many a melancholy scene, with death itself occupying the foreground; but it seemed to him that, until now, he had never known how terrible and tragic are the elements of human life. When once a real catastrophe happens to us, it appears, for the time at least, that we have been heretofore living in a Fool's Paradise; we are like some Alpine traveller who, walking on the snow that looks so smooth and sure and solid, is suddenly engulfed in a crevasse; he may escape, but there is no surety for him more; his path is henceforth full of unseen abysses. It was to the vicar's credit that he experienced these emotions, since no catastrophe had occurred to himself. The misfortunes of his friends, however, were to this worthy divine as his own misfortunes; and, in Rose's case, he had now learnt, almost for certain, that the trouble was but beginning; that "the clouds" would "return after the rain" of yesterday, and were already forming some-

where, black and bulging, to burst in tempest on her innocent head.

Yet Darall and he had both agreed that there was nothing to be done; and, above all, since Landon had made his peace with Rose, that she should be left at peace, so long as it might be possible. And in this the vicar found—which settled the matter so far as he was concerned—that Helen concurred. So of all the little party at Grantham who had any knowledge of Ella's existence, as Cecil's whilom wife, poor Rose, who was the most deeply interested in the matter, knew least about it, and feared least what might come of it. I do not say that she thought least concerning it; her simple heart, amazed that such things could be, doubtless, pondered over the weakness of the man whom she had seated with the angels, and did her best to gloss the soil away that marred the whiteness of his wings; but of personal apprehension she had none. He had sworn to her that she alone was his lawful wife, as she alone had won his love; and though he had erred in one matter, being cast more in mortal mould than she had fondly imagined, he was still to her truth itself; and she believed him.

On the third day, however, from that sad scene upon the river, there came to The Casket a taxed-cart, with two men in it; one of whom was known to the vicar, who happened most fortunately to be standing at the cottage-door as they drove up. They were policemen, though of the rural sort, and they had a warrant with them for the apprehension of one Henry Cecil Landon upon the grave charge of bigamy. The magistrates, at that moment in petty sessions at Pullham, were urgent for his immediate attendance before them.

"You know me, my man," said the vicar, gravely. "There is no need to enter: I will bring the gentleman to you."

Under pretence of a morning walk he got Cecil away from the two women, and told him what had happened.

"It is nothing," remarked Landon, with a crooked smile, "or, at least, nothing more than I anticipated. It is merely a last effort of revenge and spite. Such a warrant ought never to have been signed by any man."

"It has been issued, however, upon sworn information," observed Mr. Welby, dryly. "That of one Colonel Gerard Juxon, of the Royal Horse Artillery."

Then the crooked smile faded from

Cecil's face, and a ghastly paleness crept over it. He was not afraid of the colonel individually; but his prompt action in the matter convinced him that it was not only to be a duel to the death between him and Ella, but a general engagement, from which Rose herself would be unable to keep aloof.

"What would you have me do?" he asked in a husky voice.

"I will drive you over to Pullham in the dog-cart," said the vicar, "and if the worst comes to the worst—if you are committed for trial—then I will be your bail. We shall be home by dinner-time, and, for the present at least, neither of the ladies need be any wiser."

So they walked off to the Vicarage, the taxed-cart following them at an interval too close to be called "respectful," and presently started for Pullham in the vicar's "trap," with the taxed-cart behind it like its shadow.

CHAPTER XLVII. THE COMMISSARY AND HIS BRIDE.

It will be some relief to turn for a little from two homes, the domestic peace of both of which is threatened, to a roof beneath which young love—or at all events recent love—hovers above a presumed happy pair. I refer to the good commissary and the second Mrs. Ray—just returned from a mere swallow-flight of a wedding-tour to their home at Woolwich. Their marriage had taken place almost immediately after Gracie's departure, and much within the prohibited degree of time as respected the first Mrs. Ray's death; but both their minds were of that stout fibre which is independent of public opinion. It was also generally understood that they both possessed an independence of a description much superior to any mental endowment; for the bridegroom had always been very frugal in his mode of life and had an eye to the main chance, which was not likely to be dazzled by mere beauty and accomplishments. Miss de Horsingham's constantly-repeated assertion, that she loved to watch the expansion of those human flowerets, her pupils' minds, beneath the sun of learning—or, in other words, teaching for its own sake—had therefore really obtained a sort of credence; and she was believed to possess not a little property of her own, in spite of her denial of that agreeable impeachment. She had told the commissary, indeed, almost in so many words,

that if he took her for his wife, her charms would be her only dowry; and he had replied—with the items of that will in Doctors' Commons fresh in his recollection—that he preferred those charms to all the riches of Golconda.

In spite of this thorough mutual understanding, I am compelled, as an honest biographer, to confess that, short as their honeymoon had been, it had not been all sweetness. This arose, in the first place, from the fact that the bride despised the bridegroom in her secret heart to an extent that produced absolute loathing; and, secondly, that matters did not turn out with respect to money as either of them had anticipated.

The excellent commissary had shown such extreme prudence with respect to expenditure of coin, even upon his wedding-tour, that his Rosanna had called it "shabby;" and the remedy he had himself suggested had not been taken in good part.

"If you want two horses instead of one, my dear, to draw us, or a quart bottle of champagne, instead of a pint, between us at dinner," he had ventured to observe, "that can be managed very easily, and I must be allowed to add very rationally, by your contributing one horse and one pint."

She had given him no reply at the time, save a glance of scorn; but afterwards, when they got home, explanations became necessary, and out of them grew a very considerable "unpleasantness"—which is the American term for civil war. Rosanna could not understand how money was so difficult to obtain from him for the housekeeping, the mere exigencies of life, and, in queenly contemptuous manner, demanded more funds. She could not believe but that the frugal commissary had ample store in some old stocking or another; indeed, she had married him upon that very supposition, whereas he had in truth but little beyond his pay, and had married her to better matters. It was now become necessary for him to tap that ten thousand pounds, of the existence of which he had taken such trouble to assure himself; and the occasion seemed a favourable one. The fact was, that Gracie had written to her offended father, not indeed an apology for her conduct, for she saw no need of that; but words at least of dutifulness and conciliation. She had also entreated him, in view of his new wife's returning home and perhaps destroying such fond relics, to send her certain articles of small intrinsic value

but of inestimable worth to her, that had belonged to her dead mother.

"She shall have none of them," had been the commissary's sullen reply to this appeal; but Mrs. Ray No. Two being a kind-hearted creature in the main—warped though she was by circumstances—had suggested a reconsideration of the matter.

"It will not hurt us to part with these things, Mr. Ray; and the poor girl has nothing, it seems, in the way of remembrance of her mother."

"She might have had them all, had she done her duty and remained at home. She flew in my face in leaving this roof, and, again, in engaging herself, as I understand she has done, to this penniless young scoundrel, Darall. She deserves nothing at my hands; but if you ask it, Rosanna, as a favour to yourself, I will grant her request."

For an instant the majestic Rosanna looked very unlike a lady who is asking a favour; but the frown on the brow and the curl of the lip smoothed themselves away, and she replied:

"Well, Mr. Ray, I do ask it."

He nodded, and she at once set to work to wrap up the articles Gracie had indicated in little parcels—silver-paper within and brown-paper without—in that neat-handed way which, though so common among women, is unattainable by almost all men who are not trained to the art. There could not surely be a better opportunity, he thought, for breaking ground with her about that ten thousand pounds.

"You were speaking of money matters this morning, my dear," said he, plunging at once into his subject, "and I think it is high time we should understand one another with respect to ways and means. Our dinner to the colonel this evening must be our last piece of extravagance."

She looked up with a surprised air from a parcel she was tying with string, but immediately resumed her occupation without a word.

"You seem to imagine," he continued, "that we live too frugally, by contrast, I suppose, to my way of life before marriage. The fact is, that at that time you put me to very considerable expenses, and I certainly do not intend to persevere in giving entertainments which have now become unnecessary. I have neither the wish to do so, nor—what will have more weight with you, I suspect—the means, I do assure you."

There was a significant, an unaccustomed air about him as he spoke, that convinced

her that for once he was telling the simple truth.

"Is it possible, then, that you have not saved money?" enquired she, gravely.

"I never had any to save, madam," he answered, not, I am sorry to add, without a malicious grin. "However, with my pay, and the interest of your own fortune, which is not settled upon you, I believe, we shall, doubtless, get on well enough."

If he intended to imply a threat, it was lost upon her; it was not fear, but anger, that shook her voice as she replied:

"Do you mean to say, then, Mr. Ray, that you have wilfully deceived me with respect to your pecuniary position?"

"'In love and war——' my dear madam, you know the proverb," said the commissary pleasantly. He could afford to be good-humoured, for he felt that he had the whip-hand of this woman every way, and he had no scruples about using the whip. "If I am not quite so well off as I represented myself to be, the artifice should be excusable in your eyes, since it was made use of to secure you. It is unnecessary at this time of day to repeat how I adored you; but I was a practical man, and, in addition to your beauty and intelligence, I was not unaware that you possessed what—so long as you remained a single woman—would have been an independence; but which, in the eye of the law, is now your husband's."

"Oh, I see!" said she, with a strange smile; "you have been to Doctors' Commons."

"Well—yes, my dear; I confess that I did take that little precaution. I also gathered from your conversation that you had never speculated, and had been always prudent in your expenditure; so that your ten thousand pounds cannot have been spent. You will now oblige me, perhaps, by telling me where it is invested."

"In the air, in the moon, in the clouds," replied she coldly, but with a certain tone of humiliation too, which did not escape him. "I do not possess one penny of it."

The commissary smiled, or rather showed his teeth like a hyena.

"I do not think you understand, madam, the man you have married," said he, with an ominous snarl. "It will be better for you to make no mistake about the matter. When I say 'I wish,' to my wife, it means 'I will;' and when I say 'I will'——"

"Well, sir?" for he had hesitated.

"Nay; I then use no more words about it, madam, for, if my wife has any sense, the thing is done. When an oyster does

not open to my knife—that is, in the smooth and quiet way that is so pleasant for both parties—I use any means; I have, understand, no sort of scruple in getting that oyster open. This ten thousand pounds of yours, or some of it, I mean to have, and the tighter you hold it the more unpleasant it will be for you. I would advise you not to push me to extremities.”

“Miserable man!” said the other slowly, “I do not heed your threats at that,” and she snapped her fingers; “but I am almost sorry for you. You have overreached yourself through greed, and will, no doubt, repent it bitterly. I, too, have done the like it seems, and I accept my punishment, for it is just; but you, who are a mere wild beast of prey, will howl and lash yourself to frenzy. Listen to me! I had a father once to whom the world was that oyster of which you speak, and he failed to open it. There was this difference indeed, that his regret on that account was for another’s sake, his daughter’s, rather than his own; and when he died in seeming affluence, but, in truth, almost a beggar, he sought to benefit me at the expense of others. By this will, it is true, he bequeathed me ten thousand pounds; but the money he left behind little more than sufficed to pay the legacy duty upon that amount. It was his hope that some rich greedy fool would seek to assure himself of his daughter’s wealth, as you have done, and share with me, not it, but his own fortune. It was a fraud of course, though to such as you it needs not an excuse, and I was fraudulent to—even tacitly—take advantage of it. Still, I never led you on by hint or—”

“Stop!” cried the other, almost inarticulate with fury, and with his large bony face sickled o’er with that hue of yellowish green which was so dangerous a symptom with him. “If you are telling lies—if you wish to keep your money for yourself, and are inventing this, beware, madam. If you value your life—”

“I do not, sir,” interrupted she, coldly. “I hold it, if that were possible, more cheaply than your own. I have told you the plain truth, and if you doubt me, you can have corroboration of it.”

“Put that down!” he roared, pointing to the parcel she was tying up with hands that neither paused nor trembled.

“Why?”

“Never dare to ask me ‘why’ again, you white-skinned thief! Enough that I say ‘do it.’ Do you hear?”

He sprang at her like a tiger—one of that old and mangey sort that is called “man-eater”—and then sprang back again with even greater agility.

She had stood her ground; but, with a quick movement of her hand, had plucked from her bosom a small drawing-room pistol, and presented it point-blank at his hungry face.

“If you had touched me,” she said, “you would have been a dead man—or dog—by this time. If you ever dare to touch me—in anger or on pretence of fondness, no matter which—your life shall pay for it! You cur, and coward!”

Here she did the commissary wrong. He was not a coward in the mere physical sense, but he set a fancy value upon what was intrinsically worthless, namely, his own existence, which would unquestionably have come to an end, had he not made such good use of his legs. Not Beppo, upon his return from foreign parts and alien food, could have looked half so yellow.

At that moment the knock of their expected guest, the colonel, was heard at the front-door. The duties of hospitality were never, perhaps, demanded from a newly-married pair under more embarrassing circumstances; but it was necessary, nevertheless, that they should be paid. Back went Rosanna’s pistol—quite a toy to look at, but more dangerous even than our present steam-engines for the nursery—into her bosom, as quickly as it had emerged; while the commissary, in his extreme confusion, took up one of the show-books from the mother-of-pearl table. It was a foolish act; for never within mortal memory had he been seen occupied with literature before, and it would have excited the suspicions of a far less acute observer than the colonel.

“Poems, by the living jingo!” was in fact the observation that this abnormal incident drew from the visitor’s lips, as he entered the room. “Mrs. Ray, I congratulate you, indeed. I never thought that even your gracious teaching would have made a student of poetry out of the commissary.”

If he had said “a silk purse out of a sow’s ear,” the subject of this observation could not have looked less gratified.

“I was just looking into the book,” he stammered, “to settle the question of a disputed passage with Mrs. Ray.”

“Then there ought to have been no dispute about it, sir,” answered the colonel, gallantly; “you should have given in to your wife at once, independently of her

being right about it, which I will wager that she was."

At this the commissary grunted by no means in approval, while his bride smiled in a grave and Juno-like manner.

"There has been a row," reflected the colonel, "and not, I guess, about a mere quotation. She has hit out from the shoulder, as I knew she would, and damaged him pretty considerably. He looks all sorts of colours.—May I ask what is in these neat little parcels, Mrs. Ray? If it's bride-cake, I'll take my share of it home in my pocket."

"No, no; we had no rubbish of that kind," put in the commissary, with irritation. "Besides, it's out of fashion, like sending cards and all that."

"So you have become a creature of fashion as well as a child of song," answered the colonel, "have you? Then all is transformation indeed, and this is the fairy who has done it."

The fairy—who must have weighed fourteen stone—laughed a silvery laugh, as she finished her last parcel.

"These are all for Gracie," said she; "little relics of her old home-life, which Mr. Ray is sending her. She is going to be married next month, you know."

"Well done, sir," exclaimed the colonel, slapping the commissary's unyielding shoulders, "I am very glad to hear you have come round and forgiven your girl. She has chosen a right good fellow, in my opinion; and I only wish my poor Ella had made as wise a choice."

"Yes; that's a precious bad business, I'm afraid," observed the commissary, maliciously. "They say Landon will never go back to her."

"Well, that isn't the worst thing that can happen to some wives," growled the colonel; "sometimes the husband comes back when she don't want him, or, worse still, doesn't go away at all."

The fair Rosanna laughed again, even more pleasantly than before.

"How absurd you are, colonel!" she said; but it was evidently pleasant to her to see her husband discomfited.

They were dining by daylight—"quite en famille," as the hostess said, or "without their war-paint," as her guest described the not having to dress for dinner—and as they sat at table they could see into the barrack-square. As the conversation languished greatly—Rosanna thinking, doubt-

less, of what her husband might have in his bosom; and the commissary thinking of what his wife had certainly got in hers, namely, the pocket-pistol—this outlook was advantageous, as it offered topics for conversation. Presently the colonel's servant was seen coming towards the house.

"There is news for you, I think," observed the hostess. "Whatever it is, I hope it will not rob us of your company."

"I hope not, indeed," observed her husband; and they were both speaking the truth, no doubt.

"No, madam; not even the kitchen-chimney being on fire would affect me," said the colonel, who prided himself on his bachelorhood, chiefly because it kept him out of harm's way and beyond the reach of Fate's malice. "I'll wager my fellow has brought my snuffbox, not knowing that I put the tortoiseshell one into my pocket instead of the other."

"He has a letter in his hand," said the keen-eyed Isabel.

"Nobody ever writes to me, madam, thank Heaven." He rose, however, and threw up the window with a "Hi! what is it, sirrah?—'Gad, it's from Ella!"

Its envelope was marked "Immediate," and no sooner had he glanced at its contents than he uttered a furious execration.

"What's the matter?" enquired the commissary.

"Matter! everything's the matter! I'll have his blood!"

He was out of the room and out of the house in half a minute, and then across the barrack-square—a spectacle that neither friend nor enemy had ever before beheld—Colonel Gerard Juxon was seen to run!

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

On the conclusion of "What He Cost Her," early in June, will be commenced

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK III. THE STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER I. OF MYSELF.

I MEAN to write about myself first of all.

It has been an annoyance to me that at my christening my parents, or my god-fathers and godmothers, or whoever else was concerned in the matter, should have given me so absurd a name as Nicholas. I think that children should be allowed to choose their own names, or to decline to bear names of an objectionable sort. At school I had to fight many boys who tried to be funny at my expense and to taunt me with being called Nicholas—rhyming it with "ridiculous," and so on. However, the boys I fought with I generally thrashed—that was one comfort. Still I should have been spared a good deal of trouble if some ensible name, such as John, or Henry, or William, had been allotted me.

The members of my own family added to my vexations, by shortening Nicholas into Nick. Now Nicholas is a bad name, but Nick is ten times worse. Of course they did not mean any harm; families have a way of shortening christian-names; I was never one to make a fuss about trifles, and I was not going to quarrel with them for such a reason as that. So I let them go on calling me Nick. All the same, I am clearly of opinion that they ought to have considered my feelings on the subject. Indeed, speaking generally, it has been the fault of my family that they have not sufficiently considered my

sentiments on most subjects. I have always taken care that out of my own family very few should be permitted to address me as Nick. Whenever any of my fellow-clerks ventured to take that liberty, I speedily let him know that, for his own sake, he had better not let such a thing happen again.

My father died of cholera in the prison called The Bench, leaving no provision for his three children. As his eldest son, I felt that certain duties had devolved upon me. I was left the head of the family, and I was anxious to do all I could on my own account, and also on behalf of my sister Doris and my brother Basil. To my dying day I shall maintain that Doris and Basil did not rightly understand the true state of the case, and were very injudicious, to say the least of it, in the course of conduct they thought proper to adopt. They would have done far better, if they had submitted themselves to the guidance and control of one who had nothing but their good at heart, and who was older and far more competent to act than they were.

It was my task to examine my late father's letters and papers. I found among them his correspondence with certain relations settled in the North of England. I have always regarded these people as belonging to what I must call the illegitimate branch of our family. At the same time I am bound to state that they seemed to consider us—my father and his three children—as belonging to an illegitimate branch of their family. The thing turns upon a question of pedigree, which is not worth discussion now by me, or by anybody else. So far, however, these folks in the North allowed my

father's claim of kindred that they doled out to him from time to time various sums of money, always under protest, however, and with an understanding that he was not to intrude himself upon them otherwise. They would recognise him as entitled to a measure of their bounty, but they did not want to see him; in fact, they rather wanted not to see him, and they would be obliged to him if he would only keep aloof from them. My father submitted to these conditions, which were, I think, a trifle degrading. However, he thought it well upon any terms to avail himself of their pecuniary assistance. He had been, I must say, rather short of money all his life.

Upon my father's death I applied to these relatives of ours in the North, without much result. They manifested little surprise at the painful news it had been my duty to communicate to them. Indeed, they described my father's death as "a happy release," which, I thought, was an offensive way of stating the case. However, I should wish to do them justice. They sent up a sum of fifty pounds in Bank of England notes, which I found to be of great service in discharging the numberless small charges and liabilities that arise on such occasions. At the same time, I was bidden to take note that nothing further would be done for me, or for my brother or sister. We were expressly advised, indeed, not to insist further upon a relationship which they were determined to dispute, and from which we could really obtain nothing whatever. They turned upon us what is called "the cold shoulder." We submitted, and steadily refrained from troubling them further.

I was anxious to be at work, and to be earning my living as soon as possible. I sought employment in various quarters, and carefully studied the advertisement-sheet of *The Times*. Whenever I read or heard of a young man being wanted anywhere, I hurried thither to assert that I was exactly the sort of young man that was wanted. At last I secured an engagement in what was known as Baker's Bank, Whitechapel; but I must admit that my success was not due solely to my own pertinacity and enterprise. Mr. Leveridge, it appeared, knew something of Baker, and, at the right moment, had spoken a good word for me. Baker was, in his way, a patron of art, and had bought pictures of Mr. Leveridge.

It may seem disrespectful to speak of

him plainly as Baker, without the usual prefix of Mister; but that was the way in the neighbourhood of the bank. Indeed, he was commonly known as Old Baker. It was understood that his rise to wealth had been entirely due to his own industry and natural intelligence; for of education he could make little boast. He could read and write after a fashion; but further than that he did not go. It was told of him that he had been a parish boy, of unknown parentage; that he had been apprenticed to a small grocer in the Commercial-road; that he had run of errands and swept out the shop; then his master dying—of drink, people said—young Baker had married the widow, and carried on the business on her own account and his own. Presently he had enlarged the shop—had, indeed, opened another shop at a little distance, and was doing something in the money-lending way. The result was the establishment of Baker's Bank and the great prosperity of Baker. In those days joint-stock banks were more limited in their operations than they are at present.

Baker's was, of course, only a small bank, in a very unfashionable neighbourhood—some described it as a very low neighbourhood. The customers of the bank were the tradesmen and dealers of the district, which extended, as we used to consider, down to the docks and the river-side.

"We're a rough lot here, you must understand," said old Baker to me, when I went to enquire about the situation. "Can you fight?"

"Yes," I said; "I can use my fists when there's any occasion."

"You know what to do when you're hit hard?"

"Hit back harder."

"Let's feel your arm. Hard as nails, I declare! You're young and thin, but you're strong and springy. If I did not carry quite so much flesh I should like to put on the gloves, and have a round or two with you. I like you, young man. I don't mind telling you so. I think you might do. Your appearance is in your favour, and you've a good strong arm. I take for granted that you know how to read, and write, and cipher. You've no knowledge of business, you tell me? Well, you'll soon learn what you've got to do. It's very simple. Only be industrious and honest, and keep your wits about you, and take good care of my property. There's

people in this neighbourhood as would think little of knocking a banker's clerk on the head, for the sake of anything he might happen to have in his pockets. They've been dropping on two or three of my young men lately; there's one at home now with a broken head, poor boy. He made a good fight too; but they were too much for him, and, then, he wasn't nearly your size or your weight. You see what sort of situation this is. You'll have to carry bills, and sometimes gold and notes, through a very rough lot and very queer quarters. Are you frightened?"

"Not a bit."

"Then come here the first thing on Monday morning, and consider yourself employed in Baker's Bank."

I must say that he was rather a common-looking old man. He seldom took off his hat, and he was fond of going without his coat, fully revealing his crumpled, flapping shirt-sleeves, his expansive black satin waistcoat. His face was red; his iron-gray hair was combed straight on to his flushed and rugged forehead. His voice was loud and harsh. He often mispronounced his words, spoke very bad grammar, and dealt erroneously with the letter H. His temper was very violent, his manners were vulgar, and his consumption of brown brandy and water was very large. But there was something honest and hearty, downright and straightforward about old Baker, that one couldn't help liking.

"Serve me faithful, young man," he said to me one day, "and you shall never want a friend. But if I find you selling me, out you go instantar."

And he pointed to the door, while he scowled, until his bloodshot old eyes were nearly hidden by his bushy old eyebrows.

I served him to the best of my ability, and to his satisfaction, as he often told me. I was not very quick at first. I am never very quick at learning things, and I rather tried his patience. Sometimes he flamed out at me very considerably. I said little, for I knew that I was wrong somehow, and that he was certainly right. But on another occasion he had put himself into a passion very unnecessarily. He had found fault with me without just cause. So when he scolded me, I scolded back again, and very high words passed between us. Upon this, old Baker looked further into the matter in dispute between us. In the end, he frankly confessed that the error was his own, he shook hands with

me, and insisted upon my drinking his health. He produced for the occasion a bottle of old port-wine.

"When I make such another mistake, young fellow, you tell me of it. Only, if I were you, you know, I wouldn't tell it in quite so fierce a way. You see, I'm the banker, and you're the clerk. We're master and man, that's what we are. And to be plain with you, I was very nearly knocking you down only just five minutes ago. Still I don't think any the worse of you, but rather the better, for standing to your guns when you knew you were in the right."

At first my salary was very small, with an understanding that I was to receive a present at Christmas. I was duly rewarded by a payment of ten pounds. I lived over the bank with certain of the other clerks, and we were boarded by old Baker in a plain but ample way. In the early days of the bank, old Baker had lived there himself with his wife and family—his second or third wife, I forget which; his first, the grocer's widow, had been dead some time before—but now he occupied a pleasant, old-fashioned, red-brick house near Chingford, Essex, and drove to and fro every day in a mail-coach. He was proud of his horses, paid large sums for them, and was fond of driving very fast indeed. He would invite his clerks, one or two at a time, to spend Sunday at his Chingford house, when he regaled them with a very liberal dinner, and produced excellent wine. Afterwards, the weather being fine, he would sit in a summer-house built on the brink of the fish-pond in the garden, and smoke a long clay pipe of the church-warden kind. Later on, the three Miss Bakers, his daughters, would open the piano, play sacred music, and sing hymns. They were nice-looking girls, with very fair complexions, pale, flaxen hair, and light blue eyes. They were rather shy, and apt to blush when they were addressed, and when you spoke to one, the others joined in replying, treating you to a trio, when you had only looked for a solo. And they had an irritating way of whispering and giggling together whenever any of the clerks from Baker's Bank visited him at Chingford, as though the clerks were a joke that needs must be ridiculous and laughable.

A trusty head-cashier—an old bachelor—took charge of the bank and presided over the junior clerks. At night, we bolted

and barred, as though in dread of desperate attack from the outside. All the shutters were lined with iron, and the windows well fortified with bars. There was also a good supply of firearms upon the premises, and it was understood to be the duty of every clerk to shed his life's blood in defence of Baker's Bank. We were for ever reminding each other that we lived in "a rough neighbourhood," and that any day something violent and dangerous might really come to pass. Stories were current of attempts of a burglarious kind that had been made upon the bank in times past. But we none of us really believed, I think, in the perils of which we were so often speaking. Perhaps we talked of them so much and so often, as really to talk the seriousness out of them.

A SOUTH-RUSSIAN POET.

TARASS CHEVCHENKO was born a serf; and serfdom is not a wholesome condition for a human creature. Under a good lord the serf's lot might be superior to that of the English labourer in some of these dreary villages where there is no resident squire, and where the farmers are more than usually hard and unenlightened; but all masters are not good, and the mischief of serfdom and slavery is, that they leave too much to the individual. Man needs checks of all kinds to keep him straight. In England, if one farmer is exceptionally hard, the labourers will go to another; and there are various courts of appeal, unestablished but none the less influential, which help to keep things straight. Where serfdom was the rule, poverty was not—as theoretically it ought to have been—abolished; and, worst evil of all, the disposition to help distress in general was lessened because it was each owner's business to look after his own serfs; he was their "father," and to interfere might be resented as an affront. Moreover, Chevchenko belonged to a race among whom serfdom was a recent introduction. This South Russia, or Little Russia, of which he is the popular poet, is what we also call the Ukraine—the land of Cossacks, who were free till the middle of the seventeenth century. Free they were, but not safe, with their loose organisation of village communities—not centralised enough to bear the pressure of modern times—and with eager enemies, Poles, Turks, Russians, watching them

all round. Of these the Poles were the worst.

Poland has suffered a great deal, no doubt of it. Her sufferings are a disgrace, not only to the arch-robber and persecutor and to the other two who shared in the spoil, but to all the other "powers" who looked on, and did nothing—did not even get up a conference on the occasion. But then, Poland, in her time, was a hard mistress, deservedly hated by her kinsfolk of Little Russia. She had "annexed" them as far as the right bank of the Dnieper, and had made her rule odious, by that petty kind of tyranny which it is the hardest thing in the world to forgive. For instance, the Poles then, as now, were zealous Romanists, and they worried the schismatic Cossacks, by putting all the church-lands in their part of the Ukraine into the hands of the Jews. Worse still, every church matter was transacted through Jews; the wafers for consecration could only be bought of Jews, who, the Cossacks believed, never sold any, without having first desecrated them by stamping them with some unholy mark. So, when it seemed needful to choose a protector, lest the other half of the Ukraine should likewise be swallowed up, no one thought of the Poles; the question was: "Turks or Russians?" Many were for the Turks; they were a strong nation then, and they had won the respect of their neighbours by a habit of truth-telling, not over common in any part of Christendom, and especially rare to the eastward. Moreover, they were tolerant. If their Christian subjects would pay tribute, they were safe to be undisturbed in the practice of their religion. During the two centuries of Tartar rule in Russia, when the Grand Duke of Novgorod, or by whatever other title he styled himself, was the humble vassal of "the Golden Horde," the churches rarely or ever suffered, the bishops were protected. However, the hetman of the Cossacks, Bogman Chamelnitsky, decided for Russia, and, in 1651, the Ukraine put itself under her protection, stipulating that she was to be as free as ever, and to be ruled still by her own chiefs, the hetmans and kochovys. Just so the horse made all sorts of stipulations when, in his struggle with the stag, he took man to help him. Very soon the native rulers were abolished, and "Great Russian" laws, administered by "Great Russian" functionaries, were introduced. The Cossacks had to submit, except those who lived among the almost inaccessible

islands, hidden by the reed-beds of the Dnieper. Even Peter the Great left these to themselves; but Catherine the Second at last conquered even them in 1775, all except a few hundred who got on board their light boats, dropped down the river by night, and settled on the right bank of the river Kuban, under the skirts of Mount Caucasus, where their descendants are still called Black Sea Cossacks. Catherine determined to make sure work of her new conquest, by introducing throughout the Ukraine the new institution of serfdom. The chiefs, seeing resistance hopeless, submitted with a good grace; it was no bad change for them, looking at the matter from a selfish point of view, to become, instead of patriarchal heads of clans with very limited authority, nobles, with all the power which the Russian nobles wielded till the recent emancipation. But the clansmen were naturally disgusted; and a larger emigration took place, colonising the Dobrudscha—the Delta of the Danube, as muddy and reedy as the islands of the Dnieper themselves. There they lived their wild life under Turkish rule, whilst those who were left seem, with their freedom, to have lost their self-respect and their energy. They sank to be mere clods instead of enterprising fellows, ready for a foray across the steppe, or a raid with boat-flotilla up or down the river, and equally ready for any trading enterprise that had a spice of romance in it. Before fifty years were over, all the trade of the country had passed into the hands of "Great Russians," or of Jews. In education also there was a lamentable fall. Kiev had been the cradle of Russian thought; its university for a long time had ranked high, in theology especially; anyhow it was the only university between the Black and White Seas; the men who helped Peter the Great in his civilising work were educated there. Schools, too, were numerous; there were, for instance, three hundred and seventy-one in two districts of the government of Chernigof; there are now only two hundred and sixty-three in the whole government. Even now that the serfs have been emancipated, the Little Russians have not got the full benefit of the change; the zemstovs (general assemblies, folksmote), which exist in every other district, have not been permitted in Western Ukraine, for fear of the Polish proprietors; and even on the left bank the language used is Great Russian, therefore those who can only speak Little Russian don't know what is

going on. Hence they will be slower than the other Russians in profiting by their freedom. During less than a century of serfdom they seem to have lost more than their brethren did in long ages, and it will take a great deal to rouse them out of the sleepy distrustful state into which they have got. Of old times they have kept nothing but their poems—the songs of the kobzars, who used to sing at banquets and tribal gatherings, as bards or minstrels did in Western Europe. Chevchenko is a modern kobzar; only his poems, instead of being all about love and war, and raids on the Musulman, and glorious expeditions down the river, and even to the walls of Stamboul itself, are more than half about serfdom, the degradation that it brought to all, to the women especially. For, as I said, he was born a serf in the government of Kiev, just forty years after serfdom had been established by Catherine, that is, before the memory of the old freedom had died out. His grandfather must have been free; his father may probably have enjoyed some years of freedom. And he died early in 1861, just when all Russia was ringing with the news that the serfs were set free.

The future poet was one of five children when his mother died, and his father, at his wits' end how to manage such a tribe, took a second wife. She turned out a cruel stepmother to them all, especially to young Tarass, whose high spirit and sense of justice angered her. He was made family swineherd, and was sent out with a bit of black bread to spend the whole day upon the steppe. Here he would sit for long hours at the foot of one of the barrows so common on the steppe, listening to mysterious voices that seemed to come to him from within. "What is there in the world beyond, and how far does it go?" he used to ask himself; and, one day, leaving the pigs to do the best they could, he walked on and on to find the world's end, and the iron pillars on which he fancied it rested. Fortunately he was picked up by some people who knew him, and brought back half dead with fatigue—he was barely five—to his native village. When his father died, his stepmother sent him to the sacristan, who kept him and several other boys as drudges, in return for a few lessons in reading, writing, and plain-song. Russian priests are a disgrace to Christianity. "He has priests' eyes," is a proverb which means that the person so characterised is lustful, greedy, and

self-seeking. Moreover, they are, in a drunken nation, the most drunken. A friend of mine, who stayed several months at a Russian country-house, says it was a common sight to see two priests lying in a cart, as pigs do when they are driven to market. One saint's day, he tells me, the priest came to chapel too far gone to read the service; instead of being struck dumb with shame, he actually whined out an apology: "We poor fellows spend all our time in praying for others, and have no one to pray for us; no wonder, therefore, we fall under temptation." Things are just as bad in Bulgaria; an English engineer who has just written a book of his experiences there, went over one Sunday to attend a church, whose "pope" had a great reputation for sanctity. There was no service, for the "pope" was lying dead drunk among the nettles at the back of his vodkō (whisky) shop. "I heard," quaintly adds the writer, "that for the five previous Sundays his place had been among those vegetables." Is it any wonder the Turks look on a religion which has such teachers as fitter for swine than for men?

Priests being such, what can we expect sacristans to be? Tarass's sacristan was a drunken brute who beat his boys, and on whom they in turn played off all sorts of unhandsome tricks. Tarass, however, managed by dint of perseverance to pick up reading and writing and a little knowledge of accounts, and to learn how to chant the service; nay, by-and-by, his master would send him to take his place at a funeral, giving him one of the ten copecks which he got as fee. While here, Tarass became exceedingly fond of drawing, covering every scrap of paper that he could pick up with sketches of everything that he saw around him; but at last, the beatings were too much for him. He ran away—how, he details with the utmost simplicity. "One day, the sacristan, more drunk than usual, had fallen into a heavy sleep. I picked up a stick, and, in one sound drubbing, paid him out with interest for all the floggings he had given me. Then I made off, having first pocketed a little book with hideous coloured engravings—how beautiful they were in my eyes! I can't tell now, as I look back on that time, whether I thought he owed me the book for his ill-treatment, or whether my desire to possess it wholly silenced the voice of conscience. Brought up as I had been, I think I'm rather to be praised for not sinning more grievously." After his

flight, he first took service with a deacon, who was also a painter; but with him he only stayed three days, for he found that his master, though glad enough to have an intelligent lad to fetch him water and grind his colours, had not the least intention of ever putting a brush into his hand. Next he found another sacristan, whom the country-folk looked on as a veritable Raphael. "Let me look at your left hand," said the painter, before engaging him; and, having studied the lines on his palm, he said: "You'll never do—why you haven't enough notion of form to be even a tailor." So Tarass, in despair, went home and took to his swineherding. "At worst," thought he, "I shall have my days to myself, and copy quietly the pictures in my little book." But before many months were over, he was rudely reminded of his position by being taken into the steward's family as kitchen-boy. From this he was promoted to be kozachok in the great house. These kozachoks—i.e., "little Cossacks"—were half-pages, half-jesters, in the houses of South-Russian nobles; they wore the old Cossack dress, the professed object being "to protect the Ukraine nationality," and their place was in the antechamber, ready to do any little thing that their masters wanted. Tarass had now plenty of time to himself. He listened greedily to all the kobzars' songs about the old Cossack glories, and, whenever he was out of sight, he went on with his painting. Moreover, as his master travelled much, he saw many new places, delighting himself with the illustrated "posters" with which in Russia, as well as in England, town-walls are liberally ornamented. These he used to copy when he could: sometimes he even picked them off the walls, and transferred them to his portfolio. One night, when he was about fifteen, when "the family" had gone to a grand ball, and the servants were in bed, he was copying a coarse print of Platof the Cossack, when all at once a smart box on the ear laid him flat on the ground. His master had come back, and took that way of reminding him that his time was not his own. Next day, the coachman was ordered to give him a good flogging: not for drawing, but for doing what might have set the house on fire. But three years after, at St. Petersburg, his master, finding he made but an indifferent page, yielded to his entreaties, and apprenticed him to some daubing fellow who called himself a painter. Now began a

golden time for the poor lad; living in a garret, ill-fed, and worse clad, he was supremely happy, working for dear life, and when he walked, going to the "summer garden" to copy the statues which are there ranged in the shrubberies. One day an artist from his own province saw him sketching, and said: "You've got a talent for likenesses. My advice is, go in for water-colour portraits." Chevtchenko did as he was told, and got a fellow-servant to sit for him. The kind fellow sat twenty times, and at last something like a likeness was the result. His master saw it, and forthwith installed the ex-page as his painter in ordinary. He was now twenty-three years old, when the artist from Little Russia, who had become his friend, introduced him to a set of artists and poets—one of them tutor to the Czarovitch, the present Emperor. "We must send Tarass to the Academy," they said; but, of course, the first thing was to make a free man of him; to which end the painter Bruloff gave a picture, and the others got up a raffle for it; thus raising two thousand five hundred roubles, the young serf's price.

Freedom gave a new impulse to Chevtchenko's genius. During the six years that he was studying at the Academy, he wrote some of his best pieces. Looking back, he was better able to measure the evils of serfdom. More than half his pieces bore on this subject. It seems never to have been out of his thoughts. Not long before his death, he sent a short autobiography to the editor of some work like *Men of the Time*; the last paragraph runs thus: "There is scarcely one thing in my early life on which I can look without horror. It was wretched; and the horror with which I look back on it is enhanced by the thought that my brothers and sisters (of whom I have not spoken in this little history—it would have pained me too much to do so) are still serfs. Yes, Mr. Editor, they are still serfs. I have the honour to be," &c. &c. Pages of declamation could not speak so eloquently as that strangely abrupt conclusion; we can fancy something almost choking him, as he penned that closing sentence. Nor were his appeals against serfdom fruitless. He was, as we have said, the pet of a number of literary men, some of whom were about the court. Nothing could be done with the iron Nicholas; but there is no doubt that Chevtchenko's poems helped to determine Alexander in the work which he accomplished fifteen years ago. No doubt, our

poet expected much more from emancipation than any legal change could bring about. Voluntary degradation will always exist in the world, so long as there are mean, base spirits who seek it, or fools who plunge into it lured by the glitter wherewith it is often disguised. But then it is a measureless gain that the degradation should be voluntary. Some of Tarass's saddest poems would apply, almost word for word, to our own land; but there is just this difference, that feudalism in England is weak. Americans wonder how strong it still is; yet we know that feudalism among us is weak indeed compared with what it was in Russia a few years ago. And feudalism meant the degradation, as matter of course, of one class to the other—degradation not sentimental but actual, such as has not existed here since the last of the Plantagenets, at any rate. Emancipation, then, was to be a panacea for all the ills of society. Tarass never seems to have imagined it possible under existing social conditions. It must come, he thought, as part of an ideal republic—a poet's dream of the restitution of all things; such a reign of justice and brotherly love as seems very glorious when we read about it in Isaiah, but very dreadful when fifth-monarchy men or socialists try to carry it out in practice. Under such a republic all the Slav states would form a grand federation; the Ukraine should be once more independent, its Cossacks as free as in the old wild days—free, but not savage as of yore.

All this was not likely to please Emperor Nicholas; the Pan-Slavism that he favoured meant something very different from a federation of free states. So, one day, Chevtchenko was put into the army; and then at once drafted off to a little fortress on the Sea of Aral. It was such a lonely station that the garrison was relieved every year—with one exception. "Leave Number So-and-so behind, and don't let him have any books or writing-materials," was the order to each successive commandant. For several years Tarass was driven to write with a bit of charcoal on such scraps of paper as he had managed to hide between the upper and under soles of his boots; by-and-by, when they relaxed a little, and gave him pens and paper, the poor fellow found he couldn't write at all. He took to drawing, the commandant kindly winking at the breach of rules. One martinet colonel, a

man after Nicholas's own heart, reported him. "I'm deaf in that ear, colonel," said the commandant, looking stern and disgusted, "please to say what you've got to say on the other side." The colonel saw what was meant and changed the subject. When Nicholas died, the poet's friends made interest for him, and after eleven years of banishment he got back to St. Petersburg, where he found a group of authors from Little Russia ready to receive and worship him. But his spirit was broken; all his old ambitions were killed out; he longed to get back to the banks of the Dnieper, and to settle down in peaceful obscurity, marrying some peasant girl; an orphan serf he would have, and none other, one of those about whom he had so often written such pathetic little poems. But women look for other things in a husband besides the power of stringing verses together. Tarass was old and worn, and moreover during those sad eleven years he had got to be too fond of drink. The girls would have nothing to say to him, and he went back to St. Petersburg disappointed. There a pretty girl from the Ukraine took pity on him, and the day was named; but when it came she jilted him, and the poor man never recovered the shock. He had given up his life to sing the woes of serfdom; and now his reward was that, while literary friends admired and the Russian world read him greedily, the very people whose lot he had set forth in its full degradation seemed to shrink from him. His heart was broken, though he wrote on to the end. Not a strong man, you will say; not gifted with that elasticity which is sometimes the accompaniment of genius. And the Little Russian race you will rightly characterise as not a strong one; else less than a century of serfdom would not have broken it down, while other races have resisted long ages of oppression and servitude. But the Little Russians believe in a future for themselves. That is why they worship the memory of Chevtschenko. They think that their race has only been under a passing cloud, and they hail the serf-poet, who is read, not only throughout Russia, but in Servia, in Galicia, in Bohemia (the latest complete edition of his works was published last year at Prague), all Slavdom over, as proof that the cloud has a silver lining. There are fourteen millions of them, a good slice out of that strange conglomeration of peoples who make up the Russian Empire; and now

that nationalities are so much talked of, they will scarcely be content to give up their language and customs—to be, in fact, Russianised. Chevtschenko's more than popularity is one sign of the inherent weakness of that huge colossus which, in the fears of so many, threatens to bestride not Europe only but Asia. How if the Russian Empire is, after all, a thing of pasteboard and buckram, destined to melt into a federation of kindred states? Whether or not, our poet is the people's poet of his own land. He is buried, as he wished to be, on the top of one of those kourganes (barrows) which were the wonder of his childhood; and thither from the first day of spring to the last of autumn the pilgrims throng, singing his songs, talking over his history. They are not the educated class; one who has been among them says it would be hard to find another instance of such poet-worship among the poor and untaught. Strong or weak, Chevtschenko has stirred the heart of several millions of people; and so he has another claim on our attention, besides the share which he had in settling the serf-question. I should like to give samples of his poetry; but I am no Russian scholar, and translation of translations, paraphrases of the French and German prose into which he has been rendered, would be worse than the brick which the dullard carried about as a sample of the house that he had to let. So I shall leave you to form what notion you can of Chevtschenko's Songs of the bold Cossack, and his touching serf-girl tales, from M. Durand or some of his other translators. Whatever you may think of him as a poet, he has made such a name for himself that you ought to know something about him.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE ORDNANCE SURVEY.

MANY persons, not unreasonably, fail to see why the great Survey of the British Islands should be called an Ordnance Survey: seeing that ordnance is one of the names given to big guns, Woolwich Infants, and so forth. The designation arose from the fact that the Ordnance Department has—or, rather, had, until recent changes introduced a new organisation—the control of the two scientific branches of the army, the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery; and that the officers and men of the first-named of these corps have been entrusted with

the survey. A better designation would have been Geodetical Survey, relating to the measurement of the earth's surface; or Trigonometrical Survey, because it is mainly effected by the observation and calculation of triangles. Call the survey what we may, however, there are many reasons why it is desirable to know the exact distances between all towns and conspicuous landmarks; to determine the exact relation which these spots bear one to another, in direction or points of the compass, in order to furnish the data for constructing accurate maps and plans; and to ascertain the exact heights of the localities above the level of the sea, and consequently their heights relatively one to another.

The mode of making these determinations is very remarkable. If we can measure one side and two angles of a triangle, calculation affords the means of ascertaining the lengths of the other two sides; and when one triangle is thus laid down, an adjoining triangle can easily be calculated from it. This is really the whole principle concerned; all else is matter of detail. As a start, mountain tops and lofty hills are selected, each visible from at least two of the others. Ascertaining the length of one of these distances by accurate measuring rods and chains, a base-line is obtained; the angular bearings of some distant object from the two ends of the base-line are then ascertained by theodolites and other delicate instruments, and from these elements a large triangle can be determined. This supplies base-lines for similar large triangles near it; and so the work goes on, until the whole surface of a country is mapped out with a primary triangulation, as it is called. A secondary triangulation is effected by breaking up these larger triangles into smaller, having church steeples, castle turrets, or other conspicuous objects at the angles. Finally comes a detailed survey, breaking up the secondary triangles into others small enough to be mapped out by the usual processes of a land surveyor. From the detailed survey can be drawn maps, plans, and charts, which can finally be transferred to copper and steel plates, lithographic stones, &c., for engraving.

The Ordnance Survey of Great Britain had its beginning little less than a century ago. It originated in an important scientific problem concerning the dimensions and oblateness of the earth's spheroid;

one necessary point of the problem being the determination of the exact relative positions of the observatories of Paris and Greenwich, in latitude and longitude. To effect this an extensive triangulation had to be conducted, with a carefully-measured base-line as its standard of reference. General Roy undertook to lay down such a line on Hounslow Heath. At first he employed well-seasoned measuring-rods; but finding that, notwithstanding their seasoning, they expanded and contracted a little with changes of weather, he substituted glass tubes, twenty feet in length. With these, after minute attention to details, he laid down a base-line five miles long. When exquisite steel chains, by Ramsden, were afterwards used as a test, it was found that Roy's line was in error only three inches in five miles. Triangulation settled the original scientific question in 1789. Some years afterwards the Government determined to extend the triangulation all over England; two new base-lines were laid down, one of seven miles on Salisbury Plain, the other of five miles on Sedgmoor; and so the operations went on till 1809. Officers of the Royal Engineers were then engaged to carry on the minor triangulations, make detailed surveys, and draw plans of military districts in the South of England.

At length the public took an interest in the matter; and the House of Commons agreed to supply funds for surveying, drawing, and engraving maps of the whole of England, on the scale of an inch to a mile, with a degree of accuracy never before attempted. Colonel Colby was placed at the head of the whole undertaking, and proceeded in his task with great energy and skill. His corps of draughtsmen and engineers was at first located at the Tower of London; but after the great fire of 1841, the establishment was removed to Southampton. The whole of England and Wales had been surveyed by that time, and all the maps engraved except those for the six northern counties.

Meanwhile an Ordnance Survey of Ireland on a magnificent scale had been going on ever since 1825. It being a matter of great importance to determine the boundaries of town-lands in that country, for purposes of taxation, local rating, and the like, it was determined to introduce these town-land boundaries as well as those of parishes and counties; and to do this properly, the scale was en-

larged to six inches to a mile. The survey occupied from 1825 to 1842, and is considered to have been almost matchless in accuracy. Some of the operations were really wonderful in character. Colonel Colby measured an immense triangle, the three points of which were Ben Lomond, in Dumbartonshire, Cairnsmuir, in Kirkcudbright, and at Antrim, in Ireland. Although these three stations were nearly a hundred miles apart, each was visible from the other two. Visible, that is, when the sky was clear; but this was a contingency of rare occurrence. Colby tried reflecting mirrors, Bengal lights, white lights, reverberating lights; but the strongest artificial light he found to be Lieutenant Drummond's oxy-hydrogen lime-light; and, even with this, it often happened that weeks elapsed without the lights being visible through telescopes at the other angles of the triangle. Nothing can be done, unless the lights are visible from afar, to measure the angle of direction from one elevated spot to another. It is quite a romance to read of the struggles and hardships endured by the surveyors while engaged on this work; exposed on bleak mountain tops in all weathers, in mud huts set up for the purpose, and watching for distant specks of light which obstinately refused to be visible. Another great work was laying down a new base-line in Ireland. Colonel Colby employed measuring-rods made by Troughton and Simms; combined bars of brass and iron, so adjusted that two minute points near the ends of the instrument were always at an equal distance apart, whatever were the contractions or expansions of the bars individually. This distance was exactly ten feet, within an inconceivably small fraction. So extreme was the accuracy, that a base-line of ten miles long, on the shores of Lough Neagh, measured off by means of two of these compound bars, cannot (it is estimated) possibly err to the extent of two inches in the ten miles.

The state of the great undertaking by the year 1848 was as follows: The whole of England and Wales, except the six northern counties, was surveyed, drawn, and engraved in maps on the scale of an inch to the mile; the maps being mostly forty inches by twenty-seven. And beautiful examples of map-engraving they certainly are. Many of the sheets, by the aid of electrotypes from the original copper-plates, were published in quarters, for

the convenience of purchasers. The six northern counties were to be surveyed and engraved on the same scale, and also on the six-inch scale, which would, of course, cover thirty-six-fold the area of paper and plate. There had also been prepared military plans for the Commander-in-chief; coast charts for the Admiralty; county and parochial maps; baronial and manorial maps; and detailed surface-plans for railway and engineering purposes. All this had cost a sum of money the amount of which will probably surprise the reader—just about two-thirds of a million sterling! The sum received for the sale of the maps was comparatively trifling. So much for England and Wales. In Scotland, the survey really began much earlier, for the construction of military roads after the rebellion in which the Young Pretender figured. But, in 1809, a new survey was commenced, on the same plan as that of England and Wales, and was slowly continued for forty years. Meanwhile, the Irish survey had accustomed the public to beautiful maps on the six-inch scale. These surveys were carried on simultaneously; one at an inch to the mile for the whole of Ireland; one at six inches to the mile for town-lands and small rural subdivisions; and one at twelve inches to the mile for cities and large towns. The maps on the six-inch scale are exceptionally beautiful examples of drawing and engraving. The names and boundary-lines of counties, parishes, town-lands, and baronies; the names and detailed features of cities, market-towns, and villages; the localities of parish churches, glebes, ruins, antiquities, forts, parks, demesnes, mansions, and farms; the dimensions and windings of rivers, brooks, bogs, marshes, harbours, bays, creeks, canals, docks, weirs, locks, bridges, and wells; the position of mines, quarries, lime-kilns, forges, gravel-pits, brick-fields, bleach-grounds, tanneries, and large factories—all are shown with wonderful distinctness. Nearly nine hundred thousand pounds had been expended on the Irish Ordnance Survey by the end of 1848!

But we must on, and briefly relate what has been done in the last thirty years. The House of Commons, scared by the vast cost of the six-inch survey, declined to grant supplies for it in 1851; hence it was decided to finish England and Scotland on the inch-scale alone. Only for a time, however; scientific, military, engineering, and land-owning men all cried out for the

six-inch survey. The House of Commons yielded; the six-inch survey was resumed, as well as two others for special districts on still larger scales. Nearly seventy years elapsed between the publication of the first sheet and that of the last sheet of the Ordnance Map of England and Wales on the inch-scale—so slowly did the operations proceed, amid the manifold delays and changes of plan that occurred.

No one knows, no one can guess, when the gigantic six-inch Survey will be completed; and the same remark applies to other but more special surveys on the twelve-inch and the five-foot scales. We can only wonder and wait with patience. It is literally no joke to pay twenty-two guineas for surveying every square mile of country.

Hard at work they still are, the Royal Engineers and numerous civil assistants, in this memorable survey and its attendant labours. Major-General Sir Henry James has now for some years been director of the whole enterprise; under him are various commissioned officers, from the grade of colonel down to that of lieutenant; under them again are the non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Engineers; and lastly, a strong body of civilians, employed as map-draughtsmen, engravers, photographers, &c. The total force varies from time to time, but may be set down in round numbers at nearly two thousand. That the salaries and pay of this body reach a hundred thousand pounds per annum will show at what rate the total expenditure is growing. Many of the maps of England and Wales on the one-inch scale have become so faint, by the wearing away of the copper-plates, and the details so changed by the introduction of new railways, that a commencement has been made in engraving new plates, from plans reduced from the six-inch scale; some parts of the South of England have recently been completed in this new series. As to the six-inch survey itself, nearly twenty thousand square miles of England and Wales have been engraved and published—a gigantic work, seeing that a map of one square mile covers a surface of six inches square. More than ten thousand square miles of parish plans have been engraved and published on a larger scale. Sixty or seventy towns have been surveyed, mapped, drawn, engraved, and published on a scale of five feet to a mile. A Brodingnagian map of London on this scale actually fills more than eight hundred

large sheets. A number of cities and towns have been surveyed and mapped on the still grander scale of ten feet to a mile. Local Boards of Health have had many special maps prepared of the districts under their supervision. The Thames Valley Drainage Commissioners, wishing to obtain exact data concerning levels and topographical features, more than a hundred thousand acres, extending from Kent and Essex up to Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, have been specially mapped for them.

So in like manner, Scotland and Ireland are still engaging the sedulous attention of surveyors, map-draughtsmen, and engravers. The inch-map of the whole of Scotland will soon be finished. The Salmon Fisheries Commissioners have been supplied with local maps suitable for their requirements. The Inland Revenue Department of Scotland has been similarly furnished with plans and maps of parishes. In the North of Scotland, surveys on two or three different scales are going on, to serve divers purposes. For Ireland, all the inch-scale maps have long since been engraved and published, and many with the hill-features elaborately worked in; plans of glebe-lands have been prepared for the Irish Temporalities Commissioners; plans also for the Landed Estates Commissioners, to facilitate the transfer of land; while the Valuation Department has been furnished with plans on the six-inch scale, showing every property and tenement marked in distinguishing colours.

For the sake of presenting an uninterrupted sketch of the map-producing work of the Ordnance Survey, we have said nothing of other operations which have risen out of it, and which now comprise a most interesting variety. We have mentioned that electrotyping has been brought into requisition. Almost any number of electrotype casts can be taken from an engraved map; a large number of maps can be printed off from any of these; and thus one copper-plate engraving of a map can supply an almost unlimited number of maps on paper. This has been a great advantage in facilitating the operations of the Ordnance Survey. But a much more surprising process is now adopted. Some years ago photozincography was invented, and has since been greatly improved by Sir Henry James. A zinc plate is carefully coated with a thin film of a gelatinous compound; a photograph from a map,

print, page of letter-press, drawing, or manuscript, is taken upon the prepared plate; the action of light eats away a little of the chemical film, and a process of washing presents on the plate a series of minute inequalities, those parts of the film being dissipated which have been less shielded from the light by the dark portions of the photograph. The plate, in this form, can be printed from. Great use has been made of this remarkable process in regard to maps, for reductions can be made from the larger Ordnance plans of a size convenient for publishing; reduced maps of all the counties, for instance, being produced in this way.

But this is not all. By the combined agency of surveying, planning, engraving, electrotyping, photography, and photozincography (some or more of them), work is executed of which no one would have dreamed when the Ordnance Survey first commenced. Do the Geological Survey require additional details put into plans; or the Admiralty require plans of our coasts and harbours; or the Census Office need new plans of public parks, and other patches of thinly-inhabited districts; or the Local Government Board ask for plans of all the Poor Law Unions; or the Commissioners of Woods and Forests have need for photographs and plans of Crown Estates? Sir Henry James can supply all these demands. The War Office avails itself of his services in producing photographs or zincographs of military equipments, plans of battles, plans of important districts in some of our foreign possessions and of the great fortified posts, zincographs of several hundred barracks and forts in the British Islands, &c. The officers of some of our military expeditions, such as those to the Crimea, Abyssinia, and Ashanti, were supplied with numerous copies of these zincographs, to facilitate their appreciation of the topographical features of the respective regions.

Nor have literature and archæology failed to reap benefits from these remarkable operations. Domesday-book being an invaluable authority on the boundaries and area of landed estates in Anglo-Norman times, useful alike to landowners and historical students, Sir Henry James has reproduced it in copies rigorously exact in every feature, and saleable to the public in convenient portions. The Ritual Commissioners being in need of several hundred copies of an extract from Archbishop Parker's Register, and many copies of the

Black Letter Prayer-book of 1638, the work was done by photozincography. When the Government, at the suggestion of literary men and archæologists, determined to reproduce many old valuable national manuscripts of the three kingdoms, it was done; many hundred copies of several stout volumes have thus been prepared. These photozincograph fac-similes of ancient manuscripts, including the world-renowned Magna Charta, are greatly esteemed by those who well know their value. An Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem has been made, and one of Mount Sinai; and Sir Henry James has perpetuated the results in numerous plans, photographs, and zincographs. It is impossible to say where a limit could be placed to valuable works of this kind; for the demand grows more and more, as the great capabilities of the system become manifested.

All this, as we have said, costs a vast amount of money; a considerable dip into three millions sterling has been made. If money's worth is obtained for the money, however, so well. The sale of maps and charts to the public, to parochial and municipal bodies, and to departments of the Government, is small compared with the total outlay incurred, but it is steadily on the increase.

BOTH HER BOYS.

A STORY.

THE house stood in a damp hollow, regardless of all sanitary considerations, between two almost impenetrable belts of gloomy towering trees. It was not a cheerful house externally, though its gardens had more capital and labour invested in them than was bestowed upon all the grounds put together of the country round within a radius of ten miles. But nothing throve on the Balyon estate. Regiments of standard roses were planted afresh every year, and regularly as the next year came round they had to be removed, having signally failed to fulfil the fair promise they had made as to blooming. Myrtles were brought in from cottage-gardens in the villages, where they had flourished without care or culture, and had a vast amount of both bestowed upon them by the skilled horticulturists of The Court. They invariably faded, or refused to flower, or dwindled down from imposing-looking shrubs to wretchedly-stunted plants. To be sure, now and again some perversely hardy annuals made a show along the

ribbon borders for a short time, but those that bloomed were always the duller colours, and the most insignificant forms. So though the gardens and grounds were in admirable order, and were brushed and combed into neatness, there was no beauty about them, and poor Mrs. Balyon began to despair of them altogether, and to pine for greenhouses and conservatories in which she could superintend the efforts that were made, and try her own hand at the graceful work of cultivating flowers. But the Balyons who had gone before the present squire, her husband, had been contented "with flowers that were not too good to grow in God's open air," he told her, when she asked that the glass houses might be built; so, though she pined for them, she went on leading a flowerless life, for Mr. Balyon's manner of refusing favours that were asked of him was, to say the least of it, depressing even to the dauntless, and Mrs. Balyon was far from being that.

No wonder that she pined for flowers, or for anything else that was pretty, at The Court. In spite of its vastness, its antiquity, its excellent preservation, its hoards of old, valuable, and well-built furniture, in spite even of the beautiful scenery in which it was placed, life at this home of the Balyons was as devoid of all prettiness as could well be imagined. The sun's rays rarely found their way into the rooms, brightly as he shines in that fair Western county, by reason of the house being in a hollow, as has been said, and of the trees overwhelming it on every side. And the furniture, handsome as it was, belonged to the dark, gloomy, heavy order that requires to be brightened up with massive gleaming silver bowls and tankards, and with glistening-surfaced china. But the silver at The Court was kept in the plate-chest, and the china lived in its own closet that was the size of a room, and the fair mistress of the house dared not dislodge a single article from its own stronghold under penalty of her husband's displeasure. And rather than bring that upon herself designedly, she would have left undisturbed an uglier life even than that which rolled on monotonously at The Court.

Not that Mr. Balyon ever brought his heavy hand to bear physically upon his wife, but he snarled at her, and browbeat her, and terrified her with rough looks and rough words, till she came to look upon the hours that he spent out of the house as the only happy ones of her existence,

the only ones in which she felt at liberty to pick up a book, or alter the position of an ornament on the mantelpiece, or caress her dogs, or romp with her children.

For the poor woman's life was not such an utterly arid plain as it would have been, had not the blessing of sons been vouchsafed to her. She counted herself a proud and happy woman when she could manage to forget her husband in the society of her two handsome, spirited boys, Rupert and Archie. They were all her own; like her in disposition and person, like her in generosity and affection. Fair, beautiful, courageous, loving boys, they were as unlike the black Balyon stock as it was possible to conceive anything to be. They were all her own! Even their names were of her choosing, for Mr. Balyon not having the faintest preference for one christian-name over another, had magnanimously allowed her to call her sons by names that were dear to her, because two of her brothers had borne them. All the love of her heart was given to these boys. All her hopes and pride were invested in them. The thought of their future enabled her to bear her own desolate present, with something akin to cheerfulness, when they were away at school. And when they were home for the holidays they infused a certain amount of warmth and colour into her chilled and darkened life by the display of such love and tenderness, such devotion and thoughtfulness, as she was sure no boys but hers ever felt for a mother. In a word, she worshipped them, not because they were better or more beautiful than other people's boys in reality, but they were all her own; her idols; the gleam of brightness in what without them would have been a painfully sunless path.

Rupert was twelve, and Archie eleven, when Kathleen Boyne came to live at The Court. Kathleen was wearing crape at the time, in remembrance of a grandmother, for whom she had not entertained any very deep affection, while the lamented lady lived. But she loved grandmamma greatly for dying, and being the cause of a sudden accession of new black frocks. Father and mother she had never known; the one had died, and the other had better have done so, poor, lost, unhappy creature, than have deserted home, and husband, and child as she did, for the sake of a man who, in turn, deserted her.

Kathleen was just eight years old, and a sweet, little, imperious queen of a child,

when circumstances threw her upon the guardianship of Mr. Balyon. He did not think it necessary to explain to his wife what those circumstances were, but briefly told her that such a child existed, and was coming to live with them. He further added, that the boys were to be taught to regard Kathleen as their sister, and, "as for you, madam, if you coddle her up half as much as you do your poodle, and the paupers in the village, it's all I shall ask of you."

"I'll try to do my duty by her," the sad-spirited woman replied, and conscientiously she carried out her promise. No mother could have bestowed more care and love upon a daughter, than Mrs. Balyon gave freely to Kathleen. The duty became a pleasure as soon as she saw the bright, beautiful little girl, and, when Kathleen nestled in her arms and begged her to be "a real mamma," the gentle-hearted lady yearned to the little one, and she pledged herself solemnly to be to Kathleen what she prayed some other good woman would be to her boys, if she were taken from them.

Years rolled on, and the handsome boys grew into fine young men, and the child-queen into a bewilderingly beautiful girl, and still the fraternal relations between them seemed likely to be unimpaired. Still, when "the boys," as she called them, came back to The Court, Kathleen held up her face to be kissed by them, as frankly now that the one was a full-blown barrister, and the other a captain in the army, as in the old days when they were school-boys, and she their pet and plaything.

"Take care that your sons don't fall in love with little Kate by-and-by," the squire had been wont to say to his wife, when the boys were young. "She has a strain of her mother in her, and will make the heart of the man who's unlucky enough to love her ache—take care!"

"If I spent my life in trying to guard against it, it would come about just the same if it is to be so," Mrs. Balyon, who was something of a fatalist, would reply; "and I can wish nothing better for either of my boys than such a girl as Kathleen or his wife, but I'll promise never to put the notion in their heads. Rupert and Archie will go out in the world and see other girls; if one of them still thinks Kathleen the fairest and sweetest, you won't say him nay, will you?"

"She is the daughter of the greatest coquette in Christendom," the squire

grumbled; "however, we must keep the girl here, and I'm not sorry for it, for I'm fond of her myself in a way, and what is to be will be, as you say. If she marries either of them, I trust it will be Rupert, for he will be able to stay at home and look after her—all your training hasn't eradicated the seeds of coquetry from her nature. She's a flirt to the very marrow of her bones."

"Poor child, you've never seen her tested!" Mrs. Balyon pleaded. "The boys are like brothers to her, and she never sees another man to flirt with. I think she's too true and too frank to trifle with and wrong anyone who loves her. I have faith in Kathleen——"

"And I have none, for I knew her mother," the squire laughed. "But I like the girl for all that, and the boys must take their chance."

The boys took their chance, and, when Kathleen was about nineteen, Rupert came home to spend Christmas week in the old house, and fell in love with her in a sudden, unreasoning, sincere, and manly way, and took the earliest opportunity of telling her that he had done so.

She listened to him with bent head and joyful eyes, and seemed to be very much surprised at the turn affairs had taken. Only three days before, she had run out to the hall-door to meet him, and had held her cheek up to be kissed by him as usual. It seemed to puzzle her that he should want her to be his wife, but the puzzle seemed a pleasant one to her, as he gathered from the expression of her face.

"Papa and mamma will be very angry with you," was the first thing she said.

"Kathleen, you know they love you already as if you were their own child; besides, if all the world were angry with me I shouldn't care so long as you were pleased. Are you pleased that I love you, and want you for my wife, Kathleen?"

"Pleased that you love me? Yes. Pleased that you want me for your wife? Doubtful! You see it's an upset, Rupert; we've been told all our lives to love each other like brothers and sisters, and we've done as we were told. It seems unfair on Archie, that you and I should contemplate making a change without consulting him."

She said it so seriously that he fell into her humour.

"You shall write and tell Archie of our engagement to-day, if you will," he said.

"But we're not engaged. I'm balancing

the for and against still. I like you and love you, and I like and love Archie, too; he's just as dear to me as you are. We had better not be engaged; we'd much better not think of marriage, Rupert; let us go on as we were before, and don't introduce complications."

"I can't go on as I did before; you've grown too dear to me for that," the young man said, earnestly. "It must be one thing or the other now, Kathleen; I must either go away, and not see you again, or you must promise to be my wife."

"You shall not go away, and I won't quite give you the promise; yet, I may, by-and-by, when I've thought about it a little more and got used to it."

"Don't trifle with me; don't lead me on for nothing," he pleaded.

"Don't be dictatorial," she laughed; "if I am worth having, I'm worth waiting for." Then she changed her manner abruptly, and said pleadingly, "Supposing I say that it shall be as you wish in good time, will you do me a little favour in return?"

"My darling! ask me anything, anything."

"It's only a little thing that I ask, Rupert. Don't say anything about it to mamma or anyone yet; let it be our own little secret, will you, dear?"

She held her rosy mouth towards him, and was so irresistibly coaxing that, as he kissed and clasped her to him, he granted the little favour she prayed for, though it was sorely against the grain that he did it.

"Everything must be as you like, my own Kathleen; but I don't like anything underhand. I abhor secrecy, and to observe it towards the dear mother, too! We've always told her everything, you know; don't let us begin deceiving her now. It will make her so happy to hear it; let me tell the mother!"

But Kathleen was resolute. It must be kept secret for a time, for as long as she liked, or she would have nothing to say to him! And, as he loved her so, he gave in to her whim, though his judgment was opposed to what he believed to be a " motiveless deception." And affairs were in this unsatisfactory state when Archie came from the camp at the Curragh, on six weeks' leave.

The maintenance of the secret involved a great deal more restraint and circumspection than Rupert had contemplated, when unadvisedly giving in to Kathleen's caprice.

The fraternal relation had ceased to exist; and, on pain of her displeasure, he dared not betray that other and more tender ones had been instituted. Accordingly, a certain reserve and stiffness characterised Rupert's bearing towards his promised wife in public, and the girl seemed to take a delight in teasing him, by being frigid towards him, and almost demonstratively affectionate towards Archie. "It was a pretty little game," she said; "quite as amusing as chess." She would insist upon his praising her acting powers; and to please her—he was so slavishly in love—he would sometimes profess to be entertained by the semi-sentimental flirtation which she carried on openly with Archie.

"But it's playing with fire, Kathleen," he said to her, warningly, once or twice. "Archie's a susceptible fellow, and as he is unconscious of treachery towards me, he may lose his head and place you in a dilemma by proposing to you; then it must come out, and how could we face him after selling him so?"

The girl crimsoned as she listened to her lover; but whether her emotion was caused by anger or contrition he could not divine.

"I will take care that Archie doesn't make a mistake, or lose either his head or his heart to me. You have no confidence in me, Rupert, no love for me, or you wouldn't hurt my feelings by hazarding such a proposition."

"I more than love you—I worship you," he answered warmly; "but I love my brother too."

"Then cease to wrong me by being idly jealous of him," she said, coldly; and, for the first time since the existence of their understanding, she left him angrily, and would not even give him the parting kiss of peace he craved for.

It added to his uneasiness this day, when his mother—always on the alert when her boys were concerned—spoke to him about his brother. "Has it struck you that Archie is getting fond of Kathleen?" she began, and his whole frame trembled under the first shock of definite, realised jealousy, as he answered:

"I hope not fonder of her than he has been all his life, with all my heart and soul."

"But, my dear boy, why so vehemently opposed to the idea? Even your father, who was unreasonable on the subject years ago, long before I troubled my head with the thought of love or marriage in con-

reception with either of you—even your father seems well pleased enough now.”

“Well pleased with what?” poor Rupert asked in an agony. “Has it come to this, that you’ve talked about it—that here is anything to talk about—while I have been kept in the dark?”

“I can’t help seeing that they are very much attached to each other; I have not spoken to either of them yet, but we all must see how very much attached they are,” his mother replied.

“Then Heaven help me,” Rupert said in a tone of bitter misery, throwing himself down on the sofa by his mother. “Mother, you may as well know it now! There’s deception all round; she has promised to marry me, pretended that she loves me! Good heavens! how can such an arch-traitress have grown up in your pure, ruthless atmosphere?”

“My boy, my Rupert! I may be mistaken, I must be mistaken,” poor, bewildered Mrs. Balyon cried. “Our Kathleen could never bring herself to cause such misery; but, why wasn’t I told? No, she can’t have acted so basely, and I’ve wronged and misjudged the girl I love as a daughter; it’s just a sister’s love he’s giving to Archie, and perhaps he’s in her secret, and—oh, my boy, don’t ret!”

The mother was so powerless to combat his grief, or to assuage it in any degree. These sons had been her joy and comfort all their lives, and now, when trouble fell upon one of them for the first time, she could do nothing to aid him to bear it, nothing to lighten the burden to him! Such trouble too! If it had been brought upon him by any other man, she might have been able to counsel him how to bear it. But to have fallen on him through his brother’s agency! They were both her boys, and she loved them both better than she did her life; and now one could only be happy at the expense of the other, if her fears were true.

If her fears were true! There was still a doubt about it. She rose up from his side, and lifted his bowed head on to her bosom and bade him take courage, and have faith in Kathleen still. “I’ll go to her at once, Rupert, I’ll tell her that my son couldn’t keep his foolish secret any longer from his mother, and Archie shall hear directly that he mustn’t try to engross his brother’s bride; be hopeful, my son!”

“You speak more hopefully than you

feel, mother; I’ve shut my eyes to the danger, because it was too ghastly and mean a one for me to bear to contemplate it. But now you’ve seen it, and spoken about it, and I know I’ve been betrayed; but Heaven knows it’s not Archie that I blame—he knows nothing.”

Mrs. Balyon determined to go to Kathleen. She would not compromise her charge by implying, even to Archie, that the girl had been less discreet than it was well his brother’s promised bride should be. So she sought Kathleen, and found her in her own room doing nothing, and looking sad.

“You have come to scold me,” she cried impetuously, jumping up and putting her arms round Mrs. Balyon’s neck; “don’t do it yet; I’m so sorry, I’m so frightened!”

“What about? Make a clean breast of it, Kathleen,” Mrs. Balyon said softly. “I may have to scold you afterwards, but I’ll hear what your trouble is first.”

“You’ll forgive me, whatever it is?”

“Stop a moment, dear; instead of scolding you, or hearing your confession, I’ll make everything easy for you, by telling you that Rupert has taken me into his confidence, and that I congratulate my adopted daughter on the engagement to my eldest son.”

Mrs. Balyon tried to speak cheerfully, but her heart was beating thickly with apprehension of what she might be called upon to hear.

The girl fidgeted and blushed, and finally asked:

“You say it as if you wouldn’t have congratulated me if you had heard of my engagement to your youngest son.”

“Ah, Kathleen, remember they are brothers; they love each other so well.”

“You do know—you do suspect something more than Rupert has told you,” the girl said eagerly. “Oh, love me still, help me, I am so unhappy; I kept the secret as a joke at first, and then Archie came home, and—now I dare not tell him.”

“Then it is true he loves you too,” the mother panted. “Kathleen, child that I’ve loved so, what have you done? Heaven help them; both my sons deceived by you! Why have you stabbed me through them in this way? Their happiness has been the only thing good that I’ve had in my life; couldn’t you leave it to me?”

She had put away the girl’s clinging, clasping arms as she spoke, but Kathleen would not be repulsed. She had worked mischief and misery for want of thought,

not want of heart, and it galled her to the quick to be reprovèd and treated coldly.

"Don't push me from you," she pleaded. "Rupert would be kinder than that, and it's for Rupert's sake you hate me now, you don't care for Archie's pain; he loves me too, and he will have to lose me, and I have to tell him the truth and teach him to despise me—and oh, no one will pity me!"

"I will pity you, I will try to help you, if—if you'll only be truthful, if you'll only try to mend the mischief: you must not see Archie again. I knew he couldn't have wronged his brother knowingly, I knew he was ignorant. My boys are gentlemen, and they have always loved each other and given each other their due. Archie must be spared as much as possible, Kathleen, but not at the expense of his brother; you are pledged to Rupert, and Archie must bear his disappointment."

"You'll teach him to hate me," the girl interrupted; "let me see him once, only once, and tell him of my fault myself; that will be punishment enough for me: let me see Archie once again."

"My sons are gentlemen," the mother repeated proudly, "there can be no danger in what you ask; they will both renounce you if you go with your heart to one, while you leave the promise of your hand with the other; what has made you do it, child? why have you played at love with natures so much finer than your own, when it was only vanity actuating you?"

"No, no, no!" Kathleen cried, falling down on her knees, "not vanity when Archie is concerned; I love him, I love him, and he will never know it—isn't that hard enough? You only feel for Rupert——"

"And you only for yourself," Mrs. Balyon said, sternly; "there shall be no dissension made between my boys; if Rupert can trust you after this, I'll not interfere, but Archie shall not see you and be worked upon by you; my son is but human, and though I think it impossible, you might teach him to be untrue to his brother and himself. Leave him his honour, if you have robbed him of his happiness."

"You have no care for me," the girl wailed; "I have loved you all so much, and you'll all come to hate me, and though I may deserve it, I shall feel it hard all the same. I never meant to do any harm. I never knew it was real harm till to-day, when Archie said a word or two, that

showed me that the end was come! Kiss me and forgive me, mother! I may lose you all, and the worst that may happen to you all is that you may lose me; and as I'm such a doubtful blessing, that may be the best thing that could be."

What could Mrs. Balyon do but "kiss her and forgive her?" "Evil can't come through her," the too partial friend thought as she caressed the girl's bent head; "but there must be no more secrets, no more folly, dear," she added aloud, and Kathleen, relieved from her fear of being further reprehended just at present, sprang to her feet joyfully, and gave every promise that was asked of her.

"Rupert need never be troubled about Archie," she finished up. "Go back and tell Rupert that the engagement shall be made public immediately, and then he'll understand that there's no difficulty; as for Archie——"

She paused, and Mrs. Balyon asked anxiously:

"Yes, what of my other boy?"

"He'll never make a sign, I'm sure of that," Kathleen answered, proudly; "if I'd behaved three times as badly as I have, Archie would never blame me, and never seem to think me wrong. We can all trust him—you to spare his brother's feelings, I to spare mine."

"And may it all end well, and be a warning to you, Kathleen," Mrs. Balyon said, weepingly; "I am trying to think hopefully about it, I'm trying to believe that all my children will come unscathed out of the trial." But though she said this and so tried to cheer the girl, who was crushed by the consciousness of her error, or perhaps by the consideration of its consequences, Mrs. Balyon's heart misgave her sorrowfully, and for the first time in their lives she shrank from meeting her sons. It seemed to her that, if Rupert could be thoroughly satisfied with Kathleen for his wife after all this, that she (his mother) could never be thoroughly satisfied for him: and this, to a woman who so completely identified herself with the interests and hopes and disappointments of her children, was a disheartening conviction.

Through the long hours of this day the two women kept apart from each other, each bearing her special burden alone according to her lights. Mrs. Balyon characteristically confined herself in striving to mature some plan by which she could keep the peace, make her children happy, and still not outrage her own

conscience. Kathleen occupied herself equally characteristically in arranging how she could place her conduct of the last few days before them all in such a pleasant, pretty light, that they would go on regarding her as the blameless, bewitching, always-to-be-forgiven idol of the household that she had been from her little childhood. And the two young men spent their time in nervous avoidance of each other, in distrust of themselves, their mother, and, above all, of the girl who had introduced the element of discord into their lives.

It was not a happy party that sat down to dinner at The Court that evening. Even the squire remarked that there was something wrong, and in his grim and uncouth way made matters worse by discoursing about them. Rupert was grave, but not gloomy, for his mother had given him Kathleen's message, and he had resolved to trust her as before, and to love her more than ever. As for Archie, he was neither grave nor gloomy, but that he was excited and uncertain his mother saw with pain, and intuition taught her that Kathleen had held some communication with him, in spite of her promise to the contrary.

As for Kathleen, she only volunteered one remark, and that was to the effect that it was "a fine bright night, and that the avenues in the north plantation were always at their loveliest, when the snow was on the ground, and the moon was up."

Time did not fly any faster when dinner was over, and the family party had adjourned to the drawing-room. Kathleen seemed to recover her spirits, but her spirits led her astray, it seemed to Rupert, for he failed to keep her near him for a single moment. When he went to her at the piano she broke into louder song, and went on pouring out uncertain strains of melody so waveringly and inharmoniously that even the sleepy master of the house roused himself to express a hope that she "would do her practising in the morning for the future." Archie buried himself among the cushions of a sofa and the pages of a novel, but once he rose to put another candle on the piano, and as he did so he muttered:

"Keep your promise; this state of things can't go on."

They kept early hours at The Court. At ten, Archie said good-night to them, and when his mother asked him if he "meant to go out into the bitter cold to

smoke his cigar as usual," he replied, "No, his bedroom fire would be the divinity he should worship to-night, not the cold starlight." And she kissed his hot forehead, and blessed him, and bade him sleep well; and so he went out.

"Good-night, old fellow," the brothers said to each other simultaneously, and Rupert followed Archie halfway to the door with extended hand, but Archie did not see him. Then Rupert turned to his love, and whispered:

"It's all clear between us, my own, may I tell my father now? we will never have a secret from our nearest again, Kathleen."

"Tell him when I'm gone to bed, and I am going to bed now; I'm tired, I'm worn out," she said, impetuously; "my little concealment has been put before me in the light of a crime to-day, Rupert; let me go and recover my faith in myself."

She rose as she spoke, and stood irresolutely before him, and his mother watched them with a faint smile, and a fainter heart.

"Tell him to let me go, mamma," Kathleen said presently, with weary pettishness; "I will be as obedient as a slave to the voice of my owner after to-night, but just to-night I am a slave to nervousness! tell him to let me go."

A sob broke her voice, and filled with pity and fear for them both, his mother said:

"Let her go, my boy," and when Kathleen availed herself of her liberty with alacrity, and flew out of the room, the poor lady added:

"Heaven direct you in what you do, Rupert, and teach her to reward you."

"And teach her to love me better," was his mental addition to his mother's prayer, poor fellow, as he finally went away, half hoping that Archie might have altered his mind, and gone into their common smoking-room.

But Archie was not there, and the room was dull and cold without him. A comfortable old room it was in itself too, and endeared to him by a thousand associations connected with his happy boyish days of free, loving, unfettered intercourse with Archie and Kathleen. Would that intercourse ever be free and unfettered again, he wondered? Had his brother's love for Kathleen been nipped in the bud soon enough, and effectually enough, for their respective barks to float serenely over the sea of family life for the future? All that must depend on Kathleen, he reminded

himself. If she had the tact and truthfulness, the grace and generosity which he believed her to have, it would all be well.

He had been standing at the window as these thoughts passed through his mind, looking down into the heart of the north plantation, which looked a mysterious, uncomfortable place enough in the cold starlight. Presently he remembered Kathleen's words at dinner about the avenues being at their loveliest when the snow was on the ground, and the moon was up. In another minute he had opened the window, and gone down to the edge of the belt of trees. A step or two more and he was under their black shadows, and then he looked back at the light in his mother's window, and saw the reflection of her figure moving about the room; and half unconsciously longed the more for happiness in his marriage, in order that a portion of the reflected brightness of her children's lives might pass into his mother's.

"It's late in the day for her to begin to enjoy herself," he thought, "but it will be more perfect enjoyment to her than she's ever known, if all goes well with Archie and me."

The thought had hardly crossed his mind, when whispering voices caught his ear, a woman's form rustled in the bushes close to him, and he saw his Kathleen standing, her head on a man's shoulder—that man's arm encircling her. In an instant he was by her side—still in the shadow of the trees—speechless with grief and shame, and outraged love and trust; he was unrecognised, and Archie's startled instincts caused him to raise his hand, and strike the invader a heavy blow.

He reeled and fell, and when they bent over him and shrieked his name in their horror and fear, no answer came, for the sharp edges of a jagged stump of a tree had cut into his brow, and it was a dead heart that Kathleen tried to convince of her fidelity, in spite of appearances.

His mother believed Archie, when he knelt and told her that he was innocent of the great offence of raising his hand knowingly against his brother—believed him, and loved him, and suffered for him, and lamented him, even as she loved, and sorrowed, and suffered for, and lamented Rupert. But Archie had to take his trial in spite of her faith in him, his trial by the laws of his country—that was soon past. The trial that was never over, was his vivid remembrance of how his brother's

life and his own honour had been sacrificed.

He never renewed his wooing of Kathleen, indeed, he never saw her again after the terrible day of the inquest, when she was dragged before the jury to give evidence against him. When it was all over, he left the service and the country, leaving his mother to take care of the broken, penitent girl, who had been the cause of robbing her of both her boys; and Kathleen knew that there was justice in his course, though there was little mercy in it.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HADLEY," &c.

CHAPTER XLVIII. IRREPARABLE.

It had not been in company with Gracie that Ella had joined that fatal water-party and met her Cecil—for he was still hers by force of law, she knew, if not by that of love—within the lock's dark walls. Gracie had made excuse to stop at home, which her hostess had accepted without remonstrance. She understood too well that such miscellaneous entertainments, whether on land or water, of the semi-fashionable, semi-Bohemian kind, had no charms for her simple friend, as, indeed, they had not for herself. But to her, at all events, they offered excitement and oblivion. Her companions were mere acquaintances, such as she could number by the hundred, who had bespoken her presence long beforehand, indeed before Gracie had taken shelter beneath her roof. And, since the thing must needs have happened, it was better so. It had been easier for her to bear the brunt of that dread encounter among comparative strangers, than it would have been with that faithful friend by her side, to understand and grieve for it all. We have most of us felt the same, though, let us hope, under less distressing circumstances. If there must be a social catastrophe, say we all, let it fall upon us when there is no one by to share the sorrow or the shame with us. And Ella, but for that little touch of melodrama, which, after all, was natural enough—"His wife. Then who am I?"—had borne herself like a gentlewoman through that terrible scene, and given no cause for ridicule to those about her. Nay, her very earnestness and passion had impressed them, as it had im-

pressed Helen, with the conviction that she was speaking truth. They had heard, we may be sure, that there was something amiss—"shakey" was the word used for it by the gentlemen—about her marriage with Cecil. The doubt about it had added, perhaps, to her attraction in their eyes; but they now no longer doubted that she, at least, believed herself to be his lawful wife. It is even probable that they felt compassion for her while they remained in her company, though it was not easy, and would, perhaps, have been dangerous to express it. It is a difficult matter to sympathise with a tigress robbed of her young; and poor Ella's feelings were not very dissimilar to those of the tigress. Outraged, betrayed, insulted, and abandoned as she was, it was neither wretchedness nor despair that took possession of her soul, but Fury. Her love for her husband was swept away in the current of a passionate indignation against him; the idea of righting herself in the eyes of the world—powerful though it was—was lost sight of in her desire for vengeance. If the woman that was with him had told the truth; if he, indeed, had married her, he should pay the extremest penalty that the law could inflict upon him—imprisonment, transportation, death itself, were too small a punishment for such a villain.

On the first opportunity she left her company—glad enough, doubtless, to be rid of her, and eager to discuss the great sensation of the day with freedom—and took the train for London. Gracie hardly knew her friend when she arrived at home, so terrible was the change that wrath and undeserved shame had wrought in her. A few words told her all, and overwhelmed her with their horror; counsel for the moment was wanting to her as much as comfort, but Ella had no need of counsel. She sat down at once and penned the letter to her uncle, which called him, as we have seen, so abruptly from the commissary's table. It was despatched by special messenger, and the colonel obeyed the summons on the instant. He had the sagacity to call, upon his way, on his legal adviser, Mr. Vance—the same he had consulted about Ella's marriage—and to bring that gentleman with him. His presence was fortunate in another respect, beside that of the knowledge and advice he brought to bear upon the matter in hand, since it imposed some restraint upon his clients. The Juxon blood was up with both of them, and though the

colonel breathed nothing less than fire and slaughter—garnished with expressions that carried the war into another world—the lawyer noted that the lady was the more resolutely vindictive of the two. He had no shadow of doubt that vengeance, to almost any extent, was in her power, supposing that Cecil had really married another woman; but of this fact he did doubt, since his experience led him to believe—contrary to the opinion of some less matter-of-fact philosophers—that madness is the exception in mankind, and not the rule. If Landon had really married again, trusting to the supposed flaw in the first ceremony, consequent on his wife's deception, he must, so the lawyer thought, have been stark staring mad. The colonel had put the case to him, in the first instance, as in nowise connected with himself, and as a *fait accompli*; he would never have ventured to advise a marriage under such circumstances; but he was quite convinced of its legality even before he had taken the counsel's opinion, which had confirmed that view. No lawyer could have decided otherwise, and no man, as he concluded, would have ventured on the step Cecil was said to have taken without consulting a lawyer. Therefore Cecil had not married again: Q. E. D.

"You are mistaken, Mr. Vance," said Ella, slowly. It was necessary for her so to speak; if she once lost the mere mechanical mastery of her tongue, it seemed to her that it would begin inarticulately to rage and riot, just as one reins with care some evil-tempered horse, whom the touch of the whip, or even the sense of motion itself, would transform into a demon. "This man has taken the woman I saw with him in the boat to be his wife."

"I'll have his blood whether he has or not," put in the colonel, parenthetically.

Mr. Vance shook his white head in mild disagreement with the one, in mild remonstrance with the other. He was a quiet student of the law; but had studied human nature, too, so far as it had reference to legal matters; he had seen many a client "with a temper," but all his angry clients together had not, he thought, looked half so dangerous as these two now before him; the woman, for all her studied calmness, so much worse than the man, for all his fire. The interview would have dwelt long in his remembrance even if it had not been fated to be engraved there by subsequent circumstances.

"What is to be done first and foremost,

madam," said he, "is to decide whether you or I are right as to this second marriage. Some competent and trustworthy person must be sent down to discover the whereabouts——"

"They stopped at The Dolphin," interrupted Ella; "I saw their boat as we passed by afterwards. The people at the inn will know where this man came from."

"Quite right, madam; then our messenger must go there first, and afterwards to their parish church to examine the register. Then, if he finds them married, he will have to swear an information before a magistrate."

"And then this man will be put in prison," said Ella, eagerly.

"Well, not necessarily, my dear madam. In the first place there will be a warrant, or perhaps only a summons issued, and he will have to appear at petty sessions, but may be admitted to bail."

"Upon what grounds?" enquired she, with sudden fierceness; "they will know him to be guilty, though not as I know him. Why bail?"

"It is the course of law, madam. All offences areailable save treason and——"

"Which this man has committed," she broke in passionately; "he is a traitor doubly dyed."

"Still he has not compassed the death of her Majesty the Queen," observed the lawyer, with a half smile. "Our proceedings must be reasonable, madam, though as prompt and energetic as you please. Simple as the matter may appear to you, it is not really so; though Mr. Landon should have transgressed the law, he will use every advantage that the law affords him to defend himself. If you are bent on his prosecution—which, I say again, is in my opinion most injudicious, since it is not you, but the other lady——"

"You are wasting time, Mr. Vance," interrupted Ella, imperiously. "You would move a mountain from its place more easily than me from my purpose. If justice is to be had, I mean to have it—aye, and vengeance too."

Here Mr. Vance made the reflection to himself that he had never seen a handsome woman look so what the vulgar call "ugly," as did Mrs. Cecil Landon at the present moment. He had read, in highly-respectable histories of the French Revolution, descriptions of furious women who somehow reminded him of this beautiful client of his.

"My dear madam," said he, quietly,

"justice is dear, but vengeance (according to my experience) is ruinously expensive."

"I care nothing—nothing—for the cost, sir," answered she, impatiently. "Let everything be done without regard to it, and at once; let there not be one hour's delay."

"My dear madam, our messenger shall be despatched to-morrow morning; I propose to send my own confidential clerk——"

"No; I will go myself, and to-night," put in the colonel, decisively.

Ella moved quickly to his side, and kissed him without a word.

"Such an envoy will be indeed invaluable," observed the lawyer, approvingly. "You were a witness to your niece's marriage, and your position will secure a hearing with the Great Unpaid. But remember, before you move a step, you must make sure of the second marriage."

So along the same line of rails that had borne Landon to his guilty love, sped by the mail-train that night his Nemesis in the person of Colonel Gerard Jaxon; and not unlike a Nemesis he looked.

Gracie had not been present at the consultation. She was but too well aware, from Ella's state of mind, that it could have but one ending; her own feelings of loathing and contempt for Cecil were scarcely less intense than those of her friend; for was she not almost a wife herself? But in projects of punishment and vengeance her gentle spirit could play no part. To her some comfort arrived next day in those dear memorials of her mother, which she had hardly ventured to hope would have been granted to her. She felt grateful to her father—for she little guessed to whom she was indebted for them—and well pleased to think, though he sent no word of forgiveness, that he could not be so implacable as he had appeared upon the subject of her marriage. If they were not a peace-offering, they certainly gave a promise of peace, and her future, to her dutiful eyes, looked all the brighter for it.

Her only sorrow was on her friend's account; but it was deep and grave indeed, and well might be so. For poor Ella, it seemed that life as well as love was over, that there was no future for her, but only a thick darkness, lit up for the moment by the lurid light of Vengeance, but presently to close again around her, perhaps with yet one evil element more wrapped within its murky folds—Remorse.

CHAPTER XLIX. A FRUITLESS APPEAL.

BUT a week has gone since that council of three described in our last chapter; yet something has come out of its deliberations that has had more or less of effect—from that of overwhelming horror, down through intermediate degrees, to mere idle surprise—on every person mentioned in this history. Oecil Henry Landon, of Grantham, Southernshire, and also of Wethermill-street, City, and Curzon-street, Mayfair, has been committed for trial at the next assizes at Pullham, Southernshire, upon the charge of bigamy; and all the world—which for once meant really a considerable number of persons—are looking forward with interest to what will further come of it.

Imagine the babblement on the matter in fashionable and even select circles; the airy talk in club smoking-rooms of the "grief" that "that poor beggar Landon" is like to come to; the "sensation" among the semi-Bohemians, to whom the injured wife—that is, the first one—was known, even better than the husband; and the scandal generally that ran from lip to ear like fire, among the gossips of the town! The public interest in the affair was undeniable, and, unhappily, there were some persons for whose feelings the word "interest" was very inadequate indeed.

For example, on the very morning that the intelligence was blazed abroad in the London newspapers—within a few hours, that is, after the event had happened—Mr. Landon, the elder, arrived in haste at the house in Curzon-street. He was met at the threshold, greatly to his surprise, for the ways of society were not familiar to him, by a prompt "Not at home."

"Great heavens!" cried he, "your mistress has gone off then at once to Southernshire?"

The reply to this was not included in the footman's orders.

"I think not, sir," was all he could venture upon, and even in that he hesitated.

"For Heaven's sake, man, tell me where she is gone?" exclaimed the father in his agony.

Before the servant could answer, the dining-room door opened, and out came Gracie, white as a spirit. "Come in here, Mr. Landon," said she; and she took his trembling hand, and led him into the empty room.

"Where is Ella? What is the meaning of it—of this horrible lie," he broke

out. "It must be contradicted instantly. My boy will be ruined."

"Alas, sir, the news is true!"

"What, that he has committed bigamy? Bigamy! Do you know, girl, that men are sentenced to penal servitude for bigamy?"

"Dear Mr. Landon, I pity you from the bottom of my heart. I could not bear to hear you sent away from this house; but I can do nothing for you."

"Yes, you can; you can give me help. Ella is your friend—my boy was your friend. I am his father. Help us!"

Gracie saw at once that he believed all. He was not a man to ask for aid of any one, save in the direst straits. His appealing face—a face which that morning's news had already "aged" by at least ten years—was terrible to look upon.

"Alas, Mr. Landon, I have nothing to give you but my prayers. Ella is implacable, and I must needs say that she has been most sorely tried."

"But bigamy!" put in the wretched old man, with a bitter cry. "She cannot know how grave a crime it is, and the punishment of it. A prison—hard labour—the hulks! My boy! my boy!"

The tears streamed down his wrinkled face, and drew down Gracie's with them.

"Then you are sorry for him?" he exclaimed, "though you are not his wife. She must needs be sorry too? Let me see her! I am his father! I will go down on my knees to ask her pardon for him! I was always fond of her; she knows it. I am an old and broken man. She will have mercy upon us! Let me see Ella!"

"She will not see you, sir, I am very certain," returned Gracie. "She will be very angry even that I have seen you. The chain is broken between herself and your son, and all the links are gone together. My heart bleeds for you, sir; but I must needs say, in her behalf, that it was not she who broke that chain, nor even led to its breaking."

"I know it, girl! I confess it! I will acknowledge it in her presence. He has behaved infamously! I have been to Doctors' Commons, and I find he got the special licence for his second marriage, on the very day he last left his home. He has deceived me—his father—all along. He has had chambers in Greythorne-street, and pretended to carry on business there, to deceive this other woman as to his identity. I found out all that before I came here this morning. Do you suppose it costs me nothing to confess it, girl? and

I will confess it to her this moment! I will say to Ella, 'This man, who is my son—my boy—is a scoundrel!' But I will add: 'Yet he is your husband; you loved him once dearly—dearly—as dearly—almost—as I love him still! And you will not send him, you, his wife, you will not send your husband and my son—to gaol!'"

It was, beyond measure, pitiful and pathetic to hear the poor old man.

"I will go—Mr. Landon—I will go to her," sobbed Gracie; "but, I tell you beforehand, it will be useless."

"Go, girl, go!" cried he, with tremulous anxiety. "Let me see her, for five minutes—or only for one minute—and I will bless you to the last wretched moment I have to live."

Gracie went upstairs at once: past the disused drawing-room to her friend's own chamber, in which Ella now passed half her days, pacing it from end to end, like a caged animal, and thinking her bitter thoughts alone. To Gracie she was always gentle; but to the rest of the world her tone and manner had altered strangely.

"Well, darling, what is it?" said she, staying her quick steps, and forcing a transitory smile.

"Old Mr. Landon has come, Ella——"

"Then let him be sent away," interrupted she, impatiently. "I thought I had given orders to that effect."

"Yes, dear; and it is I who have ventured to disobey them. I heard him in the hall asking for you so pitifully, that I went out; and, oh! dear Ella, he is so shocked—so agonised! If you would only grant him speech with you, were it but for five minutes——"

"What for?"

"He wishes to acknowledge his son's errors; nay, his crime."

"Then let him go to Mr. Vance, and prove it. The shorter work that is made with the man, the better. Let him be put away out of sight in gaol, and be forgotten."

"Oh, Ella!"

"Yes, tell him that. Or, if he wants it from my lips, let him come up here and hear it. Only let us have no pleading—except the lawyer's."

Her bitter tone was shocking to listen to, her cruel smile was terrible to behold.

"Yet, this old man was always good to you, Ella, and loved you like his own daughter."

"Loved me! And did not I love his

son? Tell him that that love is changed to hate; that, if word of mine could save him from the gallows, I would not speak it, so help me heaven!"

She had resumed her walk again, and also a certain movement of the lips—a sort of dumb babble, such as is used by the insane—inexpressibly distressing to witness. Gracie saw that her appeal was not only hopeless, but did harm; so silently withdrew, and returned to the dining-room.

"Ella cannot see you, Mr. Landon."

"You mean she will not," answered the old man, the fire of wrath flashing from beneath his shaggy eyebrows. "She has hardened her heart against my boy. She thinks, perhaps, that no worse can happen to her; but may God, who punishes the unmerciful, smite her still more sorely——"

"For shame, Mr. Landon, for shame!" cried Gracie, vehemently. "If you could see her, as I have seen her, you would not use such words; she has been smitten sore enough. She cannot see you, because she is not mistress of herself."

"What, is she going mad?"

"Indeed, sir, I almost fear it."

"What is the use of that, girl, to my boy?" answered the old man, fiercely. "Let her die, since she will not help him otherwise, and help him that way; let her die, I say."

He had risen from his chair and made his way into the hall, while he was speaking those last terrible words, "Let her die—let her die."

Gracie felt, with a shudder, that it would be almost better for poor Ella if she were to die; better most certainly than the fate she feared for her, that she should lose her reason. And better even, perhaps, than to live on, with the power to think, with her husband doomed to a prison by the very lips that had once called him her own. For Gracie was confident that such would be the end of the matter. She felt that the old man who had just left her would never have made that passionate, fruitless appeal to his daughter-in-law's mercy, if he had not known that in it lay his son's only hope.

And indeed, so it was. Mr. Landon, senior, had found out for himself, within those few hours that lay between his receiving the startling news of Cecil's committal and his visit to Curzon-street, all that could be found out respecting the second marriage. He had gone, as he had

said, to Doctors' Commons, and obtained the date of the license, and even discovered in his file of *The Times*, the announcement of the marriage of Henry Landon, of Greythorne-street, to Rose Mytton, of Grantham, on which his eye had once fallen before without a thought of its dread significance, but with some shadow of interest, because he had heretofore thought that his name had stood alone in town among men of business. He had heard, indeed, by this time of some deception having been practised at the time of the first marriage, with respect to his daughter-in-law's maiden name; but only in a vague way. He had no conception that Cecil had relied upon it to save him from the consequences of his second union, or that it would now be used as a legal plea in his defence.

Gracie, on the other hand, knew that it would be so used, and that it would fail. So Mr. Vance had assured her, in the most positive terms; and his opinion had been already backed by that of one of the first counsel at common law, Mr. Pawson, Q.C., who, by the attorney's advice, had been specially retained for the prosecution.

The other side might "abuse the plaintiff's attorney" or even Ella herself, who, he foresaw, would be subjected to a long and harassing cross-examination—"they will turn the Juxon family and their pretty tempers inside out, sir," was his private remark to Mr. Vance—but the inevitable result, he was ready to take his oath, nay, even stake his professional reputation, that the accused would be found "Guilty," and that by no means under extenuating circumstances. "He will have seven years of it, sir, as sure as his name is Cecil Landon."

There was no more pleasant companion for poor Ella in those bitter days than the eloquent queen's counsel, who, contrary to his usual system, was introduced in person to his fair client, whose beauty was, perhaps, a secret spur to him—though he did not need it, for he was a legal thoroughbred—to redress her wrongs.

If the certainty of revenge could have made her happy, as it did her uncle, the colonel, poor Ella would not have been the wretched woman she was.

The spectacle of her unutterable woe,

bright as looked Gracie's future, darkened her present with its shadow. One resolve, which cost her not a little, she made at once; namely, that until the coming trial should be over, though it would not take place for many weeks, she would stay under Ella's roof, and give her what loving help she could.

"But, Gracie, there is another's leave to ask," said Ella, to whom this promised comfort was inexpressibly welcome; "he will not be so blind to my selfishness, and to his own happiness, remember, as you are, darling."

"I have written to Hugh, and he has answered as I knew he would," was her quiet reply. "We are both content to wait."

The tears which fell from poor Ella's eyes, when she heard that, were the first she had shed since the tidings of Cecil's infamy; and maybe they saved her reason. So true it is that there is no depth of human sorrow, but human sympathy can reach it, and though it may not console can soften it.

"I have no husband now," sobbed she, "and, alas! no father; but only you, Gracie."

On the subject of any withdrawal from Cecil's prosecution however, on which Gracie had ventured to touch, she was adamant to her friend as to all others; and, indeed, by this time matters had gone too far for any withdrawal, and must needs take their course.

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

On the conclusion of "What He Cost Her," early in June, will be commenced

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY

R. E. FRANCILLON,

Author of "Olympia," "Pearl and Emerald,"
&c. &c. &c.

ENTITLED

"STRANGE WATERS."

Arrangements have also been made for the commencement, in October, of

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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No. 441. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK III. THE STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER II. OF CATALINA.

WHILE speaking of myself I have no desire to be blowing my own trumpet, or to dwell upon matters about which the reader may not care for information. But I want to explain briefly how it happened that I gained old Baker's good opinion, and rose more rapidly in his service than was usual with junior clerks.

The bank was really entered by house-breakers, and I assisted to the best of my ability in expelling them from the premises, and in protecting old Baker's property. Further, I had the satisfaction of lodging a full charge of small shot in the left calf of one of the burglars. He howled terribly as he limped away, repenting him, I hope, of his sins and resolving to lead a better life in the future. On another occasion I was engaged in a rather desperate struggle with a footpad, who had tried to rob me of a packet of notes, contained in a black leather case fastened to my waist by a chain. He bit my hand savagely as I was trying to collar him, and I sprained my ankle in wrestling with, and throwing him; but I had the satisfaction of hearing the back of his head come into smart contact with the paving-stones as he fell. I held him down, until the police came to my assistance and dispersed his confederates, who were molesting me in the hope of promoting his escape. I had tight hold of his neckerchief with my right hand, and

whenever he showed signs of resistance I raised his head, and allowed it to have another knock on the pavement; my left hand was free, and I was thus enabled to protect myself for a time against the violence of his associates. It would have gone hard with me, however, if the arrival of the police had been much longer delayed. But my pocket-book was safe, and although my appearance at the bank excited some alarm, for my clothes were torn, my hat was lost, and I was much stained with blood and dust, I was not so very much the worse for my encounter.

Old Baker praised me highly for my conduct on these occasions, and forthwith raised my salary. Perhaps he applauded me more than there was any necessity for, but it was not for me to say so, and of course I was very well pleased to receive the rewards he bestowed upon me. I still possess the handsome gold watch and chain he gave me, with the inscription setting forth his sense of my merits. I own I was proud of that testimonial, while not disposed to over-value my own exploits. I am not, and I never was, a coward, but I don't know that I am any braver than a great many other people. I should have felt myself a very contemptible fellow, if I had not tried my best to worst the burglars, or to master the footpad. It was natural to me to do what I did, and so I did it. All the same I am glad it was not natural to me to run away, or to conduct myself in a cowardly way.

I was now frequently invited down to Chingford, and found myself very warmly received there. The Miss Bakers put on their most becoming dresses, and old Baker produced his best port-wine in my honour. I grow indeed quite intimate with the

family, and used to join the young ladies in singing hymns and sacred music on Sunday evenings. They complimented me on the possession of a deep voice, which, when it was in tune, gave great support to their vocal efforts. Old Baker had been courageous enough in his day I think; indeed, he used to relate many stories of his conflicts with East-end desperadoes in the early times of the bank, but in his age he showed himself rather timorous. He complained of his drive from town to Chingford, he found it irksome and trying, and persuaded himself that it was even dangerous, especially during the long dark winter evenings; he was always fancying that he was about to be attacked by masked men springing suddenly out of the hedges. He was glad therefore to have me for his companion, and made me carry loaded pistols for our better protection. I think that he had lived rather too freely, and that his nerves had given way somewhat. Our drives to Chingford were never really molested, however, and perhaps our danger was altogether imaginary. But it was well known that old Baker's horses were very fleet, and that he carried firearms.

It was natural, perhaps, that my rise in the bank, and old Baker's kindness towards me, should excite some jealousy among my fellow-clerks. They were careful what they said, for they were well aware that I was not one who would stand any nonsense from them, or from anybody; but I was not one to stand in the way of a joke, or to object much to any remark made in a good-humoured spirit. So, of course, I laughed with the rest of them, when I was asked how soon I was likely to become old Baker's son-in-law, and which of the three Miss Bakers I intended to convert into Mrs. Nicholas Doubleday.

Now, I liked the Miss Bakers very well, and we were very good friends together; but I had never once thought of making love to, or marrying, any one of them. They were nice girls enough, and were good-looking enough; they had been to a finishing-school, and had acquired various accomplishments. They all danced and sang; they all played the piano and the harp; they all drew chalk heads, and did Berlin-wool work; they had all learnt French and Italian, and could read and understand, but could not speak, those languages. Their names were Emmy, Alice, and Eliza. I did not know which was the eldest of them; but they were as nearly of an age as could be. There

wasn't, indeed, a pin to choose between them. Old Baker was a rich man, and it was understood that his daughters would inherit all his wealth. No doubt, so far as mere money was concerned, the Miss Bakers were desirable wives.

I have known the want of, and I know the value of money, and I should be a fool to despise it. But I had not thought of looking for a wife among the Miss Bakers; I never accompanied old Baker to Chingford with any such intention. His daughters were quite safe from any matrimonial designs on my part. And for this reason: I had fully decided as to the woman I intended to marry. My mind had been made up for many years past on that subject. Indeed, I counted myself regularly pledged to marry Miss Catalina Martinez, the granddaughter of Mr. Lucius Gridale, who had been for so many years our next-door neighbour in Somers-town.

I had known her since her infancy, I may also say. We had played together as children. There had been intervals—during my absence at school at Ongar, for instance—when we had been separated; but certainly we had seen very much of each other altogether; and, though I had never stated the matter in express terms, I thought it well understood, not only by Catalina and myself, but by those about us, that she was engaged to me, and was one day to become my wife.

But, of course, I could fix no date precisely. I was not in a position to marry immediately. Catalina had no money, and, as yet, I had very little. I was in receipt of a moderate salary, and every Christmas I received a handsome present from old Baker; still I felt the imprudence of marriage upon insufficient means, and clearly my means were not yet sufficient. However, there seemed to be no hurry in the matter. We were both very young—we could both afford to wait.

I did not doubt that my circumstances would improve in due course, and therefore I laid no stress upon the fact that Catalina and her family were really very poor. And I waived all objection in regard to her being in part of foreign origin. Her mother had been an Englishwoman, and Catalina herself had been brought up among English people; but her father was a Spaniard. I have never liked foreigners much, and probably I should not have liked Don Leon Lopez de Martinez. He died when Catalina was very young. He was a rebel, and he was shot. In my

opinion he was rightly served. I have never been able to sympathise with rebels.

I thought Catalina very pretty. I remember thinking so the first time I ever saw her, when she was quite a little girl living with her grandfather, Mr. Grisdale, next door to us in Somer's-town. It was soon after, that, boy as I was, I decided that if ever I married, I should certainly choose such a girl as Catalina for my wife. Basil also admired her very much, and wrote poetry about her. For my part, I did not like poetry, and, of course, made no attempt at any time to write to Catalina, or to anybody else, in verse. It always seemed to me so much easier, and simpler, and better to say what one had to say in prose, rather than in verse. It never seemed to me at the time that Catalina cared very much for either Basil or his poetry. I don't mean to say that she disliked him; for, in his way, Basil was a very good sort of boy, fond of books, and a poor hand at field sports, but well-informed and good-tempered enough. But he was not, I think, so wise as he was inclined to think himself.

As my position became more and more secure in Baker's bank, and my prospects of advance more definite, I thought it as well to speak plainly to Catalina of my notion of making her my wife. It was likely enough, as I judged, that she knew of my intentions; still it seemed to me the right thing that she should know of them from distinct expression on my part.

I found her alone one evening. She was sitting hemming a pocket-handkerchief.

"Catalina," I said, "I suppose you know that I like you very much?"

I somehow shrank from using the word "love" just at starting.

"Yes," she said, looking up at me for a moment. "I always thought that you liked me. And Basil, too—we've always been very good friends together for a long time past."

"Just so. But that isn't quite what I mean. And never mind about Basil for the present."

Then I hesitated; I felt myself growing hot, and I did not quite know how to go on. It was a more difficult matter to speak about than I had thought it.

"What is it you do mean?" she enquired very calmly, holding up her needle to the light, and threading it very cleverly. Her hand did not tremble in the slightest.

I found myself, in spite of myself, becoming rather agitated.

"I'm getting on at the bank," I said, deciding that I would approach the subject from a different side.

"I'm sure I'm very glad to hear it. You deserve to get on."

"Thank you."

"You're so steady, and hard-working, and punctual, and plodding."

"Thank you, Catalina," I repeated.

All the same I thought there was something of an underrating sort about her applause of me. I never cared—does any one care?—to be called "plodding."

"When a young man gets on, he generally thinks of getting settled," I continued.

"Does he?"

And she looked rather puzzled.

"I mean married."

"Oh, you mean married."

A moment after she put down her work, opened wide her eyes, and said in a surprised way, "Why, you never mean to say you think of getting married, Nick?" And immediately she added, "What for?"

I was not, I own, prepared for her talking to me in that way.

"I mean," she said, correcting herself, "how interesting! For, of course, you are in earnest. I can see that you are in earnest. Well, and who is the lady, and has she said 'Yes'?"

"Well, she hasn't said it out plainly, if that's what you mean."

"Oh, she's only hinted it, or whispered it."

And she held up her handkerchief, as though to hide her laughing. But she did not hide her eyes, and they seemed to laugh heartily; at any rate, they shone very brightly, and looked very pretty. Not that I minded her laughing. I have never disliked a joke, though I have preferred its being at other people's expense.

"Is it one of the Miss Bakers?" she asked.

I had often spoken to her of the Miss Bakers.

"Certainly not," I answered rather sharply. "It isn't one of the Miss Bakers."

"I beg your pardon, Nick, I'm sure," she said. "You know it might have been one of the Miss Bakers. They seem to be very nice girls, from all accounts. You're quite sure it isn't one of them?"

"Quite sure. There are other girls in the world beside the Miss Bakers."

"Yes, of course. And this lady, who

isn't one of the Miss Bakers, do I know her? Who is she?"

"Well, in point of fact, she's—you!"

"Me!"

And she almost screamed.

"Yes, you."

She could make no mistake about the matter. My only doubt was, as to what I should say or do next. I had heard and seen pictures of lovers on their knees. Ought I, I asked myself, to go upon my knees before Catalina?

Her surprise over, she turned pale, and looked rather frightened, I thought. She put away her hemming; she seemed to have no more inclination for that.

I felt that I must say something, so I went into particulars. I explained that I looked forward to being able to keep a wife before long. My present income was—so much. I was certain to receive a bonus at Christmas—and my salary would be raised during the forthcoming year. I had already put by some money—not enough to furnish a house with, but sufficient to buy furniture for two rooms or so. I added that to begin with we might be very happy and comfortable in two rooms.

"Pray stop—pray don't go on like that," she cried at last, rising and drawing back her chair. "It's impossible—quite impossible."

"What's impossible?"

"That I can ever marry you, Nick."

"You don't mean that!"

"I do mean it."

"Well, I shan't take 'No' for an answer," I said. For I had heard that, in cases of this kind, women commonly said "No," when they meant to say "Yes," and "Yes," when they meant "No."

"But you *must* take 'No' for an answer. I am much obliged to you, Nick, and I feel that you have paid me a great compliment—a very great compliment. But—it can't be."

"Look here, Catalina. I like you. I've said so already. And you like me, don't you?"

"Certainly, Nick. I like you up to a certain point."

"Well, I love you—there. Now why can't you love me?"

"I can't, Nick, not in the way you mean."

"But why can't you? Is it because I'm not rich enough for you?"

"It isn't that. You're plenty rich enough for me."

"Am I not young enough? or good-

looking enough? I've often been told I'm good-looking."

"You need not have said that. But it's true, all the same. You're plenty young enough, and quite good-looking enough. I'll even say that you're very nice-looking, Nick, if that's any comfort to you. But it can't be, Nick, and it shan't be, and I beg you'll never mention the subject to me again on any account, for we shan't keep friends if you do. Now that's plain speaking, isn't it?"

"Yes, that's plain speaking. But tell me, Catalina, is there anyone you like better than me?"

"You've no right to ask such a question, Nick. But as you've asked me, I'll tell you. No; there is no one I like better than you; at least, I don't think there is. There is no one I like well enough to marry. Does that content you?"

"Tolerably. If there had been anyone you liked better than me, you know, I should have punched his head; that's all."

"That would not be polite, Nick, and I don't think it would do any good. Happily, there is no one's head that seems to need punching. Now please let this subject drop. Don't let it be mentioned again between us."

"I don't know about that, Catalina. You see I want to do what's fair and reasonable in this matter."

"Of course you do."

"I don't want you to throw away an opportunity. Because you know you might be sorry for it afterwards. Girls are often sorry, I am told, for having dismissed a man they'd sooner have accepted, but that they let temper, or shyness, or vanity, or some nonsense or other stand in the way."

"Really, Nick, you're very learned on this subject."

"That may be. Now, I tell you what I'll do. I'll give you three chances. I'll ask three times in plain terms, whether you'll marry me or not. Now listen. Will you have me—once?"

"No, Nick."

"Will you have me—twice?"

"No, Nick."

But she could scarcely speak for laughing. She could not keep serious it seemed. So I resolved that I would not ask her for the third time, just then. I would defer the question. She was in a mad humour; she did not know what was good for her, or her own mind, and was as likely as not to say "No" again. So I left her.

AN INTELLIGENT FOREIGNER.

WITH Lord Macaulay's "any schoolboy," so full of learning and information upon such a variety of subjects, we might perhaps be allowed to pair off that "intelligent foreigner," whose sentiments and opinions regarding matters of home-growth and interest are so frequently cited by way of warning and rebuke to the English people. He is, for the most part, a supposititious creature this "intelligent foreigner," and credited with an unreasonable measure of sagacity and shrewd observation. It is true that he occasionally condescends to admire, and is, indeed, professedly sympathetic; still his capacity for being surprised and shocked upon small occasions is certainly remarkable. And, "What would the intelligent foreigner say?" is a question pointed in a menacing way at all and sundry contemplated actions likely to be judged strange and unbecoming. The "intelligent foreigner" is, indeed, to grown men and women, what Bogey or the Black Man is to the nursery—a means of exciting dread, and in such wise of inducing change of conduct.

We have had, from time to time, very many "intelligent foreigners," both real and ideal, in England, and to one of these—a Count Smorltork of the last century—we purpose to direct attention for a while, not because the traveller in question exercised any appreciable influence upon the country he commented upon, but for the reason that his notes convey a curious picture of what London and Londoners looked like to strangers' eyes many years ago.

Let us premise that the Baron de Pollnitz—for so the gentleman styled himself—was, upon his own showing, an adventurer of an unscrupulous kind—he might have claimed kindred with Count Fathom on the one hand and Barry Lyndon on the other; this did not prevent, however, his possessing considerable powers of observation, with ability to record his impressions after an accurate and spirited fashion enough. He came, as he alleged, of a Thuringian family. His grandfather, having been converted to Protestantism, settled in the Electorate of Brandenburg, and obtained the favour of the Elector Frederick William, who made him Master of the Horse, Minister of State, Chamberlain, Major-General, Colonel of his Guards, and Commandant at Berlin. He married Eleonora of Nassau, daughter of Prince Maurice

of Orange. A son born of this union took to wife a daughter of Baron D——, and became the father of Baron de Pollnitz, who had the electress for his godmother, and received the names of Charles Lewis. The boy, upon the nomination of the king of Prussia, was admitted into the Academy of Princes, an institution founded by royalty, and then thriving greatly. Baron de Pollnitz afterwards served as a volunteer with the army in Flanders, and was present at the battle of Oudenarde and the siege of Lisle. He was next appointed one of the Gentlemen of the Royal Bedchamber. But he seems presently to have given offence to the king, and, at his own request, obtained permission to travel abroad. His memoirs in four volumes, published in English in 1737, profess to relate his travels in Germany, Italy, France, Flanders, Holland, and England, and contain much curious matter. The book, we may note, was known to Mr. Thackeray, who included its author among the minor characters of *The Virginians*.

The baron visited London upon two occasions. Once he crossed from Helvoetsluis to Harwich in eighteen hours; at another time he sailed from Bilbao in a merchant ship, and with a fair wind during the whole passage found himself in London on the sixth day after setting sail.

The baron was disposed to think the Thames the finest sight he had seen in all his travels, and derived a grand idea of the riches of England from the noble banks of the river covered with fine houses and gardens. He was pleased to see the grand foundry of cannons, bombs, and bullets; and the docks for the king's ships, whereof he saw several lying at anchor, stately vessels of surprising bulk, well worthy of so wealthy a nation as the English. He noted a magnificent building for invalid sailors on the bank of the river, and lying off this hospital the king's yachts, richly carved and gilt, which served to carry his Majesty and his court over to Holland, when he repaired to his German dominions. He was struck by the magnificent show furnished by the river, with its shores lined with vessels at anchor, and the stream occupied by ships and boats continually coming and going, and fancied that no one could contemplate without amazement such a scene of continual motion. After "shooting" London-bridge, which he judged, in right of its length and of the tides of flood and ebb to which it stood exposed, to be one of the principal

bridges of the world, he went ashore at Whitehall, and contemplated the window through which King Charles passed to the scaffold.

Admiring the walks in St. James's-park, he yet thought they suffered from "the promiscuousness of the company"—livery servants and the mobility being permitted to promenade there not less than persons of distinction. The Mall he found especially full in the morning and evening, when their majesties walked there with the royal family, attended only by half-a-dozen yeomen of the guard. The crowd was sometimes too great; still, the scene was one of the most diversified imaginable; the ladies and gentlemen always appearing in very rich dresses, "for the English," he notes, "who, twenty years ago, did not wear gold lace but in their army, are now embroidered and bedaubed as much of the French." This refers, however, to persons of quality only; the citizen being still content with a suit of fine cloth, a good hat and wig. "Everybody in general is well clad here," concludes the baron; "even the beggars don't make so ragged an appearance as they do elsewhere."

Of St. James's Palace he notes that, but for the guards about it, a stranger would scarcely take it to be the residence of a sovereign prince; but the King of Great Britain's Guards he thought to be the sprucest he had ever seen, all of a proper size, but yet not soldiers for mere show. He found the Life Guards wearing scarlet cloth laced with gold at all the seams, and faced with blue; always booted when on guard, and, indeed, not daring to be seen without their boots until relieved from duty. The Horse Grenadiers wore a like uniform, but with caps of sky-blue cloth, with the Order of the Garter embroidered on the front in gold and silver. The Foot Guards wore red coats with blue facings. The antique dress of the Halberdiers (or beefeaters) amazed him much.

The baron steered his course to "St. Anne's quarter"—Soho seems already to have become the chosen resort of the foreigner—where he had acquaintance with certain French refugees; and he renewed friendship with various Englishmen whom he had met some time before in France. His German compatriots, he found, were shy of him. He visited St. Paul's, and thought the outside of the building very magnificent, but regretted that the white stone of which the cathedral had been constructed should be so blackened

by the smoke—"that bane of London." The statue of Queen Anne in front of the building seemed to him unworthy of the Queen it represented, of the church before which it stood, and of the city by whose order it was erected. The inside he found as plain as the outside was magnificent. The dome only was painted of an ash colour. The sculpture was of very inferior quality. The choir was too small, the size of the nave being considered. The organ was disadvantageously placed over a wooden balustrade that looked like a gate. All round the choir were placed little pews or stalls, like the boxes in a playhouse, wherein sat the mayor, aldermen, and magistrates, when they attended church. The Monument, erected in memory of the Great Fire, in his opinion far surpassed the more famous Pillar of Trajan. He greatly admired the Royal Exchange, but judged the white marble statue of Charles the Second, dressed as a Roman emperor and mounted on horseback, one of the worst statues of London, "where, indeed," he observes, "sculpture is of all arts the least cultivated, but why I can't conceive, since most of the English have been in Italy, and have there acquired a habit for what is fine and curious." At the Tower, which he describes as the Bastille of London, he was shown the crown jewels, and the crown itself, "lions and other outlandish creatures," the arsenal of arms, and statues of the kings of England from William the Conqueror to James the Second, all in armour and on horseback, "but the whole of painted wood, which makes them frightful objects."

From the City the baron rode to Westminster in a hackney-coach, saving time, but otherwise suffering considerably. For he finds the hackney-coaches, from their want of springs, intolerably uneasy, the horses, "which are very good," galloping for the most part upon pavement that he decides to be the worst in Europe. The abbey of Westminster he describes as "a very ancient pile, without any other beauty but its bulk." He admires certain of the tombs and sculptures, however, and notes the presence of wax-work effigies of General Monk, Charles the Second, and the Duchess of Richmond. He examined the coronation-chair; and of the famous stone of Scone underneath it relates a curious story; the baron, it may be mentioned, having, when of mature years, become a convert to Roman Catholicism: "Amongst the relics," he records, "which are still preserved in this

church, there is one which, for its antiquity, I believe has not its equal, it being the stone which served for Jacob's pillow when he dreamt of that mysterious ladder which reached up to heaven. This precious relic is very much neglected, and I cannot imagine how it came to be so abandoned by that pious king, James the Second. The English would do well to make a present of it to the Republic of Venice, where this stone would graduate exactly with the piece of Moses's rock in St. Mark's church. The Cardinal Cienfuegos showed me a piece of it when I was last at Rome. He told me that he stole it on his return from Portugal, where he had been ambassador, when he came to London with a commission from the Emperor to King George the First. He added that it was the only robbery he was ever guilty of in his life, and that he should have been exceedingly scrupulous of committing it, if this stone had been as much honoured in England as it deserved, but that, finding it neglected and despised, he could not help filching a piece of it, which he was so fortunate as to strike off with a key at the very nick of time, when the keeper of it happened to be looking another way. I told him that I did not think that he needed to have been so very scrupulous of this theft; that I was persuaded that, if he had given the keeper a guinea, at most, he might have had a much greater piece, and that, perhaps, for a trifle more, he might have brought away the whole stone. 'O Lord!' cried the cardinal, lifting up his eyes to heaven, 'I wish then I had purchased it!' It may be gathered from this story that the inclination to steal relics, and to knock off odd corners of curiosities, is not confined to Englishmen.

The baron found the St. James's quarter of the town, and all the "outparts" of London in general, very regularly built, the streets straight, broad, and airy, wanting nothing but to be better paved. He was told that Louis the Fourteenth had offered Charles the Second to furnish him with stones enough to pave London, provided Charles would supply him with gravel from England to lay in the gardens of his royal palaces. The baron thought that if the bargain had been struck the English prince would have had much the advantage, and London would have gained greatly. He ascribes the fancy for adorning the London squares with gardens to the want of stones for paving them, and thinks that, "encompassed with iron pali-

sadoes, they look very much like church-yards." He notes that, since the accession of the Hanover family to the throne of Great Britain, London had largely increased in size. "There is one entire quarter," he writes, "goes by the name of Hanover. The Parliament, being apprehensive that in process of time the town would grow too big to support itself, passed an Act some years ago for restraining the building on new foundations; and if this had been done twenty years ago this city would nevertheless have been too large."

The baron had an opportunity of seeing the king of England attend Westminster in state, to terminate the parliamentary session. His majesty, attired in royal robes, with his crown upon his head, sat in his state-coach, drawn by eight horses, attended by his Horse-guards. Except upon occasions of such solemnity, the king was content, as the baron records, to be carried in a sedan-chair, with a modest attendance of footmen and halberdiers, various officers of the court following in coaches drawn by two horses. The royal livery servants, in lieu of hats, wore "plain caps of black velvet made like the caps of running footmen." The baron maintained—all the pretensions of Frenchmen to the contrary notwithstanding—that London was more populous than Paris. It was true that the streets of London were less crowded than those of Paris, and the Londoners seemed to possess fewer coaches and carts, but then they made great use of the Thames, "which river is seldom without carrying forty or fifty thousand persons, who, if diffused in the streets, would make them look fuller than those of Paris." The river he found, indeed, to be quite a spectacle, for the wharves were often covered with scarlet cloth or other "neat stuffs," and the watermen, "being used to the business, manage it as well as the gondoliers of Venice."

In regard to the character of the English people, our foreigner states his opinion that Englishmen are much the same in their own country as the French are out of France; that is to say, haughty, scornful, and thinking nothing good enough for them; and that in like manner they are, when abroad, what the French are in their own country—good-natured, civil, and affable. Of all nations the Italians were the most esteemed by the English, who hated the Germans from a notion that much English money was shipped abroad to enrich Germany, and who were opposed

to the French by reason of an antipathy of long standing, "insomuch that it would be a difficult task to determine the age of it, and I am apt to think it runs in their blood." The English women the traveller pronounced to be agreeable companions, perfectly well shaped, and for the most part pretty, but wholly devoid of "the art of dress." He decides, indeed, that there is no people upon earth "that set themselves off so ill as the English do; and really they had need to be as well shaped as they are, for the generality of their dress would be insupportable." Nevertheless, he thinks highly of the English, while holding that, to acquire their friendship, it is absolutely necessary to speak their language. "Many of them understand French and Italian, but they don't care to speak foreign languages, and when they do 'tis either from necessity or constraint. Now, constraint is what the English don't at all like, for, as they enjoy the greatest liberty of any people in the world, they have an aversion to everything which cramps it."

The baron describes the manner of life of an English fine gentleman, whom he describes to be a medium between the two extremes of a scholar and a "Deboshee." He rises late, puts on a frock—a close-bodied coat, without pockets or plaits, and with straight sleeves—and, leaving his sword at home, takes his cane and walks usually to the park, "the Exchange for men of Quality." There he makes certain engagements for the day, and, after returning home to dress, saunters to some coffee or chocolate house; "for," writes the baron, "it is a sort of rule with the English to go once a day at least to houses of this sort, where they talk of business and news, read the papers, and often look at one another without opening their lips; and 'tis very well they are so mute, for, if they were as talkative as the people of many other nations, the coffee-houses would be intolerable, and there would be no hearing what one man said where there are so many." A chocolate-house visited by the Baron de Pollnitz every morning to pass away the time was invariably crowded. To secure admission, nothing more was needed than the dress of a gentleman. Here dukes and other peers mingled with the rest; at one o'clock there being a general departure to attend court, the king's levee, and the queen's apartment. At three o'clock the fine gentlemen dine, and at an expensive rate; parties at taverns being very much in fashion. "At private houses the ladies retire as soon as dinner

is over, and the men remain at table, upon which, the cloth being taken off, the footmen place a bottle of wine, or more, if all the guests don't drink the same sort, with glasses well rinsed, and then they withdraw, and only one waits at the bouffet. The bottle now goes round, every one fills his glass as he pleases, and drinks as much or as little as he will; but they always drink too much, because they sit too long at it." Upon at last quitting the table, the company go out again for the air, either in coaches to the Ring in Hyde-park, or on foot to St. James's. Operas and plays are next visited, and afterwards balls and assemblies. At midnight supper is served. "The companies formed at taverns are the merriest," writes the baron. "At daylight the jolly carousers retire home. Judge, after what I have now said, whether a young gentleman has not as much to amuse him in London as at Paris and Rome. Believe me, that they who say that this city is too melancholy for them only say so to give themselves an air."

The traveller notes the neatness and delicacy of the dinner-tables at private houses. "There are three dishes commonly at each course, and plates are often laid two or three deep, which is the reason that people always eat more than they would otherwise, and that abundance of time is spent at table. There is excellent beef here, and I am in love with their puddings, which are made of flour, eggs, crumbs of bread, and, in short, a thousand ingredients that I know nothing of, but altogether make very good fare."

One English custom the Baron finds agreeable enough. "Upon a man's first introduction to a family, he salutes the mistress of the house with a kiss, and though but a very modest one, 'tis a pleasure to see a colour come into the ladies' cheeks as if they had committed a fault." With a second custom the baron is less content. "After a man has been entertained he must give something to the servants of the house, and this gift must be proportioned to the rank of the master of the house at whose table you have sat; so that, if a duke gives me a dinner four times a week, his footmen would pocket as much of my money as would serve my expenses at the tavern for a week."

The baron greatly enjoyed the balls and masquerades at the Opera-house in the Hay-market, and comments upon the splendid dresses of the company; "the ladies especially are stuck all over with jewels, for

there is no country in the world where there are finer diamonds." The Italian Opera he declares to be the best and most magnificent in Europe, the music being "generally composed by one Hendel (sic), who is esteemed by a great many people beyond all expression, but others reckon him no extraordinary man, and, for my own part, I think his music not so affecting as it is elegant." Of the English plays, while admitting his imperfect acquaintance with the language, he noted that, although they disregarded the "unities," they abounded in happy sentiments, and were sustained by actors excellent in regard to their gesture and carriage. Concerning British recreations generally, the traveller observes that they are fairly shared by all classes, and that, whereas in other countries the rich alone seemed to have a right to pleasure, the English nation has diversions for all ranks, "and the mechanic, as well as his lordship, knows how to make himself merry when he has done his work." He finds that the English hunt much, "but in a manner very different from us," riding exceedingly hard, and chasing a poor hare with as much eagerness as they would pursue a routed enemy. "Their hounds and their horses, too, encourage their keenness for the sport, there not being the like in the world for speed; so that England furnishes almost all the nobility in Europe with horses and dogs, as the King of Denmark does with falcons." The races at Newmarket, he thinks, are infinitely superior to those seen in Italy. "They are run round a large plain. Two horses, mounted by jockeys, contend which shall run fastest. They ride without a saddle and with such velocity that the eye can scarce keep pace with them. Upon these occasions wagers are laid of several thousand pounds sterling." The baron records his conviction that no nation in the world is so fond of laying wagers as the English, and he relates how he once saw a man, for a wager, run round St. James's-park, divested of his clothes that he might be the less encumbered in the race. Unclothed as he was, "he traversed along the Mall through an infinite concourse of people." Having finished his race and won his wager, he gravely put on his clothes near Whitehall, where he had left them; nor did the spectators disapprove of his proceeding; "abundance of people, instead of checking him for his insolence, threw him money. Judge by this if any

people are so good-natured and happy as the English! For it is a custom of the country to pay handsomely to all contributing to the general stock of amusement." The baron observed that guineas were showered upon jockeys winning a race, and that at all their "prize-fightings, ropedancings, tumbings, and such diversions, every one throws down money upon the stage to them that play their part best;" the actors at the opera and the play-houses being rewarded with gratuities in addition to their salaries, "for once a year every performer has a benefit-night, as they call it." Apparently "benefits" were, at this time, confined to England.

"The English are very much for shows; battles, especially, of what nature soever, are an agreeable amusement to them, and of these they have all kinds." And then the baron discourses of bull-baiting and cock-fighting. "Sometimes they engage bulls with other beasts," he writes, "and at other times they have cock-fighting. . . . The cocks of England are the best in the world for this sport, that being a species of which there is not the like in other countries; their bill is very long, and, when they have once begun to fight, they battle it with such fury that one, if not both, is generally left dead upon the spot. Before they are exposed in the pit where they are to engage, little spurs are fastened to their feet, with which these animals gall each other dexterously; the English, who are no indifferent spectators of the engagement, form themselves immediately into several parties in favour of the combatants, and, according to the custom of their country, lay considerable wagers." But these "battles of animals" the baron discovered to be not the only entertainments of the kind to be seen in England, there being also "combats of gladiators, where the wretches for pitiful lucre fight with one another at swords, and very often wound each other cruelly," the spectators delighting in the exhibition, and applauding lustily when either swordsman inflicted wounds upon his antagonist. Our foreigner noticed, however, that when the conflict was at an end the combatants shook hands, and made each other to know that they bore no malice. "I can't conceive," he observes, "how they find any fellows to take up such an exercise, the rather because it is liable to very fatal consequences, for they say that by their laws he who wounds his adversary shall be at the expense of

curing him, and he that kills him is to be hanged without mercy."

Of pugilistic encounters the baron makes no mention. The cudgel and the quarter-staff were, at the period he discourses upon, preferred to the fists as means of testing skill and strength, or of dealing out injury. He notes a meeting of prize-fighters held every evening during the summer in a square near St. James's, "with no other weapons but quarter-staves, with which they break one another's ribs or knock one another on the head," the victor being generally regaled by some or other of the spectators. He further witnessed in the same place "a pack of wrestlers that endeavoured to throw one another down, and when one of the two has tripped up his adversary's heels he politely gave him his hand to help him up again." He deprecates the notion, however, that the English are a cruel people, while admitting that in battle they do not readily give quarter, and are apt to pursue their advantage too far. But assassinations he finds to be of very rare occurrence in England, and thinks that even the British highwayman is a more humane creature than the robbers of other nations.

The baron enjoyed various opportunities of seeing the royal family, access to the court being easy enough, "nothing more being necessary than to send in one's name to the Duke of Grafton, his Majesty's Lord Chamberlain, and my Lord Grantham, the Queen's Master of the Horse." Moreover, their majesties, with the princes and princesses, were wont at this time to dine in public every Sunday at an oblong table, "placed in the midst of a hall surrounded with benches to the very ceiling, which are filled with an infinite number of spectators." George the Second is described as not tall, but well shaped, with a grave countenance and a stately port, speaking little, but with great propriety. The queen is said to disdain trifling amusements, and to affect simplicity of address; to be of majestic presence, but accompanied with modesty and good nature; her behaviour most courteous, and her wit solid and sparkling, and adorned with a thousand fine accomplishments. The Prince of Wales, though not very tall, has a majestic air, "is extremely civil, affable, good-natured, and polite. It may truly be said of him that he has the soul of a king, for few princes are more generous. He loves pleasure and magnificence; he is gallant, has a penetrating genius, talks very much,

but always with judgment and to the point." The young Duke of Cumberland "resembles what the painters represent to us by the name of Cupid. . . . He speaks English, High Dutch, Latin, and French." With flattering accounts of the young princesses—their shapes, aspects, tempers, virtues, manners, and skill on horseback—the Baron de Pollnitz closes his description of the royal family of England.

Here we may leave our intelligent foreigner. His stay was but brief—not quite a month—yet he proved himself observant enough. He finished his travels in England with a visit to the royal palaces at Hampton Court, Windsor, and Kensington, and then forthwith embarked for Holland, "but had not a quick passage, by reason of a calm that surprised us at sea, so that we could neither go forwards nor backwards. At length, five days after we had left London, we arrived in the mouth of the Maese, where we bore a hard gale of wind which blew all night; next day we got safe into the Maese, and by noon came to Rotterdam, from whence I set out the same day for the Hague."

MR. WEGG AND HIS CLASS.

THE original Mr. Wegg, it will be recollected, resided at a street corner, where he kept a stall, sold ballads, maintained a wooden leg, deliberated carefully as to whether he should "invest a bow" in the various persons who used a crossing, and was considered "a literary man" by one Mr. Boffin, who had retired from the dust business.

That Mr. Wegg represents a numerous class, I have been enabled to verify by personal observation. My Weggs have been usually engaged in the crossing-sweeper line of business, rather than in the gingerbread and ballad trade, it is true, but I am enabled to affirm with confidence, that any occupation which is carried on at street corners, develops in time your perfect Wegg.

Thus, facing to our house, which is contiguous to an important square, is a sort of corner, forming a garden to a great mansion, and projecting like a rounded shoulder. This spot, besides offering a comfortable support, commands three crossings, which diverge from it like the spokes of a wheel. Never was there, in house-agents' phrase, so desirable a situation,

from a sweeping, or sweeper's, point of view—or, we might say, point of action; for view would not enter into his naturally practical calculation. Here it was that our Wegg pursued his operations.

He was positively a most interesting being as regards speculation and entertainment. Like his great prototype, he had a wooden leg; like him he was literary; and, finally, like him, under cover of affecting to follow his profession, he assiduously cultivated another, namely, that of Humbug. He was a broad-shouldered, sturdy being, with a black beard, and a rough, almost ferocious manner. He commanded the aristocratic square and the highly-respectable street that led into it, and tyrannised over us who lived in his district, as he no doubt chose to consider it to be.

The artful fellow, who was pampered by indulgence, never even condescended to follow his business. The wheel spokes that he affected to watch over were always deep in mud, while he lay against his wall, his long broom beside him. He affected to suffer from infirmities; his leg—that is the absence of his leg—causing him pains; though, when he saw one of his clients approaching on the opposite side, he would stump across to levy his rates and taxes. Somehow, as I emerge from our house, I always find myself casting an uneasy glance in the direction of the corner to see if our tyrant be at his post, which he invariably is on each festive occasion, leaning against his wall, in the sun, with his broom leaning also beside him; wearing his rabbit-skin cap, and a double-breasted waistcoat with mother-of-pearl buttons, like a virtuous stage-rustic; his hands in his breeches'-pockets; and—his wooden leg. As for passing him by on the opposite side, affecting to be absent and not to have seen him, it is idle; for he challenges you in a stentorian voice, wishing "Good morning!" in a sort of mocking tone that has no reference to the weather, or good news, or to good wishes; but which signifies as plain as tones can signify it, "What are you sneakin' by in that 'ere skulkin' ungemmen-like way, a tryin' to cheat me of my lawful rights, shirkin' yer proper crossin'?" At this post he was generally supported by a policeman, whose "fixed point" it always was, and the pair were generally in easy conversation.

With regard to the wooden leg, this artful "oosherer" evidently tried to inspire

the idea that what it supplied had been lost in the service of his country. He never said so in direct terms to us, his dependents, among whom were military men whom it was impossible to deceive, for with his rabbit-skin cap and red waistcoat he was totally opposed to the ideal of the "old soldier," save so far as the metaphor went. But for casuals it did very well. He was perpetually using this leg in conversation, telling us, as news of the highest interest, that "the leg," meaning the stump, "was werry bad that day," or was "shootin'," or that it had been "like to bustin' all night with the pains." There was quite an episode connected with this limb, when on some occasions the leg—the one of wood—was broken in twain, I really believe in some public-house row, and he appeared with it elaborately spliced, and held together by splinters. We had actually, such was his insolent tyranny, to get the fellow a new leg; and though the cost, as he stated himself, of a serviceable article, was no more than ten shillings, he continued for many months to extort sums of money on the statement that "it were near all made up," and that "three and six was all that were wanted for the leg." The rampant selfishness and arrogance of the being were never so conspicuously displayed as when he would stump across, as a matter of favour, "to show the new leg" to his supporters, and receive a testimonial for this nicety of feeling.

As a matter of course there was only one thing wanting to give a finish to this fellow. It occurred to him one day, when "the leg" was beginning to grow rather "flat," and had ceased to draw, that something might be done in the direction of combining sweeping—or what he considered sweeping—with Salvation. In other words, our incubus appeared as a person of strong religious feelings; as one that was "saved." This he exhibited by the delivery of some printed verses, with which, abandoning all pretence at dealing with mud of an earthy kind, he proceeded to stop all his clients. The lines were of the most truly devotional order, outmoodying Moody.

And yet I do not know whether this tyrant of the broom is not to be preferred to a brother of the same profession, whose mode of extortion, though based on totally different grounds, is not less galling. The yoke of this being grows more and more galling, and actually drives the régular

passer-by to circuits and devious byways to avoid his extortion. This is a dilapidated old freebooter, far gone in years, too feeble almost to perform even the duties he pretends to execute; a perfect fainéant, in short; and yet, I have no doubt, far more successful in his profession than the real painstaking sweeper. He has secured a magnificent "pitch"—a point commanding cross roads—by which a tide of human traffic is always pouring, in the direction of a great railway station. A long row of houses are in course of slow and leisurely construction, entailing the usual hoarding, and an improved wooden pathway with a rail. This, at first blush, seemed to disarrange all the economy of this aged tax-gatherer; the arrival of carts, scaffolding, &c., seeming likely to throw his clients into disorder, if not to divert the traffic altogether. So, no doubt, it at first seemed even to his ignorant gaze; still more so to the victims, who hoped that he would be driven into another parish. But it actually proved that this apparent death-blow was only made for his interests—the rail and wooden pathway becoming a sort of toll-gate, or funnel into which all were forced to pass; he standing at the entrance with his extended palm. You were driven up against him, with a certainty of being recognised by his dim eyes—whereas, before, there was a chance of escaping by taking a circuit round him.

Of all his class, I dislike this old extortioner the most, and I should say he was the most unblushingly sordid and ungrateful of his kind. He is so pampered that he has come to take his penny as a right—his due, in short—while the withholding of it is a positive injury. As you come up, he has two glances: one at the face, the other at the hand. You greet him with a "Good morning;" but if he notes that the fingers are not seeking the waistcoat-pocket, he will scarcely reply; while so economical is he of the slight trouble which the touching of his tattered caubeen entails, that I can see he keeps his old arm in an attitude about half way up, ready to ascend promptly if the approaching fingers are seen to be busy with their proper functions; and the ungrateful rascal has often forborne his cheap acknowledgment, checking his arm on its road when he has found that there was no hope of toll. This, even, in the case of a regular patron. The surly, grumpy gaze, intensified by the privileged ill-humour of old age, with which he would follow a figure which had thus disap-

pointed him, illustrated admirably the only definition of gratitude which could be made intelligible to him. For my part, I have at last adopted open hostility; declining to recognise him at all—a state of things he himself cannot recognise at all; but his looks are so reproachful, and, at the same time, menacing, that I feel I must come to some honourable arrangement by way of pension or otherwise.

Between the original Wegg (my Wegg, that is) and this old fellow, there is a second old man, of hobbling gait, who has a monopoly of the square—that is, of the other end—who has no regular stand, but sweeps here, there, and every where. He is on good terms with the bar-keepers and dustmen, and leads a lounging life. His case offers another wonderful instance of the strange influence of sweeping combined with begging, on the human character. In him it has induced an ass-like patience and abasement almost inconceivable. During the whole period of our acquaintance—it has lasted now for years, and I pass him now every day—he has never extorted a penny from me. Yet with a supernatural patience that would be admirable in another cause, he is ever ready with his obsequious salute; thus going on quite an opposite principle from that of the selfishly economical sweepers, who will not expend a bow save on the certainty of receiving payment for it. I am not sure that he is not wise in his generation, and that he will not end in extorting his daily obol from me. As it is, I feel occasional twinges; and he rebukes me by his spaniel-like bearing.

There are other varieties of the species. There is the dandy sweeper, for instance, who cultivates his crossing like a flower-bed, and appeals in a way that is perhaps the most irresistible. The rest may be a perfect quagmire, and you may be puzzled and distracted thinking how you, or rather those dainty boots, are to get across and you stand, like the traveller, seeking a ford. Suddenly you descry this charming path, smooth as a rolled gravel walk. Here is a real service. In Piccadilly, nigh to the Royal Academy, there is some such painstaking caterer. To give the frequent copper, in such a case, is a matter of conscience; and he must have a hardened heart who could walk across, and not acknowledge the obligation. And here, by the way, it may be noted that crossings bring out the weak places of human character, and tell against the pedestrian as well as the sweeper. In a crowded

thoroughfare, like the one just mentioned, can be noted an exhibition of rather unworthy "skulking," people affecting to post across, as if in a hurry, or to get over unobserved under cover of the benevolent offices of someone, more noble of soul, who is actually feeling the keeper. Others again, ashamed of this rather degrading feeling, brazen it out with an airy and defiant bearing, as if in protest against imposition. This is surely an injustice, as it is an ill, ungracious return for a real service.

But, on the whole, I think there should be an Act of Parliament to regulate crossing-sweeping, or to relieve walkers from the very embarrassing position they are placed in. That it is one of the callings that demoralises its professor, I have made out.

TOGETHER.

BABES that on a morn of May,
Laughing, in the sunshine play;
Babes to whom the longest day
Seems to fly!

Babes to whom all things are toys,
Life a sweet that never cloy,
Home a fount of simple joys,
Never dry.

Babes so bright, so blest, so fair,
With dimpled cheeks and golden hair;
Can they be—that happy pair!—
You and I?

Babes no longer, now they stray,
Girl and boy, beside the bay
On a sunshine holiday—
Fond, but shy.

Smiles are many, words are few,
Hearts are light, when life is new
And eyes are bluer than the blue
Of the sky.

Laughing schoolboy brave and free,
Little maiden fair to see
Gath'ring seaweed—can they be
You and I?

Boy and girl are man and wife;
Hand in hand they walk for life;
Peace and joy be theirs, and strife
Come not nigh!

Wand'ers by the Eternal Deep
Whose shores are Time, so may they keep
Together, and together sleep

By-and-by!
Sleep in death when day is done,
Wake to life beyond the sun;
One on earth, in Heaven one—
You and I!

ROUND THE ROODEE.

At eventide in the sweet early summer, when soft breezes steal the perfume of the hawthorn, there are few more pleasant lounges than the walls of Chester—looking down on the modern city, which has overflowed its barrier and spread out far and wide; on the orchards white with rosy-hearted apple-blossom; on the Dee

hurrying seaward, no longer a port of renown, but only spoken of in connection with salmon; and on the Roodee, or Rood-eye, the sometime islet beneath the castle, the Runnymede of ancient Caerleon.

It was on Chester walls that I met, some years ago, a strange old man, civil-spoken withal—a sort of "oldest inhabitant" grafted on the local antiquary. I was dawdling along, breathing the soft perfumed air, and dreaming I know not what of Chester real and Chester imaginary, of such stern entities as coal and salt, and of the strange stories constructed by early writers. I marvel greatly whether they went on telling their wondrous tales till they believed them themselves, or did not rather the monkish sage who carried back the Cestrian annals to Noah's flood, put his tongue in his cheek and chuckle softly at the quaint conceit, that, in the youth of the world, the site of Chester was occupied by the city of Neomagus, so-called from Magus, the son of Somothes, the son of Japhet? Who was the Welshman, I should like to know, who, looking upon Noah and his family as a set of mushroom upstarts, insisted on a Welsh founder for the great bulwark against the hill-men—as is confessed in the name Caerleon—for does not this signify that the city was built by Leon Vawr, or Gawr, a giant of Albion, whose skeleton, nine feet, at least, in height, was dug up within historic times in Pepper-street? And how did those very real and genuine foreign gentlemen of that crack corps, the Twentieth Legion, surnamed Viotrix, pass their time while quartered in Deva, or Cestria, as it was indifferently called? No doubt in sumptuous feasting, varied by occasional road and raid-making in the vicinity. Probably they pooh-pooed the wild-boar meat of the west as a poor substitute for the genuine Lucanus aper, but what fish that swims in lazy summer seas can compare with the lordly salmon of the Dee? It was sweet, no doubt, to revel on Ansonian ground, to watch the varying hues of the dying mullet, but what genuine epicure could compare that martyred fish to his northern rival? Did Roman dandies urge their chariots round the Roodee? Did—but here mine ancient friend interposed: "I see you are a stranger, sir"—no doubt he gathered that from my vacant stare—"you are passing the Phoenix Tower, pray look at it and read the inscription." Confound him! The vision was gone. The great square enclosure with its

mighty vallum and broad fosse; the spears of the legionaries tipped with fire by the setting sun; and alas! the crowns of roses, the purple trichinia, and the banquet itself vanished at the touch of that seedy Ithuriel—and there, staring me in the face, was a flour-mill and the Phoenix Tower. The phoenix, as my self-constituted guide informed me, was the crest of the Painters' and Stationers' Company, but, as a tablet explains, there is more human interest than attaches to the Painters' and Stationers' Company involved in the Phoenix Tower. From its summit Charles Stuart witnessed the defeat of his army on Rowton Moor. On that fatal 27th of September, 1645, Sir Marmaduke Langdale and the Royalists were utterly defeated by the Parliamentary General Poyntz. Three years had passed since the alarm of war was first raised in Chester city by the daring Parliament men, whose drum was cut to pieces before their eyes by the loyal and infuriated mayor, and no city was more thoroughly attached to the losing side. Sir Abraham Shipman, the governor, threatened by Sir William Brereton at Hawarden, destroyed all the houses without the wall, and their unfortunate inhabitants were compelled to take refuge within the city. Then came my Lord Byron, as military commander, heartily supported by Major Walley, who made heavy requisitions on the citizens, and resisted all offers of surrender, till at last the king arrived amidst the shouts and exclamations of the citizens; took his lodgings at Sir Francis Gammul's in the Lower Bridge-street, opposite St. Olave's Church, and all looked hopefully forward to the attack to be made upon the Parliamentary army—in the rear by Sir Marmaduke Langdale, and in front by all the orces in the city. But the Royalists reckoned in this, as in many similar cases, without taking into account that readiness of resource which was a salient peculiarity of the Parliamentary chiefs, and also without remembering the unreadiness of their own leaders. Sir Marmaduke Langdale did well enough, but the Royalists in Chester with the king were actually slack enough to allow the beleaguering forces to send reinforcements to General Poyntz. No sooner did that leader see fresh troops coming to his aid, then he fell furiously upon Sir Marmaduke, who, now being himself attacked in front and rear, underwent utter defeat, and was driven off

pell-mell. A pretty sight this for a king! "Yes, sir," adds my companion, "a'most awful, sir. What must his feelings have been at seeing his own men running away?" It occurred to me that this battle of Rowton Moor was but a type of many in the long fight between king and Parliament. On the king's side were loyalty, rank, and numbers, on that of the Parliament, fanaticism and ability. Courage must have been equal, but not displayed to equal advantage. In the following February, Chester, worn out by alarms and privations, surrendered to the Parliament. It was time, for the citizens were reduced to sad straits. The city lands were all mortgaged, the funds quite exhausted, and the plate melted down. The city without the walls was in ruins, and two years afterwards was visited by the plague.

Discoursing much of old Chester, we pass slowly round the walls till we reach a broad bright stretch of emerald green turf, extending from the city wall to the gray river—a species of natural circus, in the centre of which cows are quietly grazing. As we reach this spot I note a change in the demeanour of my companion, as astounding as that which came over Fitz-James's Gaelic guide at Coilantogle ford. The aged man expands as it were, his dim eye brightens. He has done with narrative for the present, and is himself in quest of information. The sight of the race-course—the famous Roodee—is too much for him. The antiquary vanishes, and the sportsman starts into sight. This ancient Briton, learned in topographical lore, sinks from the position of the lecturer to that of the student. He whispers in low tone a pertinent enquiry. He asks me not touching my great work, just now in preparation, On the Veracity of History; he has forgotten all about Magus the grandson of Japhet; he recks little of the Phoenix Tower and the sorrows of King Charles the Martyr, and Cavalier and Roundhead are to him as very naught. His voice hisses in mine ear the question, "What'll win t'Coop?" Great heaven, he takes me for a "sporting character," one deep in the mysteries of "the stable-money," "being on," and accomplished in the highways and byways of the turf! He goes on to state that he is not a betting-man, but likes to have a trifle on t'Coop. My oldest inhabitant is not what I took him for. He asks, quite technically, "What is going to spin," and incautiously avers a preference for a mysterious outsider. His demoralisa-

tion is due, I find, to the evil influence of a brother—a barber at Newmarket—whose “tips” are regarded with profound reverence by the Chester antiquary. His brother knows all the good things in a general way—in fact, is such a genius of the turf that I wonder he has not hung up the tongs for good and aye—but is in “a mase” about this particular cup.

I once knew an amiable but dissipated philosopher who cared nothing for the past. All he wanted to know about was the future—the course of the Stock Exchange, which horse would win the Derby, and so forth; but his prejudices shall not prevent my tracing rapidly the curious growth of the Chester Cup, one of the most interesting and historic of English races. Its birth is far distant among the singular customs, probably of Pagan origin, which became incrustated on the day of feasting preceding Lent. Among the “lawdable exercises and playes of Chester yerely there used,” is a long list of the homages offered by the various guilds on Shrove Tuesday. The old homage of the shoemakers took the form of a football of the value of 3s. 4d., or thereabout. All persons married within the past year “did offer unto the Companye of Drapers in homage a ball of salte, of the quantitie of a boule, profitable for few uses or purposes.” This ball of salt was afterwards changed into a silver arrow, a meet prize for archers, and contended for by them on the Roodiee—the pleasant meadow which served in winter for the pasture of cows, in summer as a recreation-ground for the good citizens. All the homages were due on Shrove Tuesday “at the crosse upon the roode Dee,” or Rood-eye—the Island of the Cross—whither went the mayor and corporation, probably with the entire population of the city. From one of the homages rendered on the last day of the carnival has arisen one of the greatest sporting events of the year.

The saddlers’ old homage to the drapers is thus set forth: “Also whereas the company and occupation of the Sadlers within the cittie of Chester did yearely by custom, time out of the memory of man, did the same day (Shrove Tuesday), hower, and place, before the said mayor unto the Companye of Drapers in Chester, did offer, upon the truncheon of a staffe or speare, a certain homage, called the Sadlers’ ball, being a ball of silke of the bignes of a bowle, which was profitable for few uses and purposes as it was, the which ball the

said Drapers did cast up among the throunge, to get it who could, in which throunge also much hurt was done, the said mayor and aldermen, with consent of the Drapers aforesaid, did alter and change; that in place thereof the said Company of Sadlers should offer before the mayor unto the Drapers, a bell of silver, the which bell was ordained also to the reward for that horse which with speede running there should run before all others, and then pssentlye should be given, the same day and place.” How, when, or why the ancient customs of man and horse racing, and enjoying the sport of football on Shrove Tuesday fell into desuetude is not very clear. Probably the Puritan wave which swept over England in the hundred years ending with the Restoration had something to do with it, for in 1609 the conditions of bearing away the bell appear totally changed. The popish and pagan associations of Shrove Tuesday are got rid of by transferring the horse-race to St. George’s Day. The drapers and saddlers vanish into night, and the contest on the Roodiee becomes St. George’s race. This change was due somewhat to the public spirit of Mr. Robert Ambrye, ironmonger, sometime sheriff of Chester, who in the mayoralty of Mr. William Lester did, upon his own cost, cause “three silver bells to be made of good value, which bells he appoynted to be ranne for with horses upon St. George’s Day, upon the Roode Dee from the New Tower to the netes, there turning to run up to the watergate, the horse which came firste there to have the beste bell, the second to have the seconde bell for that year, putting in money and sureties to deliver in the bells that day twelvemonth, and the winners had the money put in by those horses that runne and the use of the bells. The other bell was appointed to be run for the same day, at the ringe, upon the like conditions. This was the first beginnunge of St. George’s race, to which charges, it is said, Mr. Ambrye had some allowance from the cittie.” In its new form the silver bell appears as a challenge plate rather than a prize; but another change was made in 1623, by Mr. John Brereton, the mayor, who altered “the said race to run from beyond the new tower, and so round the Rood Dee, and the bell to be of greater value and a free bell—to have it freely for ever, which shall winne the same; to the which he gave liberally, and caused the oulde bells with more money

to be put out in use, the which use should make the free bell yearly for ever, there to be runne for on St. George's Day for ever."

St. George's races were celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. In olden times, probably because there was great lack of other amusements, men set great store on pageants and processions. The programme of the civic march to the Roodee is minutely given in the Harleian MSS. First marched men in ivy, with black hair and beards "very owgly to behoukde," with garlands and clubs. The duty of these "salvage men"—favourite characters in all masques and mummings—was to scatter fire-works abroad to make "way for the rest of the showe:" doubtless an effectual method of getting through a crowd. Following these came St. George on horseback, with his attendants; then Fame, also on horseback, with a trumpet and an oration ready prepared for delivery. Next came Mercury, "to descend from above in a cloude, his winges and all other matters in pompe and heavenlie musicke with him, and after his oration spoken to ryde on horsebacke with the musicke before him." Then followed one called Chester, "with an oration and drums," and others bearing the arms of the King, and of the Prince of Wales, Earl of Chester. Close behind these rode the prize-bearers with a "bell dedicated to the Kinge, being double gilt, with the Kinge's arms upon;" the "bell dedicated to the Prince with his armes," and the "cup for St. George," carried upon a sceptre "in pompe." The Cestrian population at the commencement of the seventeenth century must have had a tremendous appetite for speech-making, for Peace, Plenty, Envy, and Love all delivered their orations before the mayor and his brethren in their best apparel of scarlet.

Why and when St. George's Day, like Shrove Tuesday, was abandoned for the first week in May there is no evidence to show; in fact, a strange darkness hangs over the Roodee from Mayor Brereton's time. The rectification of the calendar is perhaps the best explanation, as the first week in May comes very near old St. George's Day.

On, past the Roodee, till we halt under the shadow of the great red sandstone cathedral, newly restored by Sir Gilbert Scott. Not a desirable material, I take it, this sandstone of the newer formation. It has been used in Chester for church-building with a most unhappy effect. Under the influence of heat and cold, snow and rain, this sandstone loses

all its angles, retaining but a rounded, wavering, uncertain outline, conveying, withal, an idea of rottenness within as well as without. The cathedral has, nevertheless, been bravely restored, and to those who admire buildings of a dull red colour, the cathedral church of St. Werburgh may be beautiful enough.

As I stroll along the rows, or two-storied streets, for which Chester is famous, the quaint architecture of the houses—the new being scrupulously imitated from the old—sets me pondering on the many strange scenes enacted here since Roman Agricola kept court in Deva: barons, lay and spiritual, on their way to the parliament of Hugh Lupus, the Count Palatine; strange Shrove-Tuesday processions; parliamentary drum-beatings; royal reception of Charles the First, and less cordial welcome of James the Second—swift to depart, the "people seeming not well-disposed;" Monmouth, handsome, hapless, feather-brain, setting off for the race-course, to ride his own horse there and carry off the prize; and, more strange than all, those Whitsuntide shows—the Miracle plays of Higden—possibly only adapted and rewritten by that dramatic monk from the earlier and ruder works of a playwright, who lived, and moved, and had his being in the long reign of Henry the Builder. His Mysteries were enacted under the mayoralty of Sir John Arneway, and then seem to have been discontinued until their revival by Higden, the author of the Polychronicon, who flourished three-quarters of a century later. So far as the uncertainty of names and dates will permit any opinion as to the share of the two authors in producing the Chester Mysteries, it would seem that they were written originally in Latin, and that Higden translated them; not without difficulty on the part of the authorities, for he "was thrise at Rome before he could obtaine leave of the Pope to have them in the English tongue." Other monks, doubtless, assisted in the curious plays, which startle the modern reader by their apparently blasphemous familiarity in dealing with sacred subjects. To one who sees perfection in his own age alone, it may seem that the Mystery and Morality plays of the Middle Ages taught little except licentiousness and impiety. The coarse language, the irreverent use of holy names, and the familiar exhibition of the most awful events are, doubtless, offensive to the delicacy of the nineteenth century; but, if we attempt to

realise the conditions under which these plays were performed, we shall soon learn to think more charitably of them, their authors, and their audience. It should be remembered that the audience was composed almost entirely of persons who could neither read nor write. The only methods for bringing home to the popular mind the leading incidents of sacred history, were paintings or these curious dramatic performances. It is impossible to suppose that the monkish authors dreamt of any irreverence, in their very familiar handling of the most elevated themes. "Such spectacles," said Mr. G. Ellis, in his preface to Way's *Fabliaux*, "indicate the simplicity, rather than the libertinism, of the age in which they were exhibited. The distinction between modesty of thought and decency which resides in the expression, is a modern refinement; a compromise between chastity and seduction, which stipulates not the exclusion but only the disguise of licentiousness." There is no doubt that, whatever the comparative standard of morality in the past and present may be, the language of peer and ploughman, dame and trowoman, was coarse, not to say filthy, at least as late as the reign of Queen Anne; and that the habitual employment of the most literal terms was no evidence of immoral life. In France, the fashion of calling things by their vulgar names lasted much longer. Superfine Horace Walpole was terribly shocked at the coarse language of Madame du Deffand, of witty and literary renown. Much of the indelicacy of the *Mysteries* is due to the introduction of comic incidents and dialogue to tickle the ears of the groundlings. It would hardly be supposed that very much fun could be got out of the launching of the ark, but the mediæval dramatist is quite equal to the occasion. Feeling, with dramatic instinct, that the subject requires lightening, lest the audience grow weary, he introduces a downright family quarrel. This debate between Noah and his wife is a prominent feature in the *Coventry* and *Townley*, as well as in the *Chester Mysteries*. Chancer alludes to it as a matter of notoriety:

Hast thou not herd (good Nicholas) also
The sorwe of Noe with his felawship
Or that he might get his wif to ship?

It is impossible to trace the origin of this absurd dispute to any source but the *Mysteries*. One of the chief motives for acting these plays was the gratification of the populace, and this end would not have

been obtained, had not the sombre character of the plots been relieved by a species of buffoonery adapted to their taste. This is set forth clearly in the *Banes*, or *Prologue to the Chester Mysteries*—

In pagentes set fourth apparently to all eyne
The Old and New Testament with lively comfort
Interminglinge therewith only to make sporte
Som things not warranted by any writt.

These *Chester Mysteries* were played in the true Thespian cart, "a high scaffold with two rowmes, a higher and a lower upon four wheelles." In the lower compartment the actors apparelled themselves, and in the upper "they played, being all open on the top, that all beholders might heare and see them." The actors were members of the various trade guilds, and they played "first at the Abaye gates then wheeled to the High Crosse before the mayor, and so to every streete."

In one of these plays, *De deluvio Noe* the title and stage directions are in Latin the rest in English. The first personage put upon the stage is Deus, and then Noah arrives to receive his commands. Noah at once calls his family together, and the building of the ark goes on and all is well till Noah's wife arrives, and flatly refuses to have anything to do with the ark—

I will not doe after thy read.

Noah makes sundry reflections on the sex
Lorde that women bene crabed aye!
And non are meeke that dare I saye.
This is well seen by me to-day
In witness of yee eich one.

In *Higden's Mystery*, the patriarch is not nearly so outspoken as in the *Townley* version, wherein he brings his recalcitrant spouse very quickly to reason:

NOE. Yee men that has wyfs: Whyle thayar yong
If ye luf youre lyfs: chastice thayr tong
Me thynk my hert ryves: both levere and long
To se sich stryfs: wedmen emong.
BOT I: As have I blys: shall chastyse this.

UXOR. Yit may ye mys! Nicholl nedy.
NOE. I shall make ye still as stone; begynnar of blunder

I shall bete the bak and bone; and breke all in sonder.

UXOR. Out alas, I am gone, &c.

There is more of this, Noah evidently beating all the while till his wife cries out, "My bak is nere in two," the sons interfere, and all goes harmoniously.

Higden's Noah tries gentler means in vain. His wife refuses to go on board without her "gossippes," prayers of husband and children all are useless, till at last Shem carries her on board by force. Then probably with an ironical intonation says:

NOE. Welcome wife into this boate.
NOE'S WIFE. Have thou that, for thy note.
NOE. Ha, ha! marye that is hott,
It is good for to be still.

In the *Massacre of the Innocents*, another of these curious productions, poetical justice is done upon Herod, whose own son is supposed to be destroyed in the general slaughter—another incident “not warranted by any writt” of Scripture. Herod cries :

He was righte sicker in silke araye
In goule and pearle that was so gaye,
Thee mighte well knowe, by his araye,
He was a kinge's son.

These lamentations are cut short by the entrance of a demon.

From Lucifer that lorde hither am I sente
To fetch this king's soule here pænte,
Into hell bring hym there to be lent
Ever to live in woo.

The Chester Mysteries lasted till the reign of Elizabeth, when they went the way of many mediæval institutions, not being strong enough to withstand the besom of the Reformation. So far as can be ascertained, they retained their popularity long after authority had marked them for destruction. In direct opposition to the commands of the Archbishop of York, the trade guilds of old Chester, backed by the opinion of their townsmen, performed their Whitsuntide Mysteries till the year 1574, when Sir Richard Savage, the mayor, having been won over, the old plays were suppressed as heathenish, popish, and idolatrous—and the actors with their open-air scaffold, their odd costumes, and rough humour, disappeared into Stygian darkness for ever and aye.

While I have been maundering—book of the play in hand—past the spots where, of old, crowds followed with eager eyes the slaughter of the Innocents and other portions of the divine tragedy, mine ancient companion, whose mind is just now intent on another kind of book, has disappeared—vanished softly and imperceptibly, gradually and mysteriously, as the immortal Cheshire cat himself—to be seen again under very different auspices.

The sun is shining on the broad Roodee, no longer a pasture for cows, or a peaceful promenade for contemplative idlers. A confused mass of horses and carriages, tents and booths, covers every inch of the bright green meadow save one narrow ribbon, an emerald circle hedged in by a black mass of humanity, thousands and tens of thousands met to celebrate the only pageant, the only sport left to Chester. Along with Miracle plays have vanished the rough amusements of our forefathers, the annual bout at football at which many were grievously hurt, some even unto

death; the solemn bull-baiting in the presence of the mayor; the shooting for the silver arrows; and the cock-fighting, not disdained by former Lords of Knowsley. All these are gone, sunk full fathom five in the limbo of the past; but the silver bell for running horses, transmuted into the Tradesmen's Plate or Chester Cup, still remains—a relic of the ancient carnival, a Saturnian revel if ever there was one. There is mighty junketing, Homeric eating and drinking, in Chester on the cup-day. “Fay ce que voudras,” is the Babelaisian motto of the ancient city for this day only. “May ye shmoke here, yer honour?” yells an Irish waiter, “faix an' it's anything short of murther ye may do here to-day.” This view prevails with the great mass of the people who crowd the Roodee itself, and hang on like flies to walls which overlook the race-course like the sloping sides of an amphitheatre. All are full of glee, black care having taken refuge in the bosoms of statesmen and pamphleteers. On the lawn by the grand stand, where the drama of the day is in preparation, the actors in the modern Mystery are not occupied in studying long tirades. On the contrary, their speech is remarkable for curtness and loudness, harshly roared or snapped out as with sudden bark. As the moment for raising the curtain approaches, the roar of the rehearsal grows louder and louder, and the excitement in the grand stand communicates as a species of electricity to assembled Chester. At last the curtain goes up, or, to speak plainly, the flag goes down; there is a flash of bright colours on the ring of turf. Anon the patches of blue and crimson, yellow and purple, become scattered; anon they close up and come flying round the inner edge of the circle. As they approach for the third time, a roar rises from the little lawn, and a horse, not “coloured” on the official list, shoots past an easy winner. As I wonder what the name of that redoubtable animal may be, I become aware of the following sounds hissed into my ear: “Didn't I tell you so?” It was the antiquary's pet outsider that had won; the old gentleman had “landed” a considerable stake, and was hugging himself on his profound judgment. A worthy old man whose glee was yet tinged with melancholy—“I hope the Chester Cup will last my time,” he went on, “but I doubt our pageant will not live much longer. I'll take ten to one the last Chester Cup will not be run later than 1880.”

Since I parted from my antiquary, I have only once been to Chester. It was on the day of the cup. My friend looked not a year older. He was not on the Roodee this time, but posted on the road to it. He looked shyly, as I thought, at me, and made no sign of recognition. He offered me, not a c'rect card, but a document of very different tenor. It was a tract against the evil practice of gambling.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR WASHINGTON," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER I. THE RIVAL GAME.

ALTHOUGH in the camp of Ella and her friend, as we have shown, reigned the completest confidence as to the issue of the coming trial, a certainty that she would be declared his lawful wife, and the other "young person" a "nobody" in the eyes of the law, and much worse than a nobody in that of society; and that Cecil Henry Landon would be shortly a mere felon, with a number attached to him in place of a name, in one of her Majesty's gaols, this was by no means the view entertained by the opposite party.

The sinews of war, thanks to Mr. Landon, senior, were by no means wanting to them also, and though they had failed by reason of Mr. Vance's promptness in securing the services of Mr. Pawson, the second most famous counsel, Mr. Redburn, and one said to be even more learned in the law, if of less forensic fire, had been at once retained. How it was possible that two such eminent legal luminaries should take a different view upon even a complicated case, may, doubtless, to some appear extraordinary, and still more so when, as in the present instance, the gist of the matter lay, as both agreed, in a nutshell. As, however, the old alchemists tell us that gold is a test which, applied to certain substances, produces a change of colour, so does a retaining-fee in these modern days possess something of that magic charm; if it does not turn black to white, it makes it so very light-coloured that it is difficult to discern the difference; and when thus presented under certain aspects to a British jury, they have been known to be persuaded that it is white, aye, as new-fallen snow or the white of egg.

Mr. Redburn did not, indeed, enjoy, as did his rival, the undoubted advantage of being introduced to his client, as Rose

might fairly be termed, since on his advocacy depended very literally her name and fame; but it is just to add that he did not need that incitement. He was a man who loved law for its own sake, and yet with a somewhat illicit love; for he loved even yet more to get the better of the law. To win a cause by proof and precedent was with him too easy a triumph to give him pleasure; but to win a cause where both proof and precedent were wanting and to extricate a client from the meshes of the law itself, was what still brought the colour into his sallow cheek and tinged "his trembling ears;" to get his verdict, in the teeth of the judge, from the lips of the jury was, in short, what the vulgar call "nuts" to him.

The ministry was going out and he was spoken of with certainty as the next Solicitor-general, and, therefore, these delights, he knew, were coming to an end with him; and he loved them all the more in consequence. So he threw himself heart and soul—or with what there was left of both of them—into the present case, the very difficulties of which enhance its attraction for him. The attorney on his side was, curiously enough, that very Mr. Everett, whose acquaintance Cecil had made in the commercial-room of the inn at Wellborough, and who had been himself the unconscious cause of the trial. He happened to be professionally engaged at the petty sessions at which Cecil was committed for trial, and at once called to mind, not only his acquaintance of Thistle Eagle, but the conversation which he had had with him concerning the law of divorce.

To this gentleman Mr. Welby had naturally applied on that occasion for legal advice as to bail, &c., and the case had been afterwards placed generally in his hands. He never spoke to Cecil concerning his having met with him on a previous occasion; and Cecil exercised the same wise discretion. In fact, the reticence in the camp of the accused afforded a very marked contrast to the openness displayed in that of the prosecution. Mr. Redburn had, indeed, a single interview with Landon; but the questions he put were few, and, as his client thought and ever observed, of an irrelevant nature. "The case will turn upon a point of law," said Mr. Redburn, with an involuntary rubbing of the palms of his hands, "a very pretty point indeed; and our side, at least, will not trouble you with many questions."

But he thought to himself, "If Pawson doesn't turn this fellow inside out I'm a Dutchman, and I'm afraid the heart will be found in a very morbid condition."

Rose positively declined to see either Mr. Everett or Mr. Redburn; she felt as though it would seem like the confession of a doubt of Cecil's innocence, and she had no doubts; she was well convinced that the crime laid to his charge was merely the last vindictive effort of an abandoned woman. But the poor girl offered tortures for all that. She knew—the knowledge could not be kept from her, unless they had shut her up in her own room, and denied her newspapers—that this unhappy case was the talk, not only of the village wherein she had thereto dwelt retired as "a violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye," but of the whole county; that Helen's face was worn and haggard, beneath the living smile it still put on; that there could be very literally no more "peace and quietness" for either of them; and that a dreadful day was drawing nigh, when her beloved Henry would have to appear a prisoner in the dock, to be tried on a charge which, although groundless, must needs leave a shameful stain upon him. Of the danger to her own fair fame she did not think at all; partly because she felt so sure that that, at least, was beyond the reach of evil, and partly because her thoughts were monopolised by her husband's trouble; though actual apprehensions upon his account, as we have said, she had none.

The vicar, too, entertained little or no fears as to the result of the trial. He had been subjected to a pretty stiff examination by Mr. Everett as to what he knew about Cecil's position, and the effect of what he had to tell upon the lawyer had seemed to him to be satisfactory. Indeed, Mr. Everett had said to him, in so many words, "We shall get Mr. Landon off," though adding that it was "a very unpleasant business."

"Unpleasant!" echoed the vicar, indignantly. "It is the most abominable business that it is possible to conceive. I call it not a prosecution but a persecution, and of one of the most pure and innocent creatures on the earth's surface."

"Oh, dear me," said the attorney, "you're all wrong there. Friendship blinds you, my good sir; our friend is a very queer lot."

"Tush, sir! do you suppose I was

speaking of Mr. Landon? I am thinking of his wife."

"Just so, just so; you mean his second wife, of course. Well, she has been hardly used, and is much to be pitied; but there, when we have got him off, she will be all right again in a few months. Folks will have forgotten all about it, or somebody else will give them something else to talk about. A really good murder down Pullham way, for example, would set us all quite straight again."

This recipe, even could it have been applied, would probably not have given much comfort to the vicar; but the attorney's assurance that the second marriage would be held valid was of course consoling. It was to his credit that for once Rose had his deepest sympathy, notwithstanding the spectacle of Helen's distress of mind, which pierced his heart to the core; it had also the mechanical effect of making his fingers double into fists, and his right toe tingle whenever he met Cecil. He would have liked to kick him into the next parish; only, like the villain in the melodrama, he was obliged to say to himself, "I must dissemble." In this respect poor Helen had to play the Villain, or rather the Hypocrite, to a much greater extent. Perhaps she had never shown her love for Rose more strongly than in the efforts she now made to be civil to her husband—to conceal from her sister that she considered him an utter scoundrel. Her contempt for him amounted to loathing, and it sickened her very soul to think that the very best that could be hoped to come out of all this trouble was, that Rose should be mated with such a man for life. And, curiously enough, Helen scarcely dared to hope for this best. She alone, of all the Grantham camp, believed that the verdict would be given against Cecil. Of the legal question she, of course, knew nothing; but her woman's prejudice against the man was such that she had already pronounced him "Guilty." And if "Guilty," what would become of Rose?

One may imagine, therefore, what a difficult task was Helen's, to feign regard for the accused and confidence in his acquittal, and hope for her sister's future, when she had no regard, no confidence, and no hope. Sometimes this period of suspense appeared almost intolerable, the rolling of the heavy hours over her head was a slow torture; and sometimes, what was to come seemed still more dreadful,

and then they flew with pitiless speed. The sole thing which gave her comfort—and that it did so proved the depth of her distress—was, that as the time fixed for the trial drew near, Rose fell ill. Perhaps her mental suffering had been greater of late than it had appeared to be, and her body now paid the penalty; but, at all events, she had contracted a sort of low fever, which, although not dangerous in itself, quite prostrated her, and would certainly prevent her from appearing in court.

This was a great relief to Helen, though, singularly enough, not to Rose herself. She was eager to give her evidence, thinking doubtless that her presence would animate her husband and convince the world of the love and confidence she reposed in him. The doctor who was called in at once, however, forbade her moving from her room, and—as work the bad and good influences in a fairy tale—the awful powers of the subpoena were rendered null and void by the magic of a medical certificate.

CHAPTER LI. THE FIRST DAY'S TRIAL.

It is, as we all know, the opinion of modern philosophers and critics, that the days of "sensation" are numbered—that human nature has been so moulded and modelled by their benignant and elevating influence that all social catastrophes and "situations" are beginning, at least among educated minds, to be classed with the stories in the "Penny Dreadfuls" as dull and vulgar, and to lose their "morbid interest." The attractions of the stage are waning before those of the meetings of the Royal Society, or those offered by the pages of the *Metaphysical Review*; and everybody is growing scientific and sensible. But, at the time at which our story is enacted, human nature was still pretty much in the same state, with regard to its objects of interest, that it had been, say for the last four thousand years; and to confess the truth, in that respect gave little signs of mending. Incredible as it may now appear to us, nothing for example interested people in those days so much as a great criminal trial. What Mr. Everett had called a "really good murder"—and if he had not been speaking to a clergyman would perhaps have even called "a jolly good murder"—was wont to excite the benighted public to an extraordinary degree; and next to a murder—next best, I fear, I may almost say, and especially when the parties con-

cerned moved in the upper circles of society—was a trial for bigamy.

Even in London, as we have seen, the case of *Regina v. Cecil Henry Landon* was looked forward to with considerable interest; but in the county where the Pullham Assizes were held it is scarcely too much to say, that all society was on the tip-toe of expectation. Delightful as it is to everybody (or rather was) to see any member of the upper classes put in the dock for so serious an offence as bigamy, how much greater was the bliss to those among whom the man had lived, and to whom he was more or less of an acquaintance. The price of cattle, the prospects of the hunting season, and even the list of stewards for the next county ball, were absolutely "nowhere" as topics of conversation, compared with the coming trial of Mr. Henry Landon. Everybody in Grantham received a lift in the social scale, or, at all events, in their conversational attractions through their local connection with the accused. "Such a gentlemanly man to look at!" "So agreeable," and "Only a few months married!" Poor Rose, too, obtained no inconsiderable celebrity by right of her husband. "A sweet pretty creature!" "Dying, they say, from the shame of it!" "Enough to make her poor father" (the late vicar of Grantham) "turn in his grave!" Even Helen did not escape. Her position, too, was "most deplorable;" and "Mr. Welby"—who would have married her on the instant though Cecil had been sure to be hanged—would "certainly have every excuse for crying off his engagement with her." It was really shameful that a mere medical certificate should have the power to deprive society of seeing the second wife in the witness-box. "All sham, my dear, as I am informed, on the best authority." But still there would be the first wife to look at—"She has 'the beauty of the devil,' I am told"—and that morbid anatomy of Cecil, when he should be turned inside out.

There are some people, we know, who have had the bad taste—theologically speaking—to pity the "poor devil;" but Christian charity did not go to the extent—in Southernshire, at least—of pitying the poor devil Landon. I am afraid he is beyond the commiseration of my readers, also. Yet, when the judges arrived, "a terrible show," and "the sheriff," he came, too, with all his—well, javelin "crew;" and the tramp of feet

and the blare of trumpets filled the county town, there was no one on the long black list of "prisoners to be tried" whose heart sank so low within him as Cecil Landon's. This was not because he thought he should be found "Guilty" by the jury, for he firmly believed he should be acquitted. Mr. Everett, with an eye, perhaps, to his bearing in court, had even said, "You are safe enough, Mr. Landon." But, alas! he was already "found guilty" by his own conscience, and by all save one, he knew, whose opinion was of any value to him. Neither Helen's civil speeches, nor the vicar's assumed calm, had for a moment concealed from him their real feelings towards him; he felt that they despised him from the very bottom of their hearts.

Darall he had refused to see. His father had come down to see him once, but at his own request had not repeated his visit; nor when he came would Cecil permit him to see Rose. The old man's purse had been placed unreservedly at his disposal, but it could not be said that he was heart and soul in his son's cause; his heart and soul were too honest to be at his service, and the story that he would have had to tell to Rose was very different, as Cecil knew, from that which he himself had told her. That he might be acquitted, many, as we have seen, thought probable; but there was but one—whose ear he had abused and whose love blinded her—who believed that he did not deserve punishment. He knew better than anybody—aye, better than Colonel Gerard Juxon, who did literally thirst for his very blood—how deeply he deserved it! Moreover, which may surely so far be set down to his credit, he felt no anger against the colonel, nor any of those who were so bitterly pressing the charge against him; and, least of all, did he feel wrath with Ella. Next to Rose, indeed, she had his sincerest pity; and he pitied both of them (though I do not say he did not pity himself) far more than himself; for in his heart of hearts he believed—such is the amazing force of man's conceit—that Ella loved him still.

Imagine him, having surrendered to his bail, standing in the prisoners'-dock, in the great court-house, filled from roof to floor with spectators whose eyes devoured him. Even the judge himself raised his gold-rimmed glasses and surveyed him with a prolonged stare, after which he took a pinch of snuff. It was the first

case in the assize list—a true bill having, of course, been returned against him by the grand jury—and everybody in court was fresh and eager. His demeanour was quiet and possessed, though by no means bold. He had the courage to run his eye round that vast assemblage, and to rest it for an instant, though without any sign of recognition, upon those he knew. Mr. Whympers-Hobson, whom his glance arrested in the middle of some humorous remark to a neighbour in the gallery—probably concerning Cecil himself, for he turned scarlet beneath his eye—was in the gallery on his left. His eyes had not fallen on him since he had thrown him, neck and heels, into Virginia Water. In the opposite gallery, a portion of which had been reserved for ladies, was Helen, who had come by Rose's special commandment, under convoy of Mrs. Darall. Cecil noticed, too, that there were many of his London acquaintances, some of whom sought, as some avoided, his eye. Others there were whose faces were familiar to him, but whose names, and the places where he had met them, he had forgotten. One, in particular, a tall white-headed man, with sloping shoulders, like a student, returned his passing glance with a look of intense disfavour. Beside these there were no persons in whom he had any special interest, for the witnesses in the case were, for the present, kept out of court. It was with them, as he was well aware, that his true ordeal lay, and with one among them above all.

He looked forward with sickening expectation to the moment when that door at the back of the witness-box should open and admit Ella; he felt his cheeks pale at the very thought of it, and his eyes seek the ground. And he had to wait for it for weary hours. The counsel for the prosecution opened the case at considerable, and indeed unusual, length. Cecil listened with more or less of attention, but he was chiefly taken up with speculations as to how Ella would look, and especially how she would look at him. Upon the whole, he hoped, as he expected, that it would be with vindictive severity; any touch of ancient tenderness or pity would, he felt, unman him quite. At times a subdued hum—the inarticulate expression of deep and unfavourable feeling—would compel him to give heed to the counsel's words. Then he heard himself described as a vile and dissolute wretch, making use of a mere informality

of the law—which, an ignorance only equalled by his villany had caused him to believe a valid plea—to break faith with the woman he had married, and to seduce the affections of another on the pretence of being a free man. He did not seem to have known so much of his own life as this lawyer in the wig and gown knew, and was describing with such merciless minuteness. And yet, dark as were the colours in which his picture was drawn, how far short was it of the blackness of the original as it must needs appear to Ella's eyes; and, again, his thoughts reverted to his former wife.

By the breathless silence, broken by the occasional sob from some easily-moved woman, the counsel must now be talking of Ella; and it was so. He was describing how she had given him her maiden love, had trusted in him, had cleaved to him in spite of his absence and indifference, and of how the news of his heartless treachery had fallen upon her without foreshadowing hint. "She was not," said the counsel, "blameless in respect to one point of her conduct—to be presently referred to; but she was altogether blameless and undeserving of this wrong as regarded him." Then he went on to touch with what seemed tender delicacy, but was, in fact, judicious lightness, on the quarrel between Ella and her father, and the unhappy error into which she had been led by her excited feelings with respect to her change of name. "An attempt might be made," he said, "by the other side to influence the jury in the prisoner's favour, by the fact that his knowledge of the deception had embittered his relations with his wife, and turned his thoughts to getting rid of her. But the jury were men of principle as well as of intelligence, and would look on that matter in its true light. The man was tired of his wife no doubt; unhappily, many dissolute and profligate persons did get tired of their wives, though scarcely within so short a time as this man; but the true reason of his second marriage was that his licentious nature had been attracted by the charms of another woman. In his own mind there had not existed a shadow of a doubt of his being already legally married; but he had used the informality already alluded to as a salve to his conscience in contracting a new alliance. The second wife," he (the counsel) "had heard, would not make her appearance that day in

court. She was said to be ill, which was likely enough, or it might be that she was disinclined to give this man the moral support of her presence." Here Mr. Redburn begged to call the attention of his learned friend to the fact, that a medical certificate had been handed in, which described Mrs. Henry Landon, "as I shall most certainly prove her entitled to be called," incapacitated by illness from attending the court.

"Ah well; that might be so. Some of the jury might themselves be acquainted with the convenience of medical certificates," at which remark, since some half-dozen jurymen had been already struck off the list that morning upon that very ground, there was "much laughter."

But, upon the whole, the case for the prosecution was singularly destitute of such streaks of light; it was unmitigatedly stern and hostile as well as protracted; and with its length—which by no means invariably happens—it seemed also to grow in strength. What puzzled Cecil—to whom, as we have said, his legal advisers had been very reticent—was, that the fact of his having been ignorant of Ella's deception, on which he himself counted for some sympathy, was willingly conceded, and even dwelt upon. Indeed, as he afterwards got to know, it was the chief point relied upon by his enemies against him.

This opening speech took up more than half the day; and the effect upon those who heard it was not only unmistakably hostile to the prisoner, but the prisoner himself seemed to feel that the odds, which had been heretofore in his favour, had suddenly veered round; for the first time he conceived it probable that he would be convicted. A terrible thought, indeed, yet not so terrible as what was to come upon the instant; the counsel for the prosecution, having sat down, had risen again and called "Ella Landon."

The door opened, and in she came, dressed handsomely, but in black, and looking like a queen in exile. A hushed murmur of admiration, the involuntary tribute to her beauty and her wrongs, pervaded the assembly; one person only grudged her that act of homage. When Mr. Whymper-Hobson's friend and neighbour, a young man-about-town, broke forth in rapturous eulogy, "By jingo, how could a man have got tired of a woman like that so soon?" he answered, "For my part, I don't think so much of her; and besides, one hasn't seen the other."

Almost everyone in court—including the old man in the corner of the gallery, who, with his hand before his face, like one who shields it from the sun, gazed at her, however, through his fingers—had a full view of her; but her own glance was limited to the judge and the counsel opposite. She had informed herself beforehand of the arrangements of the court-house, and studiously kept her eyes averted from the dock. She looked somewhat pale—which in her case enhanced her loveliness—but perfectly self-possessed; her face was sad, but wore an expression of great dignity. While the oath was administered to her, it was observed that the book trembled in her hand a little; but, otherwise, she stood motionless as a statue waiting for the breath of life.

"Your name is Ella Landon?"

"Yes."

Just that simple monosyllable; and yet it seemed to convey in it her full assurance that the name was hers by right, and belonged to no other. In the utterance of that single word, Cecil seemed to hear his doom.

Her examination followed of course the line of the speech for the prosecution, and revealed nothing that is not already known to us; but when Mr. Pawson put the question as to the reason of her adopting a false name, she answered sadly, but firmly, like one making confession of sin:

"My reason for taking my mother's name of Mayne was, because I had had a quarrel with my father; I do not excuse myself in any way for so doing; it was only less wrong and wicked than the quarrel itself."

There was a pause, during which the rapid pens of the reporters were very distinctly heard, and then Mr. Pawson said:

"There was no material cause, then, why you should have deceived your husband?"

"None whatever."

"He did not, however, aid and abet you in the deception?"

"He? No." She hesitated, as though in doubt of what was meant.

"I mean," said Mr. Pawson, "that you and he did not agree together before marriage to deceive the public by your assumption of this false name?"

"Most certainly we did not."

To the general ear there was nothing

in this reply; but Cecil noticed that it had an effect upon the gentlemen in wigs and gowns, some of whom looked at one another significantly; and at the same time the judge himself stole a glance at him over his spectacles which seemed to chill his very marrow. The next time that he should look at him like that, he felt, would be to say, "Prisoner at the bar, you have been found guilty of the crime laid to your charge." In spite of all his efforts to keep calm, he shuddered from head to foot, and his eyes sought the little ledge before him, on which, in old times, sweet herbs were wont to be placed, to mitigate gaol fever. At the same moment, though he knew it not, Ella looked round and, for the first time, fixed her eyes on him. It was but for an instant, yet those about her noticed that she turned deadly pale.

"The witness has been a long time before the court," remarked the judge, who had observed her pallor. "When you have finished your examination-in-chief, Mr. Pawson, it may be as well to adjourn."

"For my part, my lord, I have no more questions to ask Mrs. Landon," returned the counsel, in a tone of confidence that verged on triumph.

"Then your cross-examination, Mr. Redburn, since it is getting late, and the witness appears somewhat tired, had better be deferred till to-morrow morning."

"Very good, my lord."

Whereupon the court adjourned.

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

On the conclusion of "What He Cost Her," early in June, will be commenced

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY

R. E. FRANCILLON,

Author of "Olympia," "Pearl and Emerald,"
&c. &c. &c.

ENTITLED

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Arrangements have also been made for the commencement, in October, of

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SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK III. THE STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER III. OF BASIL.

I WAS very fond of Catalina, but I cannot say that I cared much for her relations, the Grisdales. I held my tongue about them on her account; but they always seemed to me rather common sort of people, though I don't mean that they ever behaved themselves rudely or vulgarly; indeed, they had rather a superior way of speaking, and were invariably kind to me. Still old Uncle Junius always seemed to me little better than a street musician. I am sure I have seen quite as respectable-looking men among the waits at Christmas. As for Lucius Grisdale, Catalina's grandfather, he was the proprietor of a very violent newspaper, and he entertained very strange and strong opinions. I never troubled myself about politics, deeming them waste of time; but I was fully satisfied that, as a politician, Lucius Grisdale was egregiously and absurdly wrong.

It was a great misfortune for Basil that he was thrown so much in the way of the Grisdales. He might have done very well if he had followed in my footsteps; and more than once the opportunity was offered him of entering City houses of reputation, as a junior clerk. He was assured of a regular yearly salary, and of a rise every two or three years; and he could have learned the business without difficulty. For I will do Basil the justice to say that

he did not want for cleverness, although often deficient in what is known as common sense. But he was encouraged by the Grisdales to go on writing poetry and articles in the newspapers. I never thought that a becoming occupation for him, or indeed for anyone. And then he was what I must call foolishly fond of music. He had received lessons from old Junius, who had taken great pains with his pupil. I know it annoyed me extremely to hear Basil eternally practising upon his flute. But I shall not readily forget how ashamed I felt, when I saw him quietly sitting in the orchestra of Sadler's Wells. He had given me an order and I was much amused by the performance, although I was tempted to wonder sometimes how the people on the stage could make such consummate fools of themselves. But when I saw him sitting there, with his flute, I felt that it would have done me good if I could have boxed his ears. The Doubledays have always been very respectable people. I am sure Nature never intended them to sit in orchestras.

Basil would not take advice, however, nor would he listen to remonstrance. He chose to go on in his own way, and I could not hinder him. It was vexations, but there was no help for it. Certainly he contrived to pick up a living, I can scarcely say how. But he never came to me for assistance, nor do I think he borrowed money of anybody else. Oddly enough, he found people—and really people of position and importance—to admire his poems. He did not play at Sadler's Wells for more than a season or two; then he took to writing for his living, or became, as he preferred to put it, an author by pro-

fession. I never found time to read his writings; indeed I had little leisure, and what I had I found I could employ better than in poring over books; but I am bound to say that I have heard Basil's writings very much admired, by people likely to be good judges of such things. And he was so fortunate as to obtain payment for the things he wrote. I should not myself have thought them of any value, but there seems to be in London a market for almost everything. I was surprised to hear one day that, according to his own account, he was receiving for his poems, writings, contributions to magazines and newspapers, and so on, almost as much as I was earning as a clerk in Baker's bank. But perhaps he exaggerated a little.

I always had an idea that Basil was very fond of Catalina, though I did not think it at all likely that she would ever care about him, for he was not really good-looking, he was not strong, and it was not to be supposed that she could sympathise with his bookish ways, or take interest in his writings. But, of course, he saw her very frequently, for he almost lived with the Grisdales, and they all seemed to be on very friendly terms together. He had taken up with Lucius Grisdale's political opinions, without being quite so much in earnest about them, or giving them such vehement expression. I was by no means satisfied with Basil, for I thought he was following a wrong and foolish course of life. On the subject of Catalina, I considered it best to deal quite frankly with him.

"You see, Basil," I said to him, "it won't do for us to be standing in each other's light."

"I suppose not," he said; "but I don't exactly understand what you mean."

"Well, look here. I am getting on at the bank, and I hope some day that I may be in a position to marry."

"Some day?"

"Yes. You can't expect me to fix the day off-hand. It won't be this year—nor next; but it may possibly be the year after."

"It won't be for some three years, then? Well, that will give you time to think it over."

"I don't want time to think it over. It's a settled thing, so far as I'm concerned."

"And so far as the lady's concerned, too, I suppose?"

"I don't say that, exactly. But I take

for granted she'll say 'Yes,' when the proper time arrives."

"I wouldn't take anything of that sort for granted, I think. In these cases we can't be quite sure what a woman will say or leave unsaid."

"Don't refer to her as 'a woman' in that rude way. I am speaking of Miss Martinez."

"Of Catalina?"

He looked quite astonished.

"Yes—of Catalina. I've been very fond of her for a long time past. I used to think, when she was quite a child, that she was the prettiest, sweetest, cleverest, brightest little thing I had ever set eyes on. I made up my mind a long time back that, when I married, Catalina should be my wife. I've always considered myself pledged to marry her. But you know that very well, Basil. Everybody knows it; you must have heard me mention the thing a score of times."

Basil seemed perplexed, and for a minute or two he said nothing. He occupied himself with rumpling his hair, and in gazing out of window.

"I think I have heard you mention the subject," he said at length.

"Of course you have heard me mention it."

"But I never supposed you to be in earnest."

"Why not? I'm always in earnest. I never joke."

"I don't think you ever do," he said in a meditative way, and then he relapsed into silence.

"And you think that I may stand in your light?" he asked presently.

"Well, to speak plainly, Basil, you seem to me to be what I may call sentimentalising about Catalina, in a soft, silly, spooney way, that I consider decidedly objectionable. You don't mean any harm, I daresay; and it isn't to be supposed that Catalina can possibly care about you."

"You think not?"

"Of course not. The idea is absurd. And then, you know, you'll never marry."

"Never?"

"No. How can you expect to marry—a man who writes poetry, and little stories in the magazines, and articles in the newspapers—you don't suppose you can keep a wife, and perhaps a family, by such means?"

"Of course," he said, "I know that an author—a mere author—is a very poor creature by the side of a banker's clerk."

"To be sure he is."

I was glad to hear him talking so sensibly.

"Still, there's no knowing what may happen."

"No, but we can form pretty good guesses on the subject."

"Yes. And you think I must never look forward to being married—that I shall always be too poor, too insignificant?"

"That's about it, Basil."

"And that it is impossible that Catalina can ever be brought to care for me?"

"Well, I suppose she cares for you after a fashion, as a friend, an acquaintance, a writer employed upon her grandfather's newspaper—but not more than that. And I think you ought to be content with that."

"But suppose I am not content with that—and suppose I cannot be content with that—what then?" he asked rather warmly.

"You don't mean to say that you love Catalina? Now, look here, Basil, don't be absurd. What is the use of your going on in this way? I'm some years older than you—and I've had a good deal more experience. I know what's best for you, much better than you know yourself. As for your loving Catalina—drop it, that's my advice; for nothing can ever come of it. And, more than that, it isn't right—it is, indeed, exceedingly improper. Because you have known all along that I loved Catalina, and that I fully intended to marry her at the first opportunity; whenever, in point of fact, I could afford to marry anybody."

He did not seem at all to like my way of putting things; but I could not help that. I had a duty to perform. I was not going to shrink from performing it.

"We're talking foolishly," he said.

"Speak for yourself. I don't admit that I am talking foolishly."

"You take upon yourself to dispose of Catalina's hand, without considering that she is entitled to a voice in the matter. You tell me that I am to give up my love for Catalina. Perhaps that is more than I can do. Certainly it is more than you are entitled to tell me to do. Further, you say that you are going to make Catalina your wife. Surely you do not mean to marry her, whether she will or no?"

I was not prepared for his taking so sharp a tone with me.

"I assume that Catalina will say 'Yes' when the proper time arrives."

"I think you are assuming too much. Deal frankly with me. Have you spoken to her of your love? Have you asked her to become your wife?"

But I was not going to tell him of my conversation with Catalina.

"Deal frankly with me," I said. "I'm the eldest. Answer me first. Have you spoken to her of your love?"

"I have not. It may be that I shall never tell her of it. Now, I think we had better not carry this discussion further. We might quarrel; and it is hardly fair to Catalina, that we should bandy her name about, and make her the subject of our talk. And—be advised by me for once—although I am so much younger than you: don't speak of Catalina as your wife, until she gives you permission to do so."

He left me hurriedly and not in a very good temper. There was, no doubt, some sense in what he had said; but I felt, all the same, that I had had by far the best of the argument. And I did not waver in my design to marry Catalina. Upon that head I was as confident as ever.

It was some little time after this conversation that, happening to look up one afternoon from my desk in the bank, I saw Basil, standing by the counter, just as though he had been one of Baker's customers.

Now Basil rarely visited me at the bank. I had indeed objected to his coming to see me there; it did not look well; and I did not like being disturbed in business hours. It was clear, therefore, that something rather important had occurred to bring him down to Whitechapel. And now I perceived that he was pale, that he seemed ill and much agitated.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Come outside for a moment; I can't speak to you here."

I put on my hat and went with him into the street.

"Now, what is it? What has happened?"

"She is gone," he gasped.

"Who's gone? Catalina?"

"No; Doris."

"Gone? Gone where? You don't mean to say she's dead?"

He went on to explain that Doris had run away from Miss Leveridge's house in Powis-place; that she had broken her engagement to marry Mr. Leveridge; that she had, in point of fact, eloped with a confounded foreigner! No other, indeed, than the journeyman painter, Paul Briel!

I was very much ashamed, and very angry. Was he quite sure of all this? I demanded. How did he come to hear of it? and when?

Something he had learnt from old Junius Grisdale, it seemed, who had chanced to be on the spot, in the early morning, and had seen Doris go off in a cab with the Frenchman. Disgraceful!

"Why did not the old fool stop them, or call for help, or give them in charge to the police?" But of course it was no use asking such questions. He had done simply nothing, the old stupid. He had seen them go off, and then had walked away himself, in an opposite direction, without saying a word to anyone.

No; he had done more than that. He had taken note of the number of the cab. We might institute enquiries. Perhaps find the cabman, and be able to track the fugitives.

I complained to Basil that he was not half angry enough. I own that I was furious.

"I am too pained, too sorry, to feel very angry just now," he said, tremulously. "I can only think of poor Doris herself, I can't think of what she has done."

"Poor Doris, indeed! Don't pity her; don't let me hear you pity her."

"We have been to blame. We should have stood by her, and helped her against herself."

"I can't blame myself," I said. "Doris always was obstinate, and self-willed, and wrong-headed; I've told her so a score of times. I knew that we should have trouble to keep her straight. I've said so again and again. I knew she was inclined to play us tricks, and go crooked. We've been too kind, and trustful, and indulgent; that's been our mistake. We ought to have kept a tighter hand over her. I ought to have done so, at any rate; you were always weak with her, Basil."

"I love my sister," he said, simply.

"Well; I love her too, I suppose. Yet I wish I'd been stricter with her. For I knew her failings, how likely she was to do wrong; what a temper she had; how very badly she could behave. You were always thinking how pretty she was; how merry she could be; how smartly she talked; how nice she was, when she gave her mind to it. And this is the result. I did think that all would be safe and comfortable when she engaged herself to Mr. Leveridge."

"We should have done all we could to hinder that engagement. It was a shameful

and a cruel thing. She was not fitted to be the wife of that old man."

"She was not nearly good enough for him; that's pretty clear."

"She has run away to avoid that engagement. It was hateful to her. She shrank from it with loathing. Who can be surprised? Poor Doris!"

"You have seen Mr. Leveridge?"

"I have seen him. He is almost heart-broken. But he does not blame her; he blames himself bitterly. He loves her still."

"He was always rather a weak sort of man, I think."

"She left behind her a letter for him. He showed it to me; a few lines only. She implored his pardon; entreated him to think of her as kindly as he could. But she felt that her marriage with him could not be, was absolutely impossible. The thought of it had made her miserable; she could bear it no longer; and so, she was going away, she scarce knew whither. But he was not to seek her out; he was to make no attempt to follow her. She was as one dead to him henceforward. Then she expressed in a few words her sense of his kindness to her; and that was all."

"He is angry?"

"No; his sister is beside herself with indignation. He is pained to the quick. Still, he charges himself with Doris's fault. He was mad, he says, to think of winning her love, of calling her his wife. But he is eager that we should find her out, lest she should need assistance, or be tempted to do anything rash. He reminded me, over and over again, that she was my sister; that whatever had happened, or might happen, I was not to forget that. I am not likely to forget it."

"For my part," I said, "I am heartily ashamed of having such a sister. Did he know about this Paul Riel?"

"He did not know until I told him. But Miss Leveridge had entertained suspicions for some time past, it appears. Mr. Leveridge, however, would not listen to her. He had absolute faith in Doris."

"What a fool he must now feel himself."

"He has been cruelly deceived. Yet he loved sincerely; he did right to trust where he loved."

"I'll tell you what we must do, Basil."

"What?"

"We must forthwith find out this M. Riel."

"And when we have found him?"

"We'll break every bone in his skin. That's how we'll serve him."

But Basil did not appear to think that this was the best course we could adopt. It was odd how fond he was of setting himself up in opposition to me, of preferring his own judgment to mine.

PORTRAITS WORKED IN TAPESTRY.

III. A SAINT OF THE REVOLUTION.

MADRID—the Madrid of the last century, not yet enlivened by pronunciamientos. Wide, airy Madrid, hottest of cities in summer, coldest and gustiest in winter. Impecunious Madrid, despite the possession of mines in Mexico, mines in Peru, mines everywhere—but never a spare dollar till Cabarrus, Count of Castile, &c., introduces a paper-money circulation. Successful Cabarrus rolls in his carriage—the saviour of his country—a brilliant financier, and a happy father. The beauty of his daughter is the talk of Madrid. Térézia Cabarrus is young, handsome, wonderfully educated for her time. She speaks three languages perfectly—Spanish, French, and Italian, and can construe a passage in Virgil. Grandees of Spain contend for the hand of this prodigy of sixteen, but stern Cabarrus carries her and her brothers off to Paris, to “finish their education.” The Cabarrus family arrive in Paris just at the period of philosophic simplicity, which, with its Florian fables, Trianon dairies, Voltairian witticisms, and Rousseau theories, masks a tremendous mine. Térézia is in all the splendour of Spanish youth—life leaping in her veins like vine-sap in April—a life not merely of animal spirits, but of keen, active intellectuality. Térézia sings and dances out of her own spontaneous vitality. As Alexandre de Lameth puts it, “Nature cries to her ‘Sing,’ and she sings—Nature cries to her ‘Dance,’ and she dances.” A damsel of frank, joyous, healthy temperament, a flower gaily expanding to the sun. Not a beauty of the pale, vaporous kind, given to sweet melancholy, to tender reverie, to tears, but a heart of fire in an envelope of faultlessly-modelled ivory. A lovely face, exquisitely-chiselled features, lit up by magnificent black eyes; a mouth unduly voluptuous, but for the intelligence of its upturned corners. A superb figure, tall and graceful. Raven-black hair covers the beautiful head, and curls over the luminous pallor of the low, broad brow, like a crown of youth and beauty. The sweetly-rounded chin betrays a trace of firmness, as the

Cupid’s-bow mouth reveals a capacity for other employments than eating and kissing.

She has wooers in plenty, and it is as much as Madame de Boisgeloup, her chaperon, can do to keep them at bay. There is the Prince de Listenay among others—loving and sincere, but dull, having no chance against the Marquis de Fontenay—a grave, middle-aged Adonis—gambler, and libertine to the backbone. The marquis begs the hand of Mlle. Cabarrus “without a dowry,” and his request is granted. All Paris goes to the brilliant fêtes at the Château de Fontenay.

Already before the outbreak of revolution, this beautiful woman for one instant has a glimpse of the man with whom her fate is destined to be intertwined, until she snaps her bonds. It is the mode for ladies of the first fashion to have their portraits painted by Madame Vigée Le Brun. Her studio is the haunt of high and well born critics, and particularly of the self-dubbed Count de Rivarol, a man of genius, a wicked wit, occupied just now in laughing at Mirabeau and his followers. As this doubtful count discourses of bull-fighting with Madame de Fontenay, a young man comes in quest of him—a young man from the publisher Panckoucke, with a handful of proof-sheets and a remonstrance from the long-suffering publisher. The young man is tall and well-grown, graceful, and of elegant speech and manner for a plebeian; first an attorney’s clerk, and then a printer’s reader. Rivarol is immensely amused at the inability of the printer to comprehend his whimsical paradoxes, involved in illegible writing. During the heat of their argument, another arises as to the accuracy of the likeness of Madame de Fontenay, who, apparently struck by the manner of the printer’s reader, asks his opinion. He gives it freely and frankly, with immense audacity, for the printer’s reader is Tallien—“le beau Tallien” of M. Houssaye—“foxy-faced” Tallien of Mr. Carlyle. Not beautiful, certainly, nor yet quite a fox, but a strapping youth with staring, bold features—the tremendously long nose communicating the foxy look. Tallien talks Velasquez to the French *élégants* and *élégantes*, till Madame de Fontenay asks him if he has studied under that master? Tallien will not allow Rivarol to laugh at him; he merely bows to the beautiful Spaniard, and makes his escape.

Between their first and second meeting the Bastille has been taken, and the monarchy humbled to the dust. But the Marquis de Fontenay is without prejudices, and gives a grand fête to the party in power. Mirabeau is there, with Chazafort, and Vergniaud, Barnave, Robespierre, and Camille Desmoulins. The fête is in the pastoral style. In the park the orchestras play the familiar airs of *Le Devin du Village*; young girls, robed in white, present the guests with bouquets on their arrival. M. Florian is there, the apostle of innocent games and innocent stories, and enjoys the realisation of his dreams. The worshipful company, "sea-green" Robespierre and all, dine together in the park under the chestnut trees. The day is breezy, blowing even M. de Robespierre's hair out of curl; but everyone is playing at happiness. The beautiful marchioness is christened "*Notre Dame de Fontenay*," M. de Robespierre applauding, and all goes well—a notable lying-down of the lion with the lamb.

Tallien has advanced a step in the world. He is now secretary of Alexandre de Lameth, one of the three brothers all in love with Madame de Fontenay. One day, Tallien, in search of his master, finds Mesdames de Fontenay and de Lameth together. These ladies enquire of him how it fares with a flower-girl, knocked over by a horse at *Cours-la-Reine*. Tallien only knows that she is named Manon, is very well known, and that her accident will probably make her the fashion. Madame de Lameth sends this audacious young man to out a branch of roses for Madame de Fontenay. In presenting it, he contrives to break off a rose for himself and coolly appropriates it. As soon as he is out of sight, the fair Spaniard wants to know all about him, and receives a terrible account of the young secretary—witty, idle, dissipated, good for nothing. Madame de Fontenay is thoughtful.

A few short months of the strange time which did the work of ages, and Tallien again appears on the scene as editor of the *Journal des Sans-culottes*—the printer has become a writer. Soon his paper changes its name, and becomes *L'Ami des Citoyens*. Events march swiftly; the sack of the Tuileries, in August, is followed by the massacres of September. Tallien is already a member of the Paris Commune, and for a third time is seen by Madame de Fontenay, thundering from the tribune, but neither her beauty nor his courage

will ever wash away the name of Septemberer, of the assassin of helpless prisoners. Tallien becomes a member of the Convention and distinguishes himself by his dash and vigour. The King, the Girondins, and, after them, Danton and Camille Desmoulins, have fallen, and Tallien, one of the first to cry for vengeance on the Girondins, is sent to revolutionise Bordeaux, denounced as a reactionary town. Here he again meets Madame de Fontenay, whose husband is anxious to escape from France, for times are getting hard with all but the chiefs of the Mountain, and even they are beginning to look askant at each other. Those suspected of moderation are purging their reputation in seas of blood. Republican armies, some clad in complete Carmagnole costume—"red nightcap, tricolour waistcoat, black plush short trousers, and black plush spencer, enormous moustaches, enormous sabres"—have marched southward with portable guillotines. The Fontenays are gravely compromised, and hope to reach Spain by way of Bordeaux. Here madame is told that an English ship is about to put to sea with more than three hundred passengers—royalists, reactionaries, and others of Bordeaux and the neighbourhood—but that the captain refuses to sail, unless he has three thousand francs more. She pays the money and retains the list of passengers in preference to a receipt, but soon finds this a dangerous document. The captain of the ship talks of the beautiful lady who had made good the passage-money. The mob, all-powerful, discover and surround her. She is equal to the occasion; flaunts the list in their faces, and swallows it. There is a frightful uproar in the great square of Bordeaux—the square in which dwells Tallien, that he may see the guillotine at work from his windows. Tallien, the procureur, witnesses the scene of Térésia Cabarras and the sans-culottes, and rushes to her rescue in time to save her from actual violence, but not from prison.

Now commences the drama of the *Lion in Love*. Tallien, the terrible procureur, ruling Bordeaux with the edge of the guillotine, is vanquished by the velvet eyes of a woman of twenty. Release from prison is followed swiftly by the divorce of the Marquis de Fontenay and his escape into Spain. Térésia is the bride of Tallien, busy in erasing names from the hideous lists prepared by the revolutionary tribunal. Tallien passes in his work of "sans-culottising" Bordeaux;

and Térézia delivers orations in favour of liberty and the Republic, saving meanwhile hundreds of lives. Her oratorical costume is charming; a green riding-dress with natty little cape and enormous buttons, her hair curled and powdered and surmounted by a tricolour plume: under the firm little chin is a voluminous white necktie, bordered with lace and tied in a huge bow—truly an orator very likely to persuade.

From the prison at Bordeaux, to the clubs of Bordeaux, and thence to the Convention itself, is not a long journey in April, 1794, or, as the sans-culottes have it, the month of Floréal, in the year 2 of the Republic, one and indivisible—nor is it far from thence to the prison and the guillotine. Madame Tallien is permitted to expound her doctrines, evangelical and republican, before the Convention, under the presidency of Robert Lindet. She is eloquent, above all, beautiful, and her discourse, praying that she may be allowed to visit the sick, and comfort the wretched in the prisons of the Republic, produces a strong impression on all save one steady-hearted sceptic. Sallow Robespierre, no longer sea-green but sky-blue since the fête of the Être Suprême, fully intends that she shall see the inside of a prison again, and quickly too, but in the character of a prisoner. He has long hated Tallien, but fears for once to strike openly. He strikes the young tribune through his wife; Térézia is arrested on a warrant of the Committee of Public Safety.

Notre Dame de Fontenay, otherwise, according to the Bordelais, Notre Dame de Bon Secours, is in evil case in a filthy dungeon of La Force, her brilliant life suddenly eclipsed; and Tallien is compelled to simulate a frenzy of sans-culottism to save his own life. Meanwhile he works unceasingly to countermine the schemes of his enemy, living the while in an agony of fear lest the woman he loves shall be hurried to the scaffold. Térézia is not alone in her cell. She has two companions, one the beautiful Creole, Joséphine Tascher de la Pagerie, widow of guillotined Beauharnais, fated one day, according to the black fortune-teller, to be "queen and more;" and the other the Duchess d'Aiguillon. Their dungeon is that in which the assassins of September massacred a number of priests. Two of the murderers, tired of the slaughter, had rested for a moment, and placed their sabres against the wall. The profile of

these two sabres from the hilt to the end of the blade, printed in blood on the damp plaster, form a horrible object of contemplation to the three hand some young women shut up in this hideous slaughter-house Floréal, the month in which she pronounced her oration before the Convention, has for the most part been passed in prison, she has had the months of Prairial and Messidor; and it is stifling hot in a cell in the dog-days, Thermidor, memorable month in the history of France, having just commenced.

On the fourth day Tallien finds lying on his table a poniard, the poniard of Térézia Cabarrus—an eloquent message. There is no time to lose. On the seventh of Thermidor comes a letter from the Citizeness Fontenay to the Citizen Tallier: "The chief of police has just left; he has come to announce that to-morrow I shall be brought to the tribunal; that is to say, to the scaffold. This bears little resemblance to my dream of last night—Robespierre was no more, and the prisons were opened; but, thanks to your astounding cowardice, there will soon be nobody in France capable of realising it." Térézia is recommended to be calm, but calmness is hardly possible under the circumstances. She knows that her turn has come, for on the seventh the gaoler had told her that it was unnecessary for her to make her bed as it would soon be wanted for another.

Robespierre has miscalculated the power of his opponents. The three proconsuls Tallien, Barras, and Fréron, accustomed to command, refuse to obey. Barras, a soldier, looks scornfully down on talkers; Fréron is furious for revenge; Tallien frantic with anxiety and despair. They are all ready to strike, but destiny and Térézia Cabarrus have placed the weapon in the hand of Tallien. On the eighth of the month of Thermidor, Robespierre determines to face his enemies in the Convention, and pronounces a long-winded oration on the old theme, death to traitors and the rest of it. For the first time shouts of dissent arise, and the dictator retires abashed. He consoles himself in the evening in the Jacobin club, but is too clear-headed not to see that, in spite of the applause of the Jacobins, his reign is at an end. He weeps, the sky-blue or sea-green incorruptible, and cries to the painter David, "It is time to drink the hemlock." David throws himself in his arms, exclaiming, "I will drink it with thee"—meaning to vanish from Paris before the next morning.

At last the famous morning dawns; the Convention is met, and as Robespierre failed the day before, St. Just, with his cherub face, essays once more to chant the hymn of the guillotine. Then Tallien springs to the front, and, waving the naked dagger of Térésia, denounces Robespierre, and the Reign of Terror is at an end. The fallen dictator strives to speak, but his tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth as they shout, "The blood of Danton chokes him." All is over. Sans-culottism is dead. The guillotine itself vanishes before the poniard of a pretty woman.

Not very dull during the Reign of Terror—for dancing and junketing went on apace even then—Paris breaks out in grand display of joy now that the incubus of revolutionary virtue has been removed. Notre Dame de Fontenay of old Paris, Notre Dame de Bon Secours of Bordeaux, has become Notre Dame de Thermidor. Paris is delighted to owe its emancipation from the gloomy virtues and the guillotine to the wit and force of character of the charming Térésia, who becomes the Grecian goddess of fashion—oddest but most beautiful incarnation of Notre Dame of anywhere. Public balls there are in abundance, but of the sans-culotte order, and it behoves Citizen Tallien and Citizeness Beauharnais to organise something better than Carmagnole caperings. The Bal Richelieu is started and receives the odd name of the Bal des Victimes. The mode is set by Madame Tallien and many who, like her, have cut their hair short while in prison, as if anticipating the "last toilette" at the hands of the executioner. The coiffure à la victime becomes the rage, and suits Madame Tallien's delicate style of beauty to perfection. She receives in the most graceful style at the Thatched House, as it is called, at Chaillot; but there is no dancing, nothing but dining, supping, and deep play. The powder has disappeared from the jet-black hair of Térésia, whose diaphanous robe is modelled on the tunic of a Grecian statue. The dress is fastened at the waist and at the shoulders with antique cameos. Golden serpents, enamelled with black and emerald-headed, enhance the beauty of arms without any sign of gloves. The partners of these classically-attired victims are arrayed as no human being was ever before. Robespierre's sky-blue and his enormous bouquet are replaced by inconceivable garments of gray or drab, with swallow-tails of extraordinary shape;

yellow buckskins, tied at the knee by a mass of ribbons à la "sixteen-stringed Jack," top-boots pushed down very low at the back, a cravat made of some three or four yards of muslin, a broad-brimmed hat, and an enormous walking-stick loaded with a pound of lead at least. Of all the guys of the period perhaps the strangest are the sublime directors themselves, in costumes of marvellous richness and vulgarity.

All these gay and giddy Parisians crowd the salon of Madame Tallien at the little Thatched House—hidden by a row of poplars and a clump of lilacs. The citizeness reigns a queen, but the citizen is not made of the stuff of kings. He is a revolutionist to the tips of his fingers, he loves the revolution for itself, but has no real political sagacity. Had he made a bold bid for power at the height of his popularity, when he returned victorious from Quiberon to celebrate the first anniversary of the Ninth of Thermidor, he might have succeeded in living down clamour, and would certainly have retained the affection of his ambitious wife. But his position is now difficult—the old Terrorists scotched, but not killed, await their opportunity, and while the mob cry "Vive Tallien," his colleagues, the chiefs of the reactionary party, look coldly upon their bold and brilliant instrument. They cannot forget that he is one of the men of the massacre. As the blood of Danton choked Robespierre, so does the blood of September stain the hands of Tallien for ever. Even his wife, who had seen him but twice before these dreadful days, is assailed by ribald shouts of "Notre Dame de Septembre"—as if the blood he had shed had splashed over her.

A strange union this marriage, brought about by love and fear, celebrated at the foot of the guillotine, dissolved by wealth and unsatisfied ambition. A curious mixture of passion and politics, of jealousy and vanity, of fashion and fanaticism. Bitter quarrels, then coldness, then fury and reintegration amoris, till jealous quarrels again make the Thatched House couple a by no means dull Darby and Joan. The citizeness-queen—still unforgiving his want of ambition at the right moment—leaves Tallien to fight it out with Terrorists and Reactionaries, and goes abroad—the delight of giddy Paris—carrying with her everywhere an atmosphere of gaiety and good-nature. She revives the good old merry traditions, spreads a carpet

over the traces of the guillotine. Entering the ball-room with her beautiful prison friend, the widow Beauharnais, and Madame Récamier, all stepping lightly on golden sandals, and dressed in the severest of Greek styles—Madame Tallien leads the shawl-dance immortalised by Madame de Staël. The citizeness is all-powerful.

In this brilliant fold of the Cabarrus tapestry are sundry strong threads, strong enough ultimately to rend the flimsy Directory to tatters. Citizen Bonaparte disports himself in the salon of Madame Tallien, who takes his part when Albitti and Saliceti suspend him. He admires the beautiful citizeness exceedingly, pretends one evening to be a fortune-teller, and tells General Hoche, to the great fury of that brilliant soldier, that he will die in his bed. Here Bonaparte meets his good genius—Josephine—and makes love to her, but not till he has failed to impress Madame Tallien, who, liking the bronze artilleryman well enough as a friend, can hardly see in him the future ruler. Bonaparte is only one among the many distinguished men who burn incense before the new goddess of resuscitated France. Barras, Chénier, Fréron, Garat, Chérubini, Méhul, Vernet, and Duplessis Bertaux all haunt the salon of Madame Tallien.

Meanwhile Tallien's popularity wanes. The men of September, the relics of the Mountain, are pointed at. Accusations—some vague, others precise—are levelled at "foxy" Tallien, who, in his present case, shows far less ability than Barras and Fréron. He harps on an old string. Paris and France have had enough of republican orations, and have learned to disbelieve in Tallien "Bell the Cat." Thibaudéan attacks him unsuccessfully; yet he is daily losing ground, his friend Barras fighting for his own hand. This General Barras, count, &c., of the old stock, by degrees fills the place of Tallien; the star of the tribune is eclipsed by that of the soldier. A very minor star as yet, Bonaparte awaits, at the hands of Madame Tallien, the command of the Thirteenth Vendémiaire, and the "whiff of grape-shot" which concludes the state of transition.

From the Thatched House Térézia passes on to a superb hotel in the Rue de la Victoire; thence to one still more magnificent in the Rue de Babylone; but where is Tallien? He has lost everything, fortune and power, because he has lost his wife. This woman, having once tasted power,

cannot resign it. She reigns still in her salon, while Tallien is in Egypt with Bonaparte's troupe of savants. Why look farther for Tallien, and watch for the gray-haired man, half-blind and prematurely old, who, too proud to accept succour from the wife who has divorced him, crawls on to the quays to sell, bit by bit, his library, till a pension of a hundred louis from the mercy of Louis the Eighteenth kills him? The west of madame's life is far brighter. She marries the Count de Caraman, a Belgian nobleman, soon to become the Prince de Chimay, and bears him many children. In the last fold of the tapestry we see her, in the year 1824, at the Château de Chimay, a lady of the period of the Restoration. How changed from Notre Dame de Thermidor! Her beauty, or what is left of it, is lost in leg-of-mutton sleeves; her classic head is disfigured by a pyramidal coiffure. The woman, too, is grown to the proportions of a Rubens. Alas, for the classic grace of the Directory! there is nothing left of it but the cameos on her shoulders. She is happy, adored by her husband and her family, playing the parts of Mdlle. Mars in her own private theatre. She is well received everywhere but at court, which is closed to her, not as Princess de Chimay, but as Madame Tallien, as Notre Dame de Septembre. Nothing can efface the stain of her union with the celebrated revolutionary. She has done all that is possible to conjure away the image of her early love. His children—his own children—she has had privately christened in her own maiden name; but no sooner is the end of her life-web come, than these very children hasten to unravel the false west which dubs them Cabarrus. By special appeal to the French courts, they obtain permission to resume the name of their father; one more proof that human nature, or, at least, French nature, loves a name written large in history, even if the page be blotted with tears and smeared with blood.

SOME THEATRICAL AUDIENCES.

WHY should the function of the play-house critic be confined exclusively to the players? Why should the Aristarchus of the stalls for ever project his eagle glance behind the footlights? Why should he take heed only of the mimic life enacted upon the stage, while humanity itself as it exists behind and around him,

affording a definite standard by which the imitation may be judged, is all unnoticed in his oracular verdicts? There should be a critic for the public, as well as for the players. The behaviour of the audience, the degree of intelligence exhibited in their demeanour, and the interest they take in the performance, is quite as susceptible of judicial analysis as the deportment of the actors and actresses. There is as much matter for attentive consideration in the composition of the spectators, as in the cast of a play; there is as much of edification to be derived from studying their manners and character, as from the critical contemplation of eminent tragedians and accomplished artists in comedy-drama.

Theatrical audiences, moreover, have their idiosyncrasies, just as much as theatrical companies. The purely society, or orthodox fashionable audience; the fast fashionable audience; the domestic audience; the respectable audience; the mixed audience; the working-class audience; these are only some of the varieties which may be enumerated. The last-mentioned, the working-class audience, is itself capable of sundry subdivisions—the transpontine, the extreme East-end, the flash, the decorous, the criminal, the honest, the drunken, the sober. Only a few of these can be glanced at now, but few though these may be, they will be sufficient, if taken in connection with an article that appeared more than a quarter of a century ago in the weekly journal from which *ALL THE YEAR ROUND* sprang,* to give some idea of the width and fruitfulness of this new field of dramatic criticism.

The purely society audience is not to be confounded with that chiefly characterised by the ubiquitous presence of amateur critics, of the tooth-pick school. The ultra-fashionable differ wholly from the fast fashionable houses. The tooth-pick critics come late, and enter somewhat noisily; when society goes to the play, it comports itself with frigid tranquillity, and in consideration of the hour at which the performance is fixed—eight P.M.—takes its seat with astounding punctuality. Society affects social comedies, sparkling with what it likes to speak of and consider epigrams, but what are in reality quaint and smart verbal antitheses and contrasts; the fast fashionable audience tolerates the drama pure and simple, but never really

enjoys itself, save when burlesque is on the boards.

If the society audience is to be observed in its perfection, it is to Tottenham-street or Sloane-square that one should go. At the Thespian temple reared in either locality, the wants and wishes of society are considered and supplied with the tenderest solicitude, and society is good enough in return to be pretty constant in its patronage, and to be seated as soon as, or very shortly after, the curtain rises. The degree of attention with which the performance is watched varies. Society is not demonstrative; it seldom applauds; it frequently accompanies the dialogue of the drama with a monotonous undertone of well-bred chatter, the general effect of which is rather that of a low and barely audible murmur, than of articulate sounds. Society is not moved to laughter or to pity. It occasionally smiles at the sparkling repartees which are so much in fashion; it seldom fails to smile when the situation placed before it on the stage is intended by the dramatist to appeal with exceptional strength to its tenderer sentiments. At times, a look of puzzled surprise at the weaker feelings of humanity, as depicted by actors or actresses, plays over society's countenance. But, for the most part, its face is as passionless and undecipherable as the Sphinx. Altogether it is not an audience which inspires, save so far as a consciousness of its selectness can inspire, the actor; neither on the other hand does it discourage or disturb.

The audience in which the tooth-pick element is largely represented cares but little for comedy-dramas, and is insatiable of extravaganza and burlesque. As a concession to public usage, the burlesque of the evening is generally preceded by something in the form of a play—comic, farcical, melodramatic, or tragic. But it is not till nine or ten that the patrons, for whom the management chiefly caters, appear upon the spot. Whether they occupy private boxes or stalls, they are readily distinguishable. The amplitude of shirt-front and wristband, the strident tones, the echoing laugh, proclaim at once the tooth-pick critic. Some of these gentlemen are up from Aldershot bent on a metropolitan holiday; others are scions of, or it may be are, themselves, hereditary legislators; others again are baronets, guardsmen, and their hangers-on; others—and these perhaps constitute the majority—are gentlemen whose days

* HOUSEHOLD WORDS, No. 34, November 1, 1851, "Down Whitechapel Way."

are given to commercial pursuits in the City, and whose evenings are devoted to enjoyment at the West-end. Their devotion to the drama, so far as it goes, is beyond suspicion; and if once an extravaganza or burlesque has won their favour, it is surprising how long that favour lasts. Their manners have not that reserve which signalise the purely society audience. They are demonstrative, and even turbulent. Their critical comments in the stalls, which are mostly of a strikingly personal nature, are made in a tone so loud that the actors and actresses can overhear. But whatever their demerits they are staunch and liberal cultivators of the dramatic art, and without their support the assistance of society alone would be insufficient for the material prosperity of the stage.

The audience which patronises the theatrical *matinée* presents various features, which are distinctively and peculiarly its own. It combines many of the attributes of what would be loosely styled Bohemianism with those of most orthodox respectability. It is conspicuous for the blending of the professional and theatrical element with the decorous suburban—for the meeting of the ladies and gentlemen of “the profession” and the denizens of Clapham, Sydenham, Hampstead, Highgate, as well as of quarters considerably more remote, upon common ground. Be the occasion one of those benefits which have been witnessed on a remarkable scale in the course of the last two or three months, or the afternoon performance of a farce which is for a while the talk of the town, or the appearance of some Gallic *histrion* of note, you shall observe unmistakable specimens of these and other classes of playgoers congregated in the auditorium. The lady to whom you sit next in the stalls is the most finished and artistic of living actresses in comedy-drama; on your right, with dishevelled locks and keenly-piercing eyes, is an eminent tragedian; just before you a highly promising *jeune premier*, the scion of a famous house, who “would be an actor;” just behind you the protagonist in a drama of domestic life, who from the unparalleled success achieved by the play seems likely to figure in the same rôle incessantly to the end of his natural days. There, too, are the invalids of both sexes, who love the stage, but to whom the night air is the deadliest of foes; those also, who inform you that they should patronise the drama more frequently than they do were

not the hours of the performance such that they interfere with the consumption of their dinner or their night’s rest; those again, already mentioned, who live outside the metropolitan radius, but who have objections to the dissipation and the late hours involved in theatre trains; those, lastly, who inform you that they never go to theatres on principle, but they occasionally make an exception in favour of afternoon performances. This final class is a numerous one, and is almost coextensive with that which sees no harm in the “entertainment” but a great deal of harm in the play. An expedition to the Theatrical shrine by gaslight is an abomination to be eschewed; but though when the portals of the theatre be once passed gas is still the illuminating medium employed, the theatrical visit has an innocence which it could not possess if undertaken at the hour when Melrose should be viewed aright. Thus it is that the theatrical audience which affects the *matinée* is a motley composition of parsons and players, severely devout spinsters, superior men, and strong-minded women, lovers of pleasure and lovers of tranquillity, the strong and the feeble, the London lounge and the country cousin.

As for the spectacle which the regulation theatrical audience presents in the older houses on ordinary nights, it would be as impossible to detail any novel feature as to discover some theory hitherto unbroached, of the madness of Hamlet, or some excellences, as yet ignored, in the poetry of Pope. What they were in the days of the Rejected Addresses, that they are now, due allowance being made for difference in costume and the advance of social civilisation generally. Perhaps we have become more genteel than we were; perhaps theatrical audiences generally are less demonstrative and impressionable. It may be that the British public devotes itself with less abandonment, less surrender of its whole moral and intellectual being, to the entertainment provided on the stage. But that the popularity of the theatre has not diminished, we know from the records of managers and comparison of figures. Theatres are more numerous; theatrical audiences more representative, not only because the population has grown, but because with the growth of population there has been developed a new taste for theatrical entertainment, while the prejudices and scruples have been swept away.

Modern taste is curiously compounded of

a liking for extremes and opposites. It is elaborate, and it is plain. It finds pleasure in the most complex of forms, as of costumes; and yet is delighted with what, at least, wears the appearance of simplicity. Are not broad beans and bacon a fashionable dish at great dinner-parties? Is it not only two years ago that the melodies produced by musical-glasses—slightly disguised in character—were the rage in society? Do not full-grown men and women puzzle themselves with the riddles, and revel in the pastime erewhile confined to the nursery and school-room? A penchant for the juvenile is in vogue with modern society. Surely this was never displayed more conspicuously than in the favour with which a stage-performance of children, already noticed in this Journal, was received during the past winter months. The theatre-goer who makes it his duty to meditate on the sights of the auditorium, as well as the spectacles on the stage, never could have enjoyed a more fertile field for his observation than the Royal Adelphi, when the Children's Pantomime was in course of representation. There were children by scores amongst the audience; but there were grown-up people as well, and, strange to say, it was the latter—the papas and mammas—who seemed to relish the thing the most heartily. As for the boys and girls, they gazed, indeed, intently upon what they beheld. The Lilliputian actors and actresses were to them as fairy children; it was difficult for the youngest of the audience, as they looked at the members of the juvenile company, to realise that little Goody Twoshoes and Boy Blue were made of the same mortal clay as themselves. Others, again, there were, or, let us use the present tense, and—fancying the whole scene before us—say are, who have just arrived at that age which affects superiority to whatever is purely childish. To laugh at the doings of the urchin-artists is beneath them; and so they sit as still as they can, while some may assume an approach to contemptuous condescension, leaving all the laughter to their elders, who, to speak the truth, discharge the task heartily. But it is not mere unreflecting amusement which, to judge from the expression on the rows of faces, possesses the adult audience. There are looks which tell of anxious, almost maternal, interest in the doings of the wee players. There is the young mother, with her chicks about her, who, as she

directs her gaze towards the stage, seems to be looking wistfully into a more distant perspective. Is there not something of sadness visible in those soft, clear brown eyes? Is it an inevitable maternal impulse, or only an odd speculative instinct, which makes her ponder for a moment on what the dim, concealed future may have in store for those children on the stage; and, while she thus questions herself, press more closely the wondering little one at her side? Contrast with such a sympathetic critic as this those gentlemen and ladies of the audience who look on with an air of unconcerned surprise. "Curious little mortals; they really do it very well," is a phrase that drops from the lips of these. Others, again, regard the whole thing with eyes of puzzled interest; and others—they are the oldest of all there—are, to judge from their faces, the amused recipients of a new sensation. Young men, too, there are, and young girls, recently "come out," in the audience, whose countenances, whether eloquent of supercilious patronage or tender solicitude, are not less a book wherein we may read instructive things.

The scene is changed, and we have transported ourselves to a different quarter of the town. It is only a few nights ago that we took a cab from St. James's, and were conveyed to the transpontine Surrey. It was an enthusiastic, nay, a noisy audience which crowded Mr. Holland's theatre from floor to roof; but it was well-behaved, most cordial, and sincere, if most vehement in the applause which it showered on its favourites. There was nothing specially instructive about it unless, indeed, it be its countenance of delight. There were visible social gradations in the audience. The two rows of stalls—the rest of the area was occupied by the pit—were filled by the élite of the vicinity of Kennington and a few pilgrims from the West End; the boxes were occupied, for the most part, by the magnates of local trade, and by young gentlemen who had evidently formed a party for the evening. It is somewhat late in the year to speak about pantomimes; but the Surrey pantomime, it may be said, in passing, was exceptionally good; and, as the audience was more than commonly demonstrative in its expression of good-will and encouragement, so did the actors, from the opening to the final scene, fling themselves with a heartiness into the fun of the parts which they were creating, that might have done the jaded critic of society real

good. But to-night we have gone much farther afield than the Surrey Theatre. Is our cabman one of the exclusive Jehus who decline to ply east of Temple-bar? It is certain that he has deposited us at our destination only after much circuitous wandering, many enquiries as to direct routes, some doubt on our parts as to whether the goal proposed was practicable. How very few of those who live West know anything of that world which we have traversed in our drive due East—have any idea of the better and more attractive aspects of the most unfashionable quarter of London! True, we have threaded some stifling thoroughfares, where flaming gas-jets have lit up bulks on which malodorous fish are exposed for sale, and whose surface is covered with decaying vegetables and unsightly morsels; have seen many signs of misery and vice; much filth; much squalor; much of dirt, and rags, and drunkenness. But we have emerged from all this now. We find ourselves being whirled through broad streets, in which are bright, cleanly shops, full of cleanly, sober people, flanked by houses, unpicturesque, it may be, but substantial and healthy. The whole place is airy and light; there is much bustling about on the part of neatly-clad women, and children, and men; for it is Saturday night, and the week's shopping is in progress.

But a hundred yards farther to go—so one of the numerous guides whom we have been compelled to consult informs us—and we shall be there. Where is "there?" "Britannia, the Great Theatre, Hoxton," where there is to be seen "an entirely new, magnificent, comic Christmas Pantomime," by name "Turlututu;" and at the Britannia—sharply turning a corner and coming on a frontage brilliantly illuminated with gas—we arrive accordingly. There are few hangers-on about the door. A gentleman attached to the establishment, who is lounging on the steps with a colossal cigar in his mouth, informs us that there is not standing room in the house. But we have already engaged a box, and to it we are led by the most civil of attendants through long passages, their floors unlined by matting, and their brick walls covered only with paint. There is no effort at decoration, and for sanitary reasons it is as well that such should be the case. It is a peculiar smell that which assails the nostrils—a component odour, whose chief ingredients seem to be the perfume of disinfecting fluids and the

fragrance of very coarse tobacco smoke. But what does the outside atmosphere matter? It is the inside sight which we have come to see, and that sight is not behind the footlights, but before it, consists not of the actors, but the audience. Imagine a vast semicircular structure, more capacious in appearance—though the result may be due to the absence of all trappings and other ornaments—than Drury-lane, packed with between five and six thousand men and women; not a vacant space on which the eye can rest, above, below, around; heads and bodies rising tier upon tier, till in the distance they dwindle to indistinct specks of humanity. Gallery, upper boxes, dress circle, pit—these comprise the divisions of the huge edifice; the box in which we are being the only one used this evening, at least, as private. The stage-boxes opposite are occupied by some dozen spectators, each paying two shillings a head, the price of admission to other parts of the house varies from one shilling to threepence. Next to the enormous multitude collected, the great feature which strikes us is the character and the demeanour of the crowd. The great proportion are working-men and women, clad in their working clothes; a few are mechanics and artisans, in broad cloth and dark tweed. As for the women, they are all neatly, but none showily attired. There is a fair sprinkling of children in arms. Some thirty per cent. of the entire audience are probably boys between the ages of twelve and sixteen. It is not a polished assemblage; the faces are for the most part grimy, and the hair unkempt, but the patient attention and tranquillity of the huge concourse are quite admirable. Nuts are cracked, Brobdingnagian sandwiches, as thick as bricks, and of much the same hue, are consumed, foaming pots of porter are quaffed. It is no polite show of light refreshments which is witnessed, but good, solid eating, and earnest drinking. Yet these do not prevent the audience from diligently noting all that is said and done on the stage. Nothing could be more orderly, nothing could be more decent. As for the entertainment itself, it is in character quite unexceptionable. There is no expression nor allusion, in dialogue or song, which can raise a blush; no phrase or sentiment which can shock the most susceptibly loyal of subjects. Surely, a mighty instrument for the harmless amusement of five thousand of the poor of London, in the heart of

such a district as Hoxton, at an average of ninepence a head; such as the Britannia Theatre, is a boon for which the moralist and philanthropist may well be grateful.

WELSH.

Do our readers remember Shakespeare's Welsh—the Welsh woof we mean, that Shakespeare makes his Welshmen weave into their English speech?

"Trib! trib!" it stands, in the mouth of Sir Hugh Evans, calling, in fair Windsor-marek, his "taber" in his hand, to his fair fellow-fairies. "Be pold! do as I pid! Jome, trib! trib!"

Before that piece of pastime, the same good priest's fery feherent and prief worts ure of his prains, his plesing, his pody; us goot 'ork to pinse and peat and knog; if a pad 'oman, a petter, a pest; of the evil with his tam; the monies in the orld; and, of course, of sesse and putter. Approaching more classical ground, there s the same faithful representation of nature: Hibocrates, says Sir Hugh; Pabylon, focative, fidelicit; hig, hag, hog; hung, hang, hog; and so on. Turn, also, to the valiant Captain Fluellen. Over in France there, in the midst of his brave and falorous poyes, he prings them across the pridge up to the preaches; he cannot bear prawls and pragging, but it is pest they shall voutsafe their athversary a plow that shall make him pithe the ground, and leave him pashful, plind, and proken in his plood. Fluellen peseeches, too; talks of plessed, pread, plue, and Alexander the Pig, and cries out, from his right warm heart: "I can tell you there is goot men corn in Mowmouth!"

All this shows Shakespeare's incisive study. D in Welsh is not d, it is nearly t; b in Welsh is seldom b, it grows as hard as a p; c is not c, it is always hard, and sometimes is almost g; s is not s, it is sh; f is not f, but becomes v. It is the double f (ff), in Welsh, that gives the sound of the English f; it is the double d (dd) that gives the smooth th in the English loathe, seethe, bathes. Welsh vowels, too, are continental. An a is ah; an e is eh; an i is e; ei, together, make i, as do ae and ai (defining broadly); y is like the u in fur, or the u in buck and luck, with another sound of it, like the i in pin; w is oo; and in these there is scarcely the smallest particle of alteration. The vowel u, in Welsh, is a deep ea, as in each, or ee, as in beech; the characteristic double l (ll) has no representative else-

where, being certainly not cl, as sometimes put, and certainly not fl, as Shakespeare was obliged to have recourse to, when he wrote Fluellen for Llewellyn, in default of something that should imitate it exactly. Now, this is a very short philological notification; after it, let the Welsh themselves be its illustrators and expositors.

Ffid ddi gŷs, they say; ddi ffwl mwn; e grŷn fild; e sofft bŷl; e ffein de. When they say this, they are putting pure English phrases phonetically, in a Self Instructor, published for the behoof of young Welshmen beginning to pronounce the unknown language of Old England. Let these apparently incomprehensible phrases be sounded fairly, vowel for vowel, consonant for consonant, according to the short philological key just given, and they will yield themselves to speech and sense easily. Ffid ddi gŷs, is feed the geese; ddi ffwl mwn, is the full moon; e grŷn fild, is a green field; e sofft bŷl, is a soft ball; e ffein de, is a fine day. For, if dd in Welsh is th (just to analyse one phrase), and if i is e, is not ddi the same as the? And, if ff is f, and i is still e, is not ffd the same as feed? Also, if g is hard, and i as ever, retains its privilege of being e, is not gŷs the same as geese? Let some more examples, too, be added to these: On ddi lefft, continues the Self Instructor, ddi syn sheus; e swit bebi; e darc rwm; e pis of bred. Spoken, these, by Welsh lips, with the appeal the letters make to Welsh eyes, they come out: On the left; the sun shines; a sweet baby; a dark room; a piece of bread. The test shall be applied, this time, on the words syn and rwm. The vowel y has the sound of u in fur and buck, the vowel w is oo (y and w being always vowels in Welsh, not sometimes, capriciously, as they are in English), consequently, a-y-u must be sun, and r-w-m must be room. Blyd is phonetic (to a Welshman) for blood; tytah is phonetic for touch; ynfis is unfit; pleasant weddyr is pleasant weather; hyrt is hurt—as in a full phrase, ei hyrt mei ffwt, I hurt my foot. To show the w, there can be given owi for cool; gw d for good; mwn (as above) for moon; dw as wi dw, for do as we do; trei tw dw it, for try to do it. Then the combination, in English, of wh, is rendered phonetically in the Self Instructor by the inversion hw; whereby it stands hoo, at once, and commands instant recognition for the superior way it allows for the aspirate, if for nothing more. Hw sed so, is written to show the Welsh how to pronounce the

English, who said so. By the same rule, hwn represents, effectively and intelligibly, whom; hws represents whose; hwot, what; hwen, when; hwitah, which, and hweih, white. As a fact, hw begins a great many of the real Welsh words themselves. When it does, it is to be sounded hoo always, with never any change. Hwn is one of these Welsh words meaning this; yr hwn being who, and whom, and whose, all three in common. Hwnnw is another word meaning that; and hwy, hwynt, and hwythwy, are more, meaning, the whole of them, they and them. There is, also, hwch, a sow; hwydrwm, slowness, also dilatoriness, tardiness, slowly, dilatorily, and tardily, and so on, all variations of it; there is hwyr, evening; hwyl, a sail, with hwyl-bren, a mast, literally, the sail-tree, according to the descriptive mode of all early languages; and there are hwt and hwian, to hiss and to hoot, wherein the ancestry of the English word is clearly to be found.

A little must be said, also, of the letter w, alone, in real Welsh words, under the proper pronunciation of oo. Gwccw is a good example of it. It is the pure Welsh for cuckoo; and with each w of it sounded oo, making it gooooo, it will be seen how the English is the same, allowing for the little fining and polishing brought about by time. Then there is dwndwr, pure Welsh for noise, for hubbub, for blaster. With oo substituted for each w here, the word is doonder, and it has English thander lurking in it quite near enough for conviction. Cwpan, again, is pure Welsh for cup; mwsg for musk; wbw for hue and cry; trwmbel for a waggon or wain; gwn for gown; crwm and crwca for crump (crook-backed, crooked); pwll for pool; cwpl for couple; bwch for buck; bwl for bowl; cwm, as a last example, well known as it is, for combe. With these called coopan, moosc, oob-oob, troembel, fool, goon, and so forth, the genealogy of each English equivalent is written for itself; and if there may be one or two cases, like musk, where there is direct evidence of importation from abroad, the continental pronunciation is to be heard in the word almost in its integrity, and there is interest in that fact alone. Moreover, where a bowl remains a bool, a gown a goon, a cup a coop, and the like, in that may lie the reason why provincial English people still sound them broadly like it; and if this be really so, as the insight deepens the interest grows.

But it is an incontestable fact that the numbers of words in the English language of to-day, left in it as a legacy from the language spoken in England two thousand years ago, is tantalisingly small. The search may be wide, the search may be deep, what is found leaves the pursuer with sadly little for his pains. Remembering that the Welsh u is sounded a full e, and noting that the Welsh word for juice and gravy is sudd, heard as seethe, relationship may be claimed that far, distant though it may be, since juices are not much extracted from materials till they do seethe, as English people mean it. Remembering also, that though keith is the sound (or nearly), of one of the Welsh words for a room, the Welsh letters required to produce keith and with which keith is spelt, are c-e-l-l, then a common origin, proving a cell to be a room, and a room to be a cell, dating from very primitive times, may be detected there. Then a road is a ffordd (suggesting bad ground enough, and weary people getting heavily across it); a piece is a darn; a hand is a llaw (claw); a maw is a crop; flax is llin (linen); a flirt is a hoeden; an hour is an awr; a passing-bell is a cnull (knell, with the u sounding e); scarlet is ysgarlad; copper is copr; iron is haiara; keenness is crafder; a yew is ywen and yw (with yew-trees plentiful in soft glades lying amidst the Welsh mountains); rye is rhyg; the lees of anything, or, as it is sometimes called, the lye, is llys (ooze being llys also); velvet is melfed; fur is mynfyr (miniver); whisper is husting (hist, with the u made e); a Druid is a Derw (an oak, in unmistakable connection, a derw as well); an emolument or beneficial transfer is a budd (bede, for a bedesman surely, since u must again be e); a riband is ysnoden (snood, with a smodde, in old English records, a smooth roll of silk or thread); and, just as far as these few words, and those that have preceded, go, there are the traces in them, distinct enough, of fruit coming from one ancient family tree. A small supplement, too, can be added. There is ty, the Welsh for house, tai the plural of it. It is studded all over North Wales (in solid gray stone), where a fine-sized residence may be called Great House, Ty Mawr, where one lower down may be called Lower House, Ty Isaf, where one showing white may be called White House, Ty Gwyn, where one showing red may be called Red House, Ty Coch, and others. The house by the moor, the house by the

church, the house by the river, old house, new house, Ty—anything, in short, descriptive of a fact, as the genius of the people led them. Well, the little bond between this and the English, is proved by a wooden-house, coed-ty, the English cotty, cottage, and cot, and by pigs-ty, the building for the pigs. Besides, there is ynys, an island, isle, or islet; any solid ground rising out of the lowland, and being habitable, there, out of the marsh, and swamp, and quag. Its pronunciation is, of course, ununs, shortened into nus; and it is met with everywhere in the picturesque Principality, where farms (although the land has long ago been drained all round them) are still called Great Island (Ynys Fawr), Green Island (Glas Ynys), Black Island (Ynys Ddu), White Island (Ynys Wen). Again, the link that this forms with the English is strong enough, since in its familiar form of nus, it is the ancestor of ness, and coming out as Dungeness, Shoeburyness, Sheerness, &c., all places of the marshy character; and since it is identical, as Ynys, with every Ennis and Innis (every one of them islands), found in Ireland and elsewhere. Attention might be called, too, to all spots or places with names beginning ros or rose (from rhos, a moor or heath); beginning lin or lyn (from llyn, a lake); beginning car or gar (from caer, a fortress; the c-of caer being turned, by grammatical law, under defined circumstances, to g and ngh, witness Welsh Caernarfon appearing also Gaernarfon and Nghaernarfon). Attention might be called to names like Dover (Doover or Douvres, from glan y dwfr, the waterside), and to many more; but this is ground with which philologists have made every one familiar, and on which there is no intention and no need to stand again. Above all, they make no difference to the general proposition; which is, that when every one of these words has been counted up and dwelt upon, they make an insignificant number, and leave the Welsh and English people talking their own language to one another, each incomprehensible.

"Speak it in Welsh!" cried Hotspur, in fine insolence, to Owen Glendower, when Shakespeare made the two meet, proud front to proud front, on Welsh ground, at Bangor.

"I think there is no man speaks better Welsh!" was rung out by Hotspur's defiant lips again; meaning, both times, that Welsh was far too outlandish and savage for the comprehension of a North-

umbrian, with Northumbrian civilisation. Then he thought "the devil understands Welsh;" and instead of lying still to hear a lady sing in Welsh, as Lady Percy bade him, he called out, audaciously: "I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish!" And it is very much this spirit, it must be confessed, that makes every English person of to-day a Hotspur, in this one matter. It would be prettier if they would say with Edmund Mortimer:

Love, thy tongue

Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn'd,
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower.

and

I will never be a truant, love,
Till I have learned thy language.

and

This is the deadly spite that angers me,
My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh.

For they would find if they would only, as Gower counselled Pistol, "let a Welsh correction teach them a good English condition," that there are a few things existing in the ancient tongue of the Cymry affording much poetry and interest. In the first place, the very tune of the language—that one never-varying sing-song, into which every Welsh preacher breaks when he warms to his subject—must be the living echo of the adoration of the Druids, descended, without the slightest change. It is the first note of a scale, the second, and the minor third; and it goes up, and falls, goes up, and falls, a perfect chant there, set in the midst of speaking, used by every singer the same, unconsciously apparently, as if from the mere habit of tradition. The tone of prayer, too, before this chant is reached, is quite the poetry of self-abasement. "O! Arglwydd!" a rough Welsh quarryman will exclaim, low on his knees, struggling for the inspiration that shall carry the hearts of some thirty or forty fellow-worshippers with him. Arglwydd is the Welsh for Lord, pronounced Ar-gloo-uth; and the Welshman will repeat it, "O! Ar-gloo-uth! O! Ar-gloo-uth!" in the posture of an Oriental, and with all the fervour. In the Church Service, the words "Lord, have mercy upon us," sound O Ar-gloo-uth, trig ar hah oor toom! (standing "O Arglwydd, trugarha wrthym!") and they come with an effect singularly fine. It is no less striking to hear the shorter of the Ten Commandments: Thou shalt not kill, Na ladd; Thou shalt not steal, Na ladratta; emphasis being in the very shortness, like a sword's swift cut. If the English eye, too, rests upon some scriptural terms, it will be reminded of a nearer Orientalism, Greece.

The Corinthians are called the Corinthiad, the Ephesians, the Ephesiad, Christian is Cristion, cherub is cerub (the c hard), purple is porphor, diamond is adamant, a jot is iot, Job is Siob, with other well-known biblical names, Ioseph, Ioan, Iago, Pedr. George and Charles, too (without mentioning scores of others), become Siors and Iarllles; the genius of the Welsh language having made no provision for the soft sound of ch and j or g. Other examples of this are given in Siapan for Japan; in siasmin for jasmine; in siaced for jacket; in siercyn for jerkin. A poetic descriptiveness, in the Welsh, is pleasantly observable, likewise. This arises from fewness of words, from the necessity to present new things in familiar clothing; but from the poverty and restraint of this, there comes an imagery that more than pays for it. A monody, to give a few examples, becomes a grief-song, galar-gân; a bigot becomes a man with a hot head, dyn pen boeth; a dean is a head of the choir, pen y cor (every Welshman being a dean, with dyn the spelling for man, and dean the pronunciation); a sponge is the wool of the sea, gwlan y mor; a valve is a dor; there is but one word, triagl, in use both for balm and for treacle; there is but one word, pel, in use for ball and orb (with pell-mell to be discovered in it?); there is but one word, corn, for both a horn and a funnel, showing the original suggestion for that implement; there is but one word, deiliad, for a tenant and a subject; there is but one word, also, Tewdwr (which must be Tudor) for both the proper name Theodore, and for fat. The names of the days of the week mark the time at which the Welsh received them, and show how they have kept them (nearly like the French; for instance) without any overrunning from the English: Dydd-Llun, they run, Lundi; Dydd-Mawrth, Mardi; Dydd-Mercher, Mercredi; Dydd-Ian, Jendi; Dydd-Gwener, Vendredi; Dydd-Sadurn, Samedi; Dydd-Sul, Dimanche. The names of the month can be best shown in the little rhyme:

Ionawr dechreu flwyddyn a hwnw i ddofi yr ych,
Chwefrol, Mawrth, ag Ebrill, i ddal y brithell brych;
Mai, Mehefin, Gorffennaf, gyd ag Aust,
Medi, Hydref, Lachwad, Rhagfyn, gig ar draws;

in which it will be seen that March is identical with Tuesday (as it is in French, Mars, Mardi, confining the index to that language only), and of which it can be said that it is real inland Welsh—a piece of genuine "lore." A free translation of it is:

January begins the year, and makes your bullocks tame,
February, the second month, remaineth near the same;
March and April following, you catch the spotted trout,
When May and June pass on, and let July and August out;
September and October, now yoke your harvest team,
November and December, hang meat upon your beam.

But this sketch has no intention of going anywhere beyond outline, and there must be no lingering unduly on any one part of it. Its aim has been to show that, with patience to give the proper Welsh sounds to Welsh letters, Welsh words will have some music and some meaning in them. Hitherto, an English tourist, going through—let it be said—Germany and passing many a hein and bach, has been a little bit ashamed if he could not pronounce the hein and bach properly. It is wanted now to show that, if he will put those same rules to Welsh words, he will be able to pronounce Welsh, properly, as well. Hitherto, also, a Welshman, mixing the pronoun she with the pronoun he, has raised a laugh. It is wanted now to show that a Welshman, having Welsh knowledge in him, could not call she anything else, since the Welsh for she is hi. There can be no better lesson for teaching this than the one gained, although it is by inversion, from the Self Instructor. It was put here for the first, and it shall be put again for the last: E leit neit, it says, for a light night; e teidi gerl, for a tidy girl; ei lost mei shw, for I lost my shoe; e new côm, for a new comb; ddi coc crôs, for the cock crows; hier is e bi, for here is a bee. A long sentence, too, rans, O gif thancs yntw ddi Lord; còl ypon his nôm; mêt nôn his dids amyng ddi pípl: the English spelling of which is, O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the people. And when the mystery of the vowels and consonants in this has been mastered, there surely will have been a mastering of something.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER LII. FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

THAT one story is always good until we have heard the other side, is a fact known even to country justices; but by those who are acquainted with legal matters, a shrewd guess can be generally made as to

how a case will "go," even from a partial hearing.

And amongst the men of law then assembled at Pullham, there was very little doubt indeed, on the conclusion of that first day's assize, as to how it would fare with Henry Cecil Landon. "He is a gone 'coon," was the remark made by the leader of the circuit behind his hand to Mr. Pawson, as that gentleman sat down; and Mr. Pawson nodded an "I believe you."

Mr. Redburn, although at that very moment occupied with his "Very good, my lord," had observed the nod of his learned brother, and knew very well what it meant. A little contemptuous smile played upon his lips, as much as to say: "The nut might be hard for you to crack; but for me it will be 'no more difficult than for a blackbird 'tis to whistle';" but to those who knew him best this show of confidence went for nothing.

"My client is safe, I reckon," whispered Mr. Vance, stopping his leading counsel on his way to the robing-room.

"Unless something quite unforeseen should occur," said the other, decisively; "all is over but shouting."

This intelligence, wrapped up, however, in less sportive phraseology, Mr. Vance thought it only kind to convey to Ella, who had at once retired from the court to the inn, where (not without difficulty at that busy time) the colonel had secured apartments for herself and Gracie. When the attorney called, the ladies were not in their sitting-room, but presently Gracie entered, and stopped his apologies for calling at so late an hour by the news that Ella had been upon the point of sending for him. "She desires to have a few words in private with you, Mr. Vance."

"I have half an hour at her service," replied the attorney, pulling out his watch, and calculating his leisure with a margin (for he had arrived at a time of life when man can neither hasten nor adjourn his dinner with impunity). "The day's work of a lawyer is never over in assize time, my dear young lady."

"Mrs. Landon will be here immediately;" and indeed, while Gracie was yet speaking, Ella entered the room, looking very grave and pale. The attorney noticed, for the first time, that she had been weeping; no wonder, he thought, that she had broken down at last. It was necessary, however, to keep up her courage for the marrow.

"Let me congratulate you, my dear Mrs. Landon, upon your admirable bearing," said he, "throughout the ordeal of to-day."

Ella smiled faintly, and sat down, giving a sign to Gracie that she should leave the room.

"No doubt you feel exhausted. It will be a satisfaction to you, however, to learn that you have not spent your strength in vain. Mr. Pawson has just assured me that, humanly speaking, the case is over; that your name and fame will be established beyond question, and—and the guilty punished."

"It is certain then that the prisoner will be convicted?"

"Undoubtedly."

"And his sentence?"

"That will depend upon the discretion of the judge; it is a bad case; a very heartless and cruel case; not less than seven years' penal servitude I should say; perhaps ten."

There was a long pause, and then Ella asked: "How is it, Mr. Vance, that you are so much more certain of this result to-day than you were yesterday?"

"We felt confident yesterday, my dear madam; but the main fact on which the prosecution rests has now been proved, namely, that Mr. Landon was at the time of your marriage ignorant of your having adopted a—well, a *nom de cour*—a pseudonym. If he had known it, it would have been a conspiracy to deceive the public, and the marriage would have been invalid. Mr. Redburn's efforts will probably be devoted to-morrow to shake your testimony upon that point; to establish, that is, a previous knowledge on your husband's part. We know that the fact is on our side; but I would impress upon you to be very careful in your replies; the least admission in the hands of a man like Redburn might be used with fatal effect."

"The prisoner might escape, you think?"

"Certainly; and if he did, your reputation would be compromised—nay, sacrificed. If Mr. Landon has not committed bigamy, you were never his lawful wife; there is no alternative; it is a *duel à outrance*, and as they used to say when such were fought, 'May God defend the right.' We ask no more of Him." And the attorney, mindful of his dinner, rose to go.

"You have been very good and kind to me, Mr. Vance, throughout this painful

business," said Ella, as she took his hand. "You have done everything in my cause, I believe, that man can do."

"I hope so, madam; but we will talk of that to-morrow, when we have reaped the fruits of it."

"You once mentioned the name of the attorney upon the other side; Mr. Everett, I believe?"

"Yes, a country lawyer, but one who must have his wits about him to have secured Mr. Redburn for his counsel. He is lodging at the 'White Lion,' with his cloud of witnesses, and I understand—by-the-bye, where is our friend the colonel?"

"He is dining below in the coffee-room, as Gracie and I have not much appetite for anything beyond tea and toast."

"Ay, ay, but you must keep up, my dear madam; you will need support to-morrow, I assure you."

"That is true," said Ella, gravely. "Good-bye, Mr. Vance."

"Good evening, my dear madam, good evening;" and the lawyer wondered to himself, as he went home, why Mrs. Landon had been so eager about the points of law (in which she had hitherto evinced no interest), and why she had sent Miss Ray away, as though her intention had been some private matter. But women were so fond of a mystery, that they would affect one even when there was none at all.

At the "White Lion," not a hundred yards from Ella's inn, and on the same side of the street, Mr. Everett, as we have heard, was lodging, and under the same roof were also Mrs. Darall (her son had, under the circumstances, deemed it right to remain at home, though he knew Gracie would be at Pullham), Helen, and the Rev. Samuel Welby. Helen had sent a message to the attorney immediately after the court rose, and he at once repaired to the sitting-room common to herself and the little party from Graatham, whom he found all assembled there. Gloom sat upon them, except the vicar, who, being a witness, had not been in court, and therefore was unaware of the general feeling produced there by the opening speech of Mr. Pawson, and by the examination of Ella.

"Come, Mr. Everett, we want you to cheer us up a bit," said he, gaily. "These good people think, because they have heard what one side has to say, they have heard all;" and he looked with tender reproach at Helen, who was very grave and pale.

"Well, I hope our side will have something to say to-morrow, sir," answered the lawyer, nodding his head in what he meant to be a significant and encouraging manner, but which somehow fell short of his intention; he seemed to be rather "hanging his head."

"There are some very unpleasant things said, I understand," observed the vicar; "but then again, as I was telling Miss Helen, the man was paid to say very unpleasant things."

"No doubt, sir; and I am bound to say he earned his money. Hard words, however, break no bones. What we have to hope for—and the vicar has to pray for" (Mr. Everett was very much "at his ease in Zion")—"is that the lady may break down under cross-examination."

"So far as I could gather from what was said to-day," observed Mrs. Darall, "I understand the case will turn upon Mr. Landon's knowledge of the deception before or after marriage."

"Oh! then I can settle that," exclaimed the vicar, cheerfully, "if at least the accused's own words can be taken as evidence, for he told me himself, that when he married he had no doubt that the ceremony was legal, and that he never heard of his wife having passed under a false name, till——"

Here he stopped, for over Helen's face, on which his eyes were fixed, a deadly pallor was creeping, which grew and grew until he was compelled to associate it with his own words. He looked up enquiringly at the lawyer, who burst out into a forced laugh.

"Never volunteer information, my dear Mr. Vicar," said he, "even to your own side. Your counsel knows, or ought to know, what is best for you to say, and especially what is best for you not to say. And as for the other side, it is fortunately highly improbable that they will think of asking one what Mr. Landon has stated to you about his first marriage."

"It is true, however," observed Helen, gravely; "he has told me himself just what he told Mr. Welby."

"Yes; but you are not a witness in the case at all, Miss Mytton," remarked the lawyer.

"This is very horrible," sighed Mr. Welby, who had become aware that his little piece of knowledge was a great deal worse than useless, and that if he told all he knew it might even decide the case against the prisoner; "it is absolutely

shocking to think that, even if the verdict is in favour of this unhappy man——”

“Then don't think,” interrupted the attorney, sharply. “No one has a right to think, or at least to express an opinion, upon this matter, except the twelve gentlemen whom you will see to-morrow in the box.”

“Mr. Everett,” said Helen suddenly, and with great earnestness, “I do not wish to ask you any questions that may be contrary to custom or legal etiquette, but I beg of you to tell me this much: I am quite sure that the confidence with which you spoke of this sad case this morning has been somewhat shaken; I desire to hear from your own mouth, do you now think it possible—nay probable—that Mr. Landon may be found guilty?”

“My dear madam, the law is a game of surprises; there is really no telling, nor even guessing——”

“I understand,” interrupted Helen, gravely; “you need say no more. I shall start to-night for Grantham to prepare my poor sister for the worst.”

A sudden silence then fell upon them all—a silence that indeed gave consent. It was the opinion of everyone in the room that things were going very ill, and that Rose should at least be given to understand that there was danger.

The attorney was the first to speak.

“I by no means wish to dissuade you from so prudent a course, madam; but it is my maxim always to have counsel's opinion, where it is possible, before taking any important steps. Half an hour can make no difference one way or another, and I will just sound Mr. Redburn.—What is it, my good man?”

This to the waiter who had entered the room, and was addressing the attorney in a low voice.

“A widow lady, you say? Oh, very good. No doubt about that ejection case at Swallingford, confound her. Well, I'll pack her off in five minutes, and then see Mr. Redburn.”

Whereupon the attorney bustled off.

In spite of his quick ways and cheerful talk, everyone present was cognisant that the attorney had lost confidence in the result of the trial. Poor Mrs. Darall, who scarcely knew which side to pray for, but whom an overmastering curiosity had induced to offer to chaperon Helen to the assize, was having a good cry behind her spectacles. As for Helen, the apprehensions she had all along entertained regarding the matter were now more than

confirmed. She was already thinking of the consequences that must needs flow from her brother-in-law's conviction—that is, when he should have been proved to be no brother-in-law; and they appalled her. For all her fears, she had hitherto ventured to hope that so pure and innocent a creature as her sister would be preserved from such unlooked-for sorrows, and such undreamt-of shame, as must fall to her lot if Landon's first marriage were held valid. The vicar, who was still in that first stage of matters, when “the worst” seems too dreadful a thing to happen, and moved by the wretchedness of her face, strove to give her a crumb of comfort.

“I cannot—I will not believe, dear Miss Helen,” whispered he, gravely, “that Heaven will permit your sweet blameless sister to be wronged.”

“That is just what the friends of this man's first wife are saying, Mr. Welby,” was the unexpected rejoinder, given in those quiet tones beneath which bitterness lies so deep. “One of the two must be wronged. Why should it not be Rose?”

“Nay, the cases are surely not parallel. There was no deception on Rose's part.”

“Or, rather say, she deceived herself, poor darling, instead of him,” returned Helen, sadly. “No, Mr. Welby, the true deceiver has been her husband. Every word that woman spoke in court to-day was true, and next to Rose it is she whom I pity most. Nay, when this verdict shall have been given, next to the woman who has lost name and fame by it, I shall pity her who has won the cause.”

“You were always just, Helen,” answered the vicar, gravely, “no matter at what sacrifice. But the difference between those two of whom you speak, when this case shall have been decided, is greater than can be described in words; if you are sorry for the one, your compassion for the other should be deep indeed.”

“I know it, Mr. Welby; and it is deep—nay, infinite; for my heart misgives me that she who will have to bear the heavier burden is the weaker, and will perish beneath the load.”

To this the vicar made no reply—indeed it would have been cruelty to speak on the matter with Helen further—but went out and bespoke the vehicle that was to take her and Mrs. Darall back to Grantham, so soon as Mr. Everett should have come back. They had no expectation of his having anything encouraging to communicate to them, but it might be

that in Mr. Redburn's judgment, in which they had great confidence, the return of the two ladies would be premature.

CHAPTER LIII. ELLA GOES OVER TO THE ENEMY.

AN attorney-at-law, though a most important personage in the eyes of "the higher branch of the profession," is, as everybody knows, in the lower, and can be approached by the general public directly, with caution indeed (if they are wise), but without any breach of etiquette. Barristers—for a reason that I will merely venture to hint is best known to themselves—are approachable by clients only through this "middleman" with all the consequences (and more) that generally result from the employment of third persons. So, although it was undoubtedly a liberty of any client, even a widow lady, to intrude upon Mr. Everett's privacy at the "White Lion" on a matter of business, it was not an outrage, as it would have been if she had called upon her counsel. Still, the ejection case was a small thing; the widow was a bore, and Mr. Everett thought himself justified in resenting her intrusion.

"My dear madam," he began, so soon as he caught sight of the lady in black, in his dim parlour, where only one gas-jet was alight, "I am sorry to say I have only a few moments to give you, as I have an appointment with Mr. Redburn."

"It is with Mr. Redburn that I wish to speak," was the unexpected reply, given in a voice that was familiar to his ear indeed, but was not that of the widow. "Since you are going to him, I will go with you."

"Good heavens! am I speaking to—
Mrs. Landon?"

It was the essence of his case, of course, that Ella was *not* Mrs. Landon; but standing there as she did, so stately, and so still, and above all, with that look of distress and pain on her noble face, he could not refuse her the title. Moreover, her presence was so astounding, that he was put off his guard, and had no time to pick and choose words that should be "without prejudice."

"That is my name, sir; I wish to see Mr. Redburn at once upon a matter of the deepest importance."

"But, my dear madam, if, as I conclude, your visit has reference to the trial now pending, this is most irregular—you should have sent Mr. Vance to me—though even then, you must surely be aware

that the case is not one in which any compromise—"

"I wish to see Mr. Redburn," interrupted Ella, firmly (for she indeed it was); "if it is impossible for you to introduce me, let me know where he lodges, that I may introduce myself."

"Can I not tell him for you—it is the usual course—anything you may have to say—"

"No, I must see him myself, and at once; every moment is precious. Where is he?"

By this time the attorney had recovered himself, and his natural sagacity suggested to him that this lady's clandestine visit to the enemy's camp must needs bode good, and not evil, to his client's cause. Compromise, he had truly said, was out of the question, but without doubt it still lay in the power of Mrs. Landon Number One to give a very different complexion to the case, with the assistance of the opposing counsel, than that it had hitherto worn. Perhaps her heart had relented towards her former husband in his extremity, and sought to mitigate his punishment; or it might be that, womanlike, now she had done him all the mischief possible, she wished some private message of forgiveness to be conveyed to him, before he was snatched away from the eyes of men; her purpose, at all events, he was persuaded was not hostile, and so far there could be no objection, save in the way of etiquette, to granting her request.

Upon the whole, and considering the difference of their natures, it was creditable to the attorney's intelligence that he had taken a view of Ella's conduct so approximate to the truth. She had come down to Pullham with the fixed intention of pushing matters against the prisoner to the uttermost. She had flattered herself that her righteous wrath with him would have been as persistent as it was vehement—that her newborn hate was complete enough to cast out all love. She had no consciousness of weakness in this respect, until she had actually appeared in court, when she found herself unequal to look at Cecil face to face. Up to that moment she had actually gloated upon the idea of seeing him stand in the felons'-dock, the object of public contumely and of her own withering scorn. Even in his presence she had steeled her heart against him, and certainly showed no softness in her replies to her counsel. But as the feelings of the vast audience became wrought up in her favour, and

every word she uttered—each a stab in Cecil's breast—found welcome with them, her determination began to waver, and "the woman" to assert herself within her. After all, this man was hers, and, like the mother in the judgment of Solomon, she felt that rather than let her beloved one die she could almost leave him to another's arms.

When that crucial question came, to which she answered "No, most certainly he did not," she felt her reply had sealed his doom; she too had caught the significant glances of the Bar, and that look of the judge that had frozen Cecil's marrow; and, moved by an involuntary impulse, she had turned and looked at him.

Great Heaven, was it possible that that white despairing face, with its cast-down eyes, was the same she had known but two short years ago, so beautiful and bright! The contrast smote her to the core. For an instant—such as that, so fleeting but so limitless, in which it is said the drowning behold their Past—she pictured to herself the lover of her youth, and, bitterest thought of all, confessed how she had compelled his love. How she had laid plans, not snares indeed, but deliberate projects, to win him, without which perchance he would never have been hers. "He shall be mine," she had said, and she had made good her words; and now that she had lost him, she was pressing him step by step over the precipice of ruin, as though he had vowed himself to her of his own free will. She had had at times the audacity to speculate in her wild way upon the right of Omnipotence itself to doom to future punishment the creatures it has made, and placed in the world on trial without their own will or cognisance; and yet she was now about to doom this man to a hell on earth (for no less would be the common goal to such as he), because he had broken the fealty which he had not sought, but which had been imposed upon him. That she felt no humiliation, for the moment at least, at this confession of her secret soul, was proof indeed of her remorse. How much of pity, nay, how much of love itself, may have mingled with it, I know not, nor did she herself know; but the resolve that overmastered all within her, and which never afterwards wavered, was made at once. She would strike that fallen man no more. She had said that his blood would be upon his own head, but that was false;

it would be upon her hands, and it should never stain them.

The prisoner should go free.

"If you really wish to see Mr. Redburn upon my client's business, madam," said the attorney, "I will take you to him."

Ella bowed in acquiescence, and Mr. Everett took up his hat at once, and they went out together.

It is, or was, considered derogatory to the dignity of barristers-at-law to dwell at inns during assize time, and Mr. Redburn had lodgings in the High Street. He had dined alone, and sparsely as his custom was, and was already at work upon an intricate case which was to be tried in the civil court, perhaps upon the morrow, if the great bigamy trial should be disposed of at a sufficiently early hour; but, in Ella's view, the papers that crowded his table had reference only to that matter. He was doubtless seeking, and seeking in vain, for some loopholes of escape for her unhappy husband.

He had risen, of course, on her entrance, and had shown no little astonishment when the attorney had introduced her to him by name; but he had at once recovered himself, and assumed his usual somewhat formal manner.

"Pray be seated, madam," said he, offering her a chair; and then waited for her to speak, still with his pen in hand.

"You are surprised, sir, doubtless, by a visit at such an untimely hour, and, above all, from me. But I have a matter to communicate to you which is of the utmost importance to one of whose interests you are the guardian."

Mr. Redburn bowed, and smiled a deprecating smile, as though, if it had not been rude to contradict a lady, he would have assured her that nothing was less surprising.

"The matter, too," continued Ella, with a glance at the attorney, "is of a strictly private nature."

"Be so good as to step into this room, Mr. Everett," said Mr. Redburn, opening a door that communicated with a small apartment occupied in the daytime by his clerk.

With the slight protest of a very perceptible shrug of his shoulders, the attorney obeyed. It was collusion no doubt, and quite unprecedented collusion, but Mr. Redburn was a great man, and ought to know best.

"Now, madam, what is your business?"

If she expected to find this gentleman conciliatory and submissive, as behoved a

man conscious of a weak cause, and in expectation of defeat, she was mistaken.

"I am come here, Mr. Redburn, on behalf of your client—my husband—Cecil Landon."

"I conclude then at his own request?"

"Not at all. I have not seen him, save in court, nor have I had any communication with him whatever."

Mr. Redburn bowed again.

"I suppose I may take it for granted, sir, that unless something quite unforeseen should be interposed in his favour, this man will be convicted, and that the law will take its course?"

"The law, madam, will, let us hope, be vindicated," answered Mr. Redburn, nursing his knee, and speaking very gently; "but as to which direction it may incline, that is a matter for the jury to decide to-morrow."

"You do not understand me, sir. I am come here to gain no advantage over my unhappy husband; but, on the contrary, to give him what help I can. You may say that I have hitherto shown myself to be his adversary; and that is true. It is now my wish to undo the harm that I have done him, so far as in me lies. The point, as I have been informed, on which the case will turn is the foreknowledge of the prisoner as to the deception I practised on him at our marriage."

"That is an important point, madam, no doubt," assented the lawyer.

"If I furnished you with a positive proof of that foreknowledge, could you secure Cecil Landon's acquittal?"

The lawyer scanned her with great intendment before he answered.

"Such a proof as you mention, madam, would, no doubt, in conjunction with other evidence that we have to offer, strengthen his position very considerably."

"Great Heaven!" cried she, clasping her hands, "strengthen it! Then you could not be sure of saving him even were you possessed of such a proof?"

"That is not at all what I meant to convey, madam; I would have rather suggested that my client's case is independent of such aid, though it would doubtless be of great assistance."

Ella drew forth a folded paper from a reticule she carried on her arm, and handed it to the lawyer.

"Be so good as to read that," said she.

It was the statement she had written out at Woolwich concerning her quarrel with her father, and which, but for her uncle's persuasion, she would, as we have

seen, have placed in Cecil's hands before their marriage. Though very clearly written, it was of considerable length, and the lawyer read it twice over before making any remark upon its contents.

"This seems to be a sort of explanation, madam," said he at last, with an indifferent air, "of your family reasons for adopting an assumed name, and shows them to have been much the same as we have heard them stated to-day in court."

"It is more than an explanation, sir; it is a confession, written down for my husband's eyes on the eve of our marriage."

"The date corresponds, I see," said the lawyer thoughtfully.

"I wrote it at that time, and for the purpose mentioned, sir. It is yours, to make use of it as you think best—I mean best for my husband."

There was a long pause, during which the lawyer sat, striking his smooth-shaven chin, and deep in thought.

"Do I understand," said he at last, "that you are not prepared to swear, Mrs. Landon, that your husband did not see this document the day before your marriage?"

"Yes," cried she, eagerly, "that is it. I will not swear that he did not read it on that very morning."

"You wish me to put that question to you in court to-morrow?"

"I do."

"Are you aware of the social consequences that must needs happen to yourself in case of my client's acquittal?" said Mr. Redburn, after a short pause.

"I am. I know that henceforth I shall have to bear disgrace as well as desertion; that I shall be the scorn of my own sex and the jest of yours."

"Except with those who know you," answered the lawyer, gently. "One man at least there will be, who will esteem you as the noblest of women and the most forgiving of wives."

She shook her head forlornly, as one beyond the touch of praise or censure.

"I thank you, sir," said she sadly. Then in a firmer voice: "You may depend upon me to-morrow, Mr. Redburn. I came to you first, not to put repentance out of my power, for my resolve is fixed, but to avoid useless persuasion. I suppose, however, Mr. Pawson ought to know?"

"If it were a case in which you had only to say, 'I withdraw from the prosecution,'" returned Mr. Redburn, musing, "I should say, tell him, by all means." In his secret heart he thought his opponent

ought to be told, but he could not easily relinquish the satisfaction of springing this mine upon the unsuspecting foe, and blowing him into the air in the very moment of his fancied triumph. "Your counsel may combat your resolution, you see, my dear madam, and even refuse to be bound by it. Then, in spite of all your good intentions, he may give us a great deal of trouble."

"Nothing he can say will alter my purpose, Mr. Redburn. This is my own affair, and no one else's."

"Yours is a noble sacrifice," said Mr. Redburn, slowly.

"I don't know as to 'noble,' sir, but it is greater than you think."

"How so, madam?"

"Because if I had gained my cause it would have killed me; and now, alas! I must needs live on." She rose to go, but, as if with a sudden thought (though it had been in her mind for weeks and months) she put this question: "You have seen, I conclude, this lady who is now—Mr. Landon's wife; what is she like?"

"I have never seen her, madam; but Mr. Everett, who has done so, tells me she is very beautiful. Though the cause, of course, of your terrible calamity, she is the innocent cause."

But Ella, with a movement of impatience, had dropped her veil, and was already moving towards the door. She stopped, however, to take the lawyer's extended hand, with a few words of thanks.

"Nay, madam, it is we who should thank you," said he. "As you have decided to inform your counsel of this matter, had it not better be done through his attorney—by Mr. Everett—in the usual way, and so spare you the pain of further discussion?"

"No, I think not. I know Mr. Pawson well, and will tell him myself." And with that she went out alone.

"I wish she had been my client, instead of the other," was Mr. Redburn's reflection, as he stood with the confession still in his hand. "This is her social death-warrant, poor soul, written and signed by her own hand. What a noble creature, to have been mated with such a cur! She has got rid of him it is true, but what has he not cost her?"

Here there was a gentle knock at the door opening into the clerk's chamber.

"Oh, come in, Mr. Everett, or rather,

I should say, come out." So Mr. Everett came out accordingly, and looked about him with a puzzled air.

"The lady is gone," said Mr. Redburn, smiling. "It seems she was afraid to trust herself to your escort. However, you must bear no malice. She has struck her colours, and our client is safe."

"The deuce he is," exclaimed the attorney. "Then the old proverb ought to be altered, The man that is born to be hanged will never be—sentenced to penal servitude. This will be good news indeed for our friends at the White Lion."

"Yes; you had better tell them at once, and save Miss Helen another wretched night."

"But I don't know what to tell them," exclaimed the attorney, excitedly; "you have not told me how it has all happened."

"To be sure; I had forgotten that. Well, then, you can't reveal it to them, you see; which will save you the embarrassment arising from their curiosity. Just say from me, that the case appears clearer than ever, and that we have no reasonable doubt of to-morrow's verdict. I wish I was as sure about this trespass matter, which will take me half the night."

And the next moment the great counsel had plunged into his quagmire of dates and facts, and was, for all practical purposes, out of hearing.

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

On the conclusion of "What He Cost Her," early in June, will be commenced

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ENTITLED

"STRANGE WATERS."

Arrangements have also been made for the commencement, in October, of

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK III. THE STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER IV. OF DORIS.

On the following day I saw Basil again. He had news to tell me; he had received a letter from Doris. She should have written to me, of course, as the eldest of the family. But Doris had a sort of talent for doing otherwise than she ought to have done.

She told Basil that she wrote to him to allay the anxiety she was sure he would feel on her account. There was no word of my anxiety, although, towards the close of her letter, she condescended to remember me so far as to send me her love. She begged that she might be spared all reproaches and expostulations; she had been driven by circumstances to the step she had taken. There had been no help for it; she could not marry Mr. Leveridge. The idea of such a thing had become, day by day, more and more odious to her. She could no longer remain under Miss Leveridge's roof. She had fled, therefore, with M. Paul Riel, whom she loved, and who loved her. She was content to entrust herself and her happiness to his keeping. She had become his wife. She signed herself, "Doris Riel."

The letter was written from Dover. A postscript supplied further information. She had been married at a church in Soho. She did not know the name of it; but it was an ugly stone church, with a clock almost at the top of the steeple. She hoped to be in London again very shortly; she

would write again soon. She was very happy. Paul was kindness itself.

Then came a second postscript. She implored Basil not to judge her harshly; nor to withhold from her his love and his sympathy. She had need of these, now, more than ever. And he was to try and like her husband, and to make friends with him. At all events, if Basil was disposed to think severely of her conduct, he was to hold his judgment in suspense until they met. What she had done she would do again, supposing it were given her to decide anew, or she were again placed in the position from which she had escaped. But she relied upon Basil's finding, in his brotherly affection for her, excuse for conduct which she readily admitted might seem to him rash, almost to madness. At the same time, he was not to suppose, for one moment, that she regretted what she had done; she did not—she could not regret it. She did not write to him because she was penitent; she was not penitent in the least.

She added that the weather was lovely at Dover; as if we cared to know that!

I need hardly say that my disgust at finding I had a Frenchman for a brother-in-law was very great. I was extremely angry with Doris, and heartily ashamed of her. But I had to reconsider my intention of thrashing Paul Riel. That he richly deserved a thrashing I was convinced. Still, I felt that, as a general rule, people usually refrained from punishing in that way the husbands of their sisters.

"Do you believe her story, Basil?" I enquired.

"Believe it? Of course I believe it. Doris would not lie."

"I'm not so sure. Doris is capable of almost anything, it seems to me. She may wish to screen that wretched Frenchman from our just displeasure."

"I do wish she'd make haste back to London. I long to see her. Poor Doris!"

"That's just like you, Basil. You're inclined now to be sentimental about Doris and her French husband."

"She appeals to my affection and sympathy. How can I resist that?"

"And you'd receive her with open arms, and treat her kindly, and tenderly, for all the world as though she were a most exemplary character, and had never done anything that was in the slightest degree incorrect?"

"It is not for me to judge her, or to punish her, whatever she may have done."

"Think how badly she's behaved to Mr. Leveridge."

"I'm very sorry for Mr. Leveridge. He has been very badly treated, no doubt. Still, he has himself to blame in some measure."

"I don't see that."

"At any rate, Doris is my sister. I can't forget that."

"She's my sister too; but that's no reason why I shouldn't express my opinion of what I must call her disgraceful behaviour. I think we ought to show her the cold shoulder for some time to come. As to the future, we should be guided entirely by her own conduct. If she is properly penitent and submissive, I should, perhaps, be disposed to take a lenient view of her case. But I don't think I can persuade myself to show any kind of civility to her husband. The wretched French interloper! How dare he sneak into our family in this way? I really lose patience when I think of it."

"You may be sure that Doris will resent any want of attention shown to her husband."

"Then she may resent it. But, so far as I am concerned, she'll find it's no use her giving herself airs. A pretty thing indeed! If she needs must get married, why could not she do it properly and regularly, with the members of her family present, and with a nice comfortable breakfast for us all to sit down to after the ceremony? There's a way of doing these things; and a woman can't be too particular as to what's due to social custom and appearances. At whatever inconveniences to myself, I would have made a point of getting a holiday from old Baker, and attending at church to give her away. But, instead of

that, she sneaks away at daybreak in a cab with her Frenchman, and gets married on the sly in this unknown church in Soho. It seems to me scarcely decent. Who was present, I wonder, to see them married? And I suppose afterwards they went to have breakfast at one of those dirty French coffee-houses in the neighbourhood—I can't conceive anything more degrading and disgusting—with crowds of unshaven foreigners in soiled shirts, and a lot of disreputable billiard-markers and domino-players, puffing tobacco smoke over them! What could Doris have been thinking about? Where could she have acquired such low tastes? The fact is, she was spoiled by her long stay at Bath. She lost the benefit of the good example set to her at home; she got out of the way of wholesome discipline and control. And this is the consequence! She's disgraced the Doubleday family; that's what she's done, disgraced the family."

As I was determined to satisfy myself on the subject of her marriage, I sought out the church in Soho; I found it without much difficulty, and forthwith I inspected the registry of marriages. She had spoken the truth. A marriage had been duly solemnised between Doris Doubleday, spinster, and Paul Riel, bachelor. One of the witnesses signed himself, "Alcide Gontran Bouchardon," a Frenchman no doubt; some wretched refugee probably. The other witness was "Mary Ann Cobb," whose signature was a miserable scrawl. She was, as I learnt, one of the pew-openers of the church. To what depths had Doris fallen!

There was no mistake about it, then. Doris was really the wife of a Frenchman. And if any children were to be born of her marriage they would be half French. My nieces and nephews half French! To think of my being the uncle of mongrels of that sort!

It was odd that I could not induce Basil to share my indignation on that head. "Why mongrels?" he asked. It was enough for him that they would be Doris's children. And he suggested that it was rather premature to discuss such a subject. There he was right, perhaps.

He had seen Mr. Leveridge again. He was much depressed, but quite calm. He had spoken of certain things Doris had left behind her in Powis-place—dresses, clothes, her desk, and dressing-case, &c. He was anxious that these should be sent to her as soon as could be. She might be

in want of them; and they were strictly her own. Mr. Leveridge owned that he could not write to her himself, he had not the heart. But he bade Basil write to her very kindly and tenderly, and to assure her that, notwithstanding all that had happened, he remained still her faithful old friend; that he was sorry that any act of his had pained her, or constrained her to the course she had so hurriedly adopted. That if he could ever help her she was to depend upon him still; and she was to think gently and generously of him, as he in his turn should always think of her. The poor old dotard! He meant well, no doubt; but he was really too absurd.

Miss Leveridge called Basil aside. She was white with passion, and she shook all over. She told him in very plain terms, that if Doris's things were not all sent for, or sent away very shortly, they should be sold "to defray expenses," or bundled into the street to take their chance. She declined to keep any article whatever that belonged to Doris, or that could remind her in the slightest degree of so infamous a creature. Miss Leveridge was very much excited, and had, perhaps, lost her head a little. But I quite understood her hatred of Doris.

I was rather anxious to know how far Catalina had been affected by the disgrace that had fallen upon our family.

"You have heard of Doris's marriage?" I said.

"Yes; I have heard of it. And I do so hope that she may be happy."

"You do not blame her?"

"Why should I blame her? She burst her bonds—it was a misfortune that she was ever bound by them. I am sure that she did it for the best. It was not quite right, perhaps—and yet there is justification in the result. There is always a victim, a sufferer in such cases, and poor Mr. Leveridge richly merits our sincerest commiseration. But one's true sympathy goes with Doris and her husband. I say again, I do so hope she may be happy."

"But this M. Riel—you know him, of course?"

"Yes, I know him."

"He's a Frenchman."

"He's a Frenchman," she repeated, laughing. "But, you know, he can't help that. We can't all be English. I am only half English, remember. And yet, I am not really sorry about it. Indeed, I am rather proud of my Spanish father. But you have heard me say so before."

She seemed rather inclined, I thought, to be flippant on this subject.

"And you think," I said, "that Doris can possibly be happy with this M. Riel?"

"Well," she said more gravely, and after a moment's hesitation, "may we not hope so? There may be certain trials and troubles before them, as before others. But trials and troubles are the conditions attendant upon life. Why should not Doris and her husband be happy together? I will hope they may be so, at any rate; yes, and I will pray so too. And surely this is better than her marriage with Mr. Leveridge. That was dreadful to think of."

I did not agree with her; but I did not care to question her opinion. I was struck by what she said in favour, as I gathered, of a marriage of affection. If I were married to Catalina, I thought to myself, that would be a union of pure affection. Certainly no commercial considerations urged me to the project.

I had never seen Catalina look more beautiful than she looked just then.

"Catalina," I said, "one marriage is often a sort of harbinger of another; at least I think I've heard as much. I should like you to understand that my sentiments in regard to you are just what they always have been."

She looked at me suspiciously.

"Now, Nick," she began, in a warning way. I interrupted her.

"I told you that I should give you three chances. I've given you two—and you did not avail yourself of them. All the same I mean to be as good as my word."

"Please don't," she cried.

"I won't enter fully into the subject, because I made you understand all about it on a former occasion. But I'll proceed to business at once. Now listen, Catalina; and don't make any mistake. What I have to say is this: Will you marry me?—and understand, this is for the third and last time of asking. Will you marry me, Catalina?"

"No, Nick, I will not."

And she here put herself quite into a passion.

"I told you so before, and I tell you so again. I won't marry you—I won't marry you—I won't marry you! I answer you three times, as you asked me three times. And if you were to ask me the same question three hundred million times, I should still give you the same answer. Now, never let me hear another word upon the subject. Whatever you do, don't dare to

“speak to me again in this way. If you do—I shall hate and despise you. Do I speak plainly enough? Do you understand me? I shall hate and despise you.”

So saying, she walked quickly out of the room, banging the door after her.

I was surprised, I admit, and considerably annoyed. I had not been prepared for so unfavourable a reception. And I did not know that Catalina had such poor command over her temper. I was much disappointed in her.

I decided, of course, that I would not renew my suit. Indeed, I perceived that my love for her had undergone grave abatement. I was of opinion, moreover, that she had shown herself to be unworthy of my love. I felt that she was not fitted to be my wife.

I began to ask myself which of the three Miss Bakers it was—Emmy, or Alice, or Eliza—that I preferred.

Alice was the nicest-looking—but I was disposed to think that Eliza admired me more than the others did. That fact I counted to be very much in Eliza's favour.

EARLY WORKERS.

AT PAPER-BAGS.

SOME forty Early Workers (boys), in an Industrial Home, assembled under one roof, are able to make together in a week as many as sixty thousand paper-bags of various sorts and sizes. Sixty thousand paper-bags a week are two hundred and forty thousand paper-bags multiplied by four; and in a given month in the year, good measure, the same constituting such a month as July or August, and containing the extra days given to it by the calendar, this accomplishment of two hundred and forty thousand can have pressed into it, by extra hours and extra forcing, a great many extra grosses of paper-bags more. On one notified occasion, indeed, the monthly make rose to the considerably higher total of three hundred and sixty-three thousand eight hundred and sixty. It sounds enormous.

One of the odd things about the business is that such an article as the paper-bag should have the distinction of pressure and slackness—of, in other words, a “season.” The idea naturally is that if there be an insignificant piece of merchandise, utterly below the fluctuation of a “run” or any variety of caprice, that piece of merchandise is the airy and perishable paper-bag. The notion,

however, would have been obtained without fit reflection, and would enjoy the fit reward of being fallacious. It is in the full current of hot summer time, when fruit is plentiful, that one of the seasons of the paper-bag comes. Windsor sends up its russet pears then, and Kent its cherries, and Devonshire its apples, and Norfolk its biffins; and there are “enormous gooseberries” (making sieve-loads as well as paragraphs), and waggonsful of currants, of plums, of damsons, and green-gages; and as every pound, or half-pound, or other retail quantity, of these appetising goods vended requires its paper-bag, orders are sent out in anticipation of this demand to the manufacturers, hurriedly and abundantly. In this same hot summer time, also, many light vegetables crowd the market, which it is quite the custom nowadays to have sent home to the consumer in the thin brown-paper-bag; tomatoes, Brussels sprouts, French beans, mushrooms, and so forth. Then, in the more hurried still, because shorter, current of a London Christmas, the paper-bag enjoys its other profitable season. Oranges are in brisk demand then; almonds, raisins, Brazil nuts, Barcelonas, Turkish figs, Greek currants, French confectionery, Chinese teas, Indian berries, American grains; and after all these foreign cargoes have been emptied loose upon the salesmen's counters, they have to be weighed out and packeted, and before this is completed they have used up many a hundred-thousand paper-bags. Indeed, it is hard to say, now, what trader there is, who has not some use, in some one or other of his departments, for this convenient wrapper. Neatness recommends it for one thing; quickness for another (since no folding is required and no tying); careful storage, cleanliness in carrying, trifling cost. Altogether, the greater cheapness of paper, it may be said, and the better organisation and utilisation of labour in cutting this paper up and pasting it into shape, have caused such a development of the paper-bag trade as, twenty years ago, would not have been credited. It is no wonder, therefore, that our forty Early Workers, as one set of little people devoted to the manufacture, are kept at full and active employment, as long as each day's work-hours last.

The production of a paper-bag as a piece of absolute work is, as might be expected, light, interesting, and easy. A quire of paper is folded over into

half its size, not evenly, but slantwise, so that each half-sheet when cut shall have its cut edge all askew, in the ratio of the right short side being nearly an inch shorter than the left; this one wholesale cutting is done by a single sweep of an ordinary carving-knife that might have come off any dinner-table; and at once the quire of paper is in twice its number of pieces, and the material for exactly as many paper-bags is cleanly and efficiently there. But, why let the cut be slanting? Why would not a straight cut do? This shall be told. A straight cut would not do, because, with it, two edges of the paper would have to be turned up to form the bag instead of one, and because with two edges, two pastings would be required instead of one, or one edge must be left hanging loose, thoroughly insecure. Then the cut answers its purpose best when slanting, because, in that case, not only does the wide end fold up over the narrow end without any doubling, but, as the whole partition and shaping are effected by one knife-sweep, good time is gained, and the charge for the bag, when ready, can be proportionately less. Still, all sheets of paper, it must be stated, are not halved, and all bags are not struck out by this one deft slicing. Those requiring a somewhat superior manufacture are cut at a certain level nearly half the paper through, forming the full width of the bag when made; have next a downward or perpendicular cut about an inch in length; and have then the other, and larger, half of the paper slit along at that inch of lower level, leaving the sheet—the same as in the slanting method—shaped for two bags, with the inch of perpendicular cutting fitting the top bag-piece into the lower bag-piece, as a notch fits together two pieces of a puzzle. Since three cuts have been necessary to effect this, though, entailing three folds, it can be seen how three times the number of slanting-cut bags could have been arranged for in the same period, and how important was the adoption of the slanting cut as a means of rendering paper-bags as cheap and popular as they now are. And to this it must be added, that no matter whether the bag has been treated by one method or the other, it is at this stage mainly shaped, with only a further and final cut to it to be given. This is a resolute slice-off—sharp-down, clean—of the right-angle at the lowest right-hand corner. It is this end of the paper that will become, when folded, the

bottom of the bag. Off the angle must go, therefore; otherwise the folding along of side over bottom would make double thickness, just as straight-cut paper would make double thickness at the prime shaping and with double thickness must come double pasting, or there must be a thickness left unpasted, with the bag absolutely no bag, and its real purpose completely gone. Then as to the cut that performs this de-angle-isation, it is sharpness itself. A stack of bag-pieces is placed on the Early Worker's table; it is piled as high as an Early Worker can make it safely go; a young arm is laid tight on it to keep it in its place; and the knife is sliced down from top to base, with hundreds of small paper triangles following its descent, flying a snow-flakes might fly in a light winter storm. Cutting over, thus—and it is certainly done in masterly and wholesal manner—the time for folding the bag piece has come. Its right-hand side is laid over towards its left, just stopping short of the outer edge of it by about three-quarters of an inch, wherein can be discovered the secret of the notch-shape paper being a little larger in the left half than in the right. If bag-pieces had both halves perfectly alike, when the two side edges came to be folded over there would be effected immediately that same double thickness that has been the stumbling block in the way of bag-making from the very beginning. There must be a clear margin left, consequently, and then, when this margin is folded over on to the upper side, all can be pasted down into bag-form proper, accurately, and efficiently. At this point, enough folding has been done. The form of the bag is indicated, the back of the fold is marked by a crease—done by the Early Worker's thumb—and the bag can now be printed, if the printing-press happens to be empty, and it has been ordered to bear the dealer's name, or the printing can be reserved for another opportunity; and the next operation can be entered upon—that of laying the bag out. To "lay" is to get as many dozens of bags as possible in a sweep; is to get a whole table-length of bag-pieces, say stretch four or five yards long of them arranged so that only the margins at the side and bottom are in view and that no more of these margins is there than will be enough, with none to spare, for pasting. By description or anticipation would it not seem that this is a labour, that would take an Early Worker a good long time at it

That it would afford him wide arena for such small and stiff-fingered shifting and shuffling, such as would make deep inroad into those appointed work-hours that ought to enable him to produce his quota, towards the Home's daily ten thousand fairly? In real working, facts upset this appearance totally. The absolute laying out of this neat line of folded bag-pieces is done in a twinkling. The Early Worker appointed to do it pulls out of his pocket the broken handle of an old tooth-brush, the Early Worker rubs this extraordinary little tool down the pile of de-angle-ised bag-corners, and there is the whole long line, all of it spread out, ready. The curious little tooth-brush has lowered the pile as the boy has stroked; it has pushed it out, telescopically, as fast nearly as can be seen, and there is no more laying to be done. After it, it is easy enough for another Early Worker to bring a paste-pot and a paste-brush and to "lick" the whole of the exposed margins one after the other, or one at the same moment as the other, straight off, down. As much as that can be understood with no need of telling. What is not to be so readily understood is, that the next operation is called bag-making. "Making" might have been concluded to have had a commencement some long time before. Yet open pieces of paper—so reflection will assure—have only remained open pieces of paper up till now, spite of their having had one fold over—nothing could have been held in them; and surely that the paper should hold, or securely confine, or encase, after this cutting and contriving of the exterior edge of it, is the reason why it has ever been touched at all. Let "made" be the expression used now, then, accepting it as violating no strict rule or order. In itself, it is to fold the bottom of the bag up, to fold the right side of the bag over, and the bag is there. Sorting out of topsy-turvydom and what not into evenness and straightness is the next operation; it is succeeded by counting into half-grosses; and the last arrangement of all is to string these bags in these half-gross packets, for the convenience of the dealer, with the care always that the Early Worker drills the hole for the string in the neck of the bag and not at the bottom, and that he drills it to use up as little of the bag as possible, and in the left-hand corner.

Now, the bag that has been thus described is the plain-shaped bag of ordi-

nary use; its material being thick brown paper, thick violet-coloured paper, any coloured paper of any less thickness, down to the thin, light, and crackling "white." If it were very brown and very big, it is the sort into which would be dropped such a sharp-edged article as large-lumped preserving-sugar; if it were less thick and less big, it is the sort that would be brought to the house full of kitchen-soda; if it were paler and more polished, it might hold seed; if it were thin and soft, "white," it might hold in the large size a peck of flour, in a smaller a modish ruche, in the smallest of all, a child's cherished pennyworth of "jubes" or "acidulated drops." There is a technical term, of course, for every sort and size. Not to particularise them all, "eight on the sheet" is one, meaning that a sheet of soft white paper is to be cut into eight, when it will produce the bags that shall hold "half-quarterns;" "twelve on the sheet" is another, meaning the paper to be cut into twelve, for bags to hold a pound; "eighteen on the sheet," "twenty-four on the sheet," "thirty-two on the sheet," "forty-eight on the sheet," are more, for half-pound bags, quarter-pound, two ounces, and one ounce respectively. "Double double small-hand" is a technical term denoting the size of the paper selected to cut these bags; another trade-name being "double middle-hand," the size for half-peck bags; and another, "double lumber," the size for quarterns. But there is a paper-bag implying a much more intricate branch of manufacture for Early Workers than this ordinary kind now done with. This other variety is that smooth-surfaced, pale-tinted, respectably-solid bag, called the tea or square bag; a specimen clever enough to lie quite flat in neat grosses for its master's convenient stowage, and yet able to stand bolt upright on its beautifully diamonded base, if a hand be put into it momentarily to expand it. And it must not be thought that this especial piece of "business" is to be arranged for without especial manoeuvring. Extra Early Workers wanted for its due achievement are folders, creasers, pasters, turners-in—a skilful quartet—and all of these little people have to superadd their cunning manipulation after the bag has left other Early Workers, in the full sense and technically, "made." Yet, let their work be organised, that is, put under the influence of that wonderful division of labour that is magically both a multiplica-

tion of results and a subtraction from time and trouble, and it will be found to go as simply and as rapidly as the rest. There has to be a zinc mould in the first place, the exact size the square bag is to be; this mould being not square at all, but mitre-shaped—oblong, that is to say, for the most of the length of it, and then starting suddenly off to a sharply-defined point; and then the four operations are effected one after the other far more quickly than can be explained. The folder thrusts the mould into the made bag; doing it, it would seem, perversely the wrong way, since, instead of aiming the point at the bag's centre, so that the corners could bend down easily over it, he puts the point into one of the corners themselves; the folder chops his hand at the back of the hooded mould, bending down a cleft between the two points loosely, and making the bag into the form of a mitre really; and then he unhoods the mould, and hands the bag to his near young neighbour, Master Creaser. Creaser runs his thumb all along the mitre-shaping, fixing it effectually; Paster takes the bag to dab a spot of paste on to each of the two mitre-points of it; Turner-in, as final operator, does away with these points altogether by turning them in till the bag is punt-bottomed, of twin-build, and will let itself lie sideways in perfect flatness, for sorting and for counting, and for the other work necessary to be done for it to be hand-trucked away. It is a bewilderment to watch these four operations. It is agreeable; for the conviction comes that the boys can only think it very pleasant labour, since the paste-brush is a favourite implement always, and here are cocked-hats and paper-boats being produced with such legitimacy of action, that the more abundant they are it is all the better, and there is no hand likely to check the most exuberant youthful vigour. But this thought dies away, of course, with sober consideration. Boys—and girls also—have a habit of disliking the occupation set them to do, even if it be the very thing that ten minutes before they would have chosen; and though no symptom of unwillingness or disaffection was discernible in these Early Workers, beginning at those mounted upon the printing-press, and ending at the most distant wooden bench-ful of them, it would be Utopian to suppose they found the gladness of recreation in their task, and the idea must be dismissed. That they work well, though, is an ascer-

tained fact. The young community realised a profit of one hundred and seventy pounds, one shilling, and sevenpence, in the last computed year of which particulars have gone forth, and this is the best proof of it. It has been argued, nevertheless, that it is not desirable for the boys themselves that they should be put to making paper-bags. Women and girls make them in the outside world, where labour is free, and where fair choice can be made; a boy, therefore, is not capacitating himself for the business of his lifetime when he is learning this creasing, and pasting, and folding, that seem to go so easily. And the reason the trade is occupied by women is that (except in the few posts of foremen and superintendents) the earnings are but low for a London artisan. Let women work as hard as they may, fifteen shillings a week is the best price for them; and there is nothing in the labour paper-bags call for to admit of a man doing it better and quicker than a woman, and so bringing larger profits. There is something in the labour of paper-bag-making, though, that calls for reform, and calls for it strenuously. Stout bags represent the largest mass of the trade now; stout bags being either the ordinary shape or the square, and made of cheap coarse paper that is rough if it be of the hard sort, and tough even if it be the smoothly-polished; and the constant creasing of this coarse paper with the thumb brings certain and painful punishment. The thumb, in fact, gets partly worn and torn away; and perhaps the time may come when machinery may be devised for this cruel creasing, and the trade experience a total change. Meanwhile, it cannot be bad, surely, for one of the industries adopted by a male Industrial School to be the making of paper-bags. The scholars in every Home must be taught something; the reason they are caught is that they may be taught; and since the principles of application, of accuracy, neatness, propriety, despatch, belong to all businesses, the Early Workers who have received preparation in one are, to a very great extent, qualified for all the rest. And the thumb-wearing, that would seem to enforce the withdrawal of bag-making from the scheme of children's labour altogether, has not the same time to show its injurious effects upon Industrial scholars, as upon out-of-door women and girls. Industrial scholars have only half their days absorbed by their trades;

schooling of the ordinary sort forms the rest of their occupation (reducing to twenty the forty of these particular Early Workers mentioned at the outset, if the hours they work be fairly counted), and the very fact that bag-creasing does not last the whole of these children's lives is thereby a recommendation to it, and does away with the chance of injury from another side. Besides, that labour should pay, whilst doing no harm, is a matter that is most essential. At this Home visited (it is in Leman Street, Whitechapel) the trade of wood-chopping was started, but it resulted in loss, and had to be abandoned. It is as true, too, of wood-chopping as of paper-bag-making, that it cannot be adhered to when the boys have grown to men. And, in clear fact, there are very few working boys who can begin at once at the precise branch of the occupation they are going to stick to; there are very few working-men who can be working now at the precise branch of the occupation they began at when they were boys. Boys' industries, in short, are just the industries that are fit for boys; let boys do them.

All along, running in and out of this sketch of paper-bag-making, there has been, every here and there, a smear of paste. It has been unavoidable. But now there shall be a look into the paste-pot itself, by way of getting rid of the subject altogether. Let it be approached daintily; for it is a full-sized galvanised-iron pail, and it is not wonderful it should spread spots and stickiness, out of its wet abundance, on to boy, and bench, and bag, and flooring, giving generously and impartially to the very end. A paste-pot that is no cup or pint, but a sturdy pail, and that makes its appearance from the kitchen loaded to the brim, is not likely to guard its treasure rigidly, or be niggardly or stingy. A whole quarter of flour has been taken to make it; three handfuls of ground alum have been taken to help the flour out; and with only half its capacity of water at first, lest it should refuse to fatten, and should keep flimsy, it has had more water and more water, bringing it to the consistency of a pancake, when it has been put upon the fire bodily, itself its own safe saucepan and sole container, and it has been stirred there, and stirred, and stirred continuously, till it has reached a proper and effectual boil. So large as this, so plentiful and thorough, it is no wonder the Early Workers who surround it get so familiar with it, they paste paper together

for their pastime, and manufacture paper ornaments voluntarily, when they might be at other play. The very gas-arms, that stretched themselves out straightly over their littered benches, were pitted and spotted with what the poor children had designed to be very pretty paper decorations; and as this is a pleasant thought in connection with these little Early Workers—seeing, especially, that it was arranged in prospect of a good feast and holiday—it is the last thought that shall be given.

THAT DEAD LETTER.

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. FIRE AND THIEF PROOF.

DINNER-HOUR in the manufacturing town of Middleton-upon-Irk; a hot summer's day; the sun glaring upon huge warehouses of dull red brick, narrow tortuous streets, the gilded minarets of our new town-hall—of which we Middletonians are justly proud. All this I can see from my office-window, with a glimpse of the cocked hat of the bronze memorial to the late Prince Consort, who, in field-marshal's uniform, is holding a review of the Arts and Sciences, on a rearing charger. We are an energetic and thriving community at Middleton, although you might not think it just now, when our streets are all deserted and everybody is engaged in hard feeding. It is no fault of mine that I am not among the everybody. A peremptory engagement retains me at my post. I expect my uncle Henry on business of importance, for which he has chosen the dinner-hour when no one is about.

My obligations to Uncle Henry are so great that his wishes are law to me, even when they involve the sacrifice of my dinner. He has been my guardian and my best friend. By his help I have been enabled to set up on my own account as a solicitor, and, through his influence, I hope eventually to be provided with a respectable practice. He is a thriving merchant of our rising town, and one of the best fellows in the world, enterprising and speculative—perhaps rather too much of the last, but there is a cool confidence about him that generally brings him out right in the end. He has no children of his own, but has another ward, a niece of his wife's, one Kate Brown, between whom and myself, I may tell you, exists an attachment of long standing. When my practice

brings in a sufficient income, Kate and I are to be married.

Altogether, in spite of the dusty, sultry air, the sleepy aspect of things, and the sense of something wanting caused by the neglected call to dinner, I felt as happy as a man could well desire to be; the future seemed bright and cheerful, and there was nothing in the present to cause me the slightest disquietude.

But something in my uncle's step upon the stairs gave me a kind of presentiment of coming misfortune. He came in, and threw himself into a chair; flung his hat upon the floor, and wiped his face with his handkerchief; an unaccustomed air of weariness and chagrin upon his face.

"All well at home?" I asked. "Aunt all right, and Kate?"

He nodded in an abstracted way, and flung a telegram across the table to me. It was from his London correspondent: "Gillies and Co.'s acceptances returned; regular smash; everybody connected with them will come down."

I remarked calmly that it was a very good thing that he was not connected with them.

"But I am, Jem, worse luck," he said; "we were operating in cotton together for a rise, and they have drawn upon me for a big figure."

I felt that this was bad news, and I did not know what to suggest. But presently Uncle Henry brightened up, and went on to say that, although this would no doubt hit him hard, yet that he could weather it, as long as his connection with the bankrupt firm was unknown. The bills that were now maturing, drawn upon him by Gillies and Co., were payable in London. He must raise ten thousand pounds to meet them, and this at once, and with the utmost secrecy. He could do this easily enough on the security of the title-deeds of the property he had in the town and neighbourhood; his banker would advance the amount at once, but he did not want to go to his banker. He would not have it known for the world that he was raising money on his property. Better pay a heavier percentage for the loan, and deal with a money-lender unknown to the world of commerce. Could I find him someone to advance the money at once on these securities?

It was not without embarrassment that I replied that I thought I could put my hand on such a person at once. Some-

time before in my hot and foolish youth I had been led into betting a good deal on races, and losing, one Liverpool meeting, a good deal more than I could pay, was recommended to a money-lender, one Bob Hargreaves of Howbent, who had relieved my pressing necessities at a sufficiently exorbitant rate of interest. Uncle Henry had subsequently very generously paid off all my debts without asking any questions, only exacting from me a promise to abstain from such courses for the future. Bob, it was well known among the initiated, could find money to any amount if he could see his way to a good profit, and I had no doubt that he would jump at the prospect of getting both a high rate of interest and unexceptionable security.

Hargreaves was an eccentric kind of man, nominally a tailor, living the life of a recluse, and nervously apprehensive of having it known that he had any money at all of his own. There was no fear of any want of secrecy on his part. He did not bear the best character in the world, it is true, and it was said that he had acquired his money in a way that would hardly bear investigation. But then you don't ask the character of a man who is going to lend you ten thousand pounds.

I telegraphed to Hargreaves to come over and see me, and next morning, at the appointed hour, I heard a tremendous thumping on the stairs, as if a heavy bedstead or something of the kind were being dragged up. Presently the door was cautiously held ajar, and a wizened face appeared in the opening.

Seeing that I was all alone, Bob—for he it was—whisked dexterously into the room, encumbered as he was by a crutch-handled stick in either hand, and brass-bound wooden clogs on his feet. The amount of timber he carried accounted for the noise upon the stairs.

"Well, I'm here to oblige you, Master Turner, but if it's brass you want, you'll bear in mind I'm a poor man."

"Then you are no good to me," I replied brusquely, "and you'd better go the way you came."

"Aye, but I can get a bit of money sometimes, thou knows. There's many thinks a deal of Bob Hargreaves. But at this minute, I'd take my Bible oath, I'm worth nothing but what I carry on my back."

According to appearance that was very little, for he was dressed in threadbare

clothes of a dirty snuff-brown colour; patched and mended, and that would have advantageously borne still more patching and mending. A greasy black cloth cap was on his head, and the only solid thing about him was a heavy cowskin waistcoat, strangely out of keeping with the sultry weather.

After chaffering awhile, for Bob's impetuosity was only assumed to justify a higher percentage, he consented to find the money—at six per cent. for three months—down upon the nail. While he was away to get the money, I sent for Uncle Henry to come and ratify the bargain. A simple memorandum of deposit of title-deeds was all that was necessary, and this I was not long in preparing; so that the affair was concluded at once, and the parchments handed over to Robert in exchange for ten thousand pounds in Bank of England notes, all soiled and limp, as if they had been a long while in circulation. It gave me a great deal of trouble to make a list of them, for they were of all denominations, and none of the same dates, or of consecutive numbers. I finished the task after awhile, and slipped the list into my portfolio. The notes I placed carefully within my safe, and locked them up.

Bob wrapped up his parchments in an old blue cotton handkerchief and hobbled off, casting many a regretful look behind at my safe, as if it had been a sarcophagus where his heart was enshrined.

That safe, by the way, was a present from Uncle Henry, a capital one by a first-rate maker, and I was really pleased to have something valuable to put in it. Hitherto a simple cupboard would have answered my purpose just as well.

As soon as Bob was gone, Uncle Henry gave me instructions as to the disposal of the money. On no account was it to go through the bank. It must remain in my safe till the next morning, when I was to take it up to London myself, and retire certain acceptances then coming due, and get back the bills. My uncle was much pleased that I had managed the business so promptly, and gave me a cheque for fifty pounds for my services. He was in excellent spirits now. Cotton had seemed a trifle harder at that day's market, and should it rise a little more, he would be able, he told me, to put back the ten thousand pounds he had just borrowed, and clear as much more besides. In that case, he would settle a good part of the money on

Kate, and we might be married as soon as we liked.

I went to bed that night in a happy frame of mind, proud of the confidence placed in me, with vague but pleasant dreams of future happiness, when I and Kate should be man and wife. But just at dawn I awoke in a horrible fright, perspiration breaking forth all over me. I had dreamt that somebody had robbed the office, and in the moment of waking it flashed upon me that I had left the duplicate key of my safe hanging on its accustomed nail over the fireplace in my office. For there I had got into the habit of hanging it, as I had a trick of leaving my keys at home, and found that the duplicate key obviated the inconvenience of not being able to get at my things. In the excitement of the day, I had forgotten about its existence.

I rose at once, although it was barely four o'clock, and walked down to my office at top speed. There everything seemed quiet and tranquil; the windows, grim and dusty-looking, blinked down upon me in a reassuring way. After all, my scare was uncalled for. There was hardly the remotest chance in the world of thieves getting into the place, and if they did, would they be likely to find the duplicate key? There was no use in alarming the neighbourhood by trying to wake up the housekeeper. Everything was firm and tight, the street tranquilly sleeping in the early sunlight. I would wait till six o'clock, and the world was astir again, and then go and secure the duplicate key. I walked about the deserted town, refreshed myself at an early breakfast stall, and then, as the factory-bells were all jangling out, and the streets were filling with operatives hurrying to work, I presented myself at the door of the building that held my office. The housekeeper nodded at me amicably. No catastrophe had happened in the night evidently.

I ran upstairs three steps at a time, darted into my office, and—casting a glance around to assure myself that everything was in statu quo—towards the fireplace for the key. It was hanging in its accustomed place. With a feeling of joyous self-gratulation, that no ill effects had followed my carelessness, I proceeded in a leisurely way to open my safe, to assure myself of the safety of the deposit. Judge of my horror and dismay when I found that the notes were gone—clean gone.

CHAPTER II. THE DEAD LETTER.

To the first stupefaction of despair at the loss of my uncle's money followed an eager desire to be doing something. I must go to the police-office at once; the notes must be stopped; I had taken the numbers—where was the list? In my portfolio; that too I had placed in the safe, that also was gone. Nothing else was touched, the loose silver I kept there was intact.

Here was a blow that almost overpowered me. In addition to the loss of money, loss of reputation would follow. What a pretty sort of tale I should have to tell, of a robbery in which the thieves had left not the slightest trace of their operations, where the objects stolen were notes of which I had retained none of the particulars. Those who knew me best might believe me, but certainly no one else would. Ten thousand pounds abstracted from an unlocked safe, the numbers not known, and no signs whatever of any unauthorised person having entered the premises! Should I believe such a story myself told of any third person?

One opening for hope occurred to me. It was possible that Bob Hargreaves had kept the numbers of the notes he had handed over to me. Howbent was only six miles away; I might be there and back before the hours of business commenced, in ample time, too, to telegraph the numbers to the leading banks. After some difficulty I found a cab, and started to drive there. A miserable, anxious drive it was.

Bob lived in a rough little stone cottage, on a waste, untidy piece of land in the outskirts of the village of Howbent. Early as it was, he was already astir; I could see him through the window, cross-legged on his board, busily at work, stitching away at a cowskin waistcoat; even in the overpowering anxiety of the moment, I could not help a feeling of wonder at his employment, the rest of his apparel stood so much more in need of his labour. The ground was too soft to give warning of my approach, but my shadow falling across the window made him look up suddenly. Catching my eye, a deadly pallor came over his face, the corners of his mouth began to twitch, he jumped off his board and came to the door.

Bob stood in the doorway regarding me with an air of covert mistrust, then his eyes glanced eagerly around as if he doubted whether I were not accompanied. Seeing only the empty cab and its driver, waiting in the road, a hundred

yards off, he recovered his self-possession and enquired my business. I asked him, eagerly, if he had kept the numbers of the notes he had paid me on the previous day. "Why, what's amiss; haven't you?" parried Robert with instinctive caution. Something at this moment prompted me to equal caution. It struck me that Hargreaves would be more ready to give information if he thought that I was already possessed of it. "Oh, I have the numbers," I replied, "but I thought I should like to compare my list with yours." "What, you've gotten a list then," cried Robert, "then what do you want more?" "The notes have been stolen," I said, and then I went on to describe the circumstances of the robbery. Robert listened with a sarcastic, incredulous smile that was very provoking, especially as I felt that his mental attitude towards the story was that which the whole world would speedily assume. "Take my advice," he said, "go home and frame a likelier tale than that. Same time, if your uncle's in with ye, I'm not one to spoil sport. There's one lee to begin with; if they took thy case with the numbers in it, how do you come to know 'em now?" "I took a copy of course," I replied, scarcely noticing the insinuation, or broad assertion rather, contained in Robert's speech; I was too broken-spirited. "But I must compare it with yours; oh, do give me the numbers, Mr. Hargreaves." "Nay, I've gotten no numbers," he replied, sullenly; "what'd be the use of numbers to me? I'd work enow to gather 'em together, bit by bit and one by one, without bothering about numbers. I'm no scholar either for that matter."

With that he slammed the door in my face, and went back to his board, but I saw no sign of the cowskin waistcoat as I passed his window, dejected and crestfallen. Bob was sitting with his needle in his hand, gazing at its point in a kind of sullen reverie. In him was the last gleam of hope I possessed, and I could not give it up without another trial. "I'm sure you could tell me something about them, Mr. Hargreaves," I cried to him through the window, "where you got them from, some of them."

"I tell thee what," said Bob from his board, "I swear my Bible oath I know naught more about thy notes, so go thy ways."

There was nothing to be gained by wasting more time over Robert, and I drove away homewards, still more wretched

than before. By the time we reached Middleton, business had commenced at my uncle's warehouse, and, always early at his work, he was there himself busily occupied. The telling him was the worst part of the business, but he uttered not a word of reproach, and evidently fully believed my account of the matter. Still, as he paced up and down his room with a gloomy ashen face, I saw that the disaster was one that affected him bitterly. "Have you told the police?" he asked sharply, at last. "No," I replied, "I am now on the way; I have only seen Robert Hargreaves since." "Thank heaven you have not. The thing is bad enough, let us make the best of it. Not a word to anybody of the loss. Except Kate, you may trust her, but not another living soul."

My uncle was right, I could see, hard as it was to keep quiet. The tale of such a loss under these suspicious circumstances, at this especial juncture, would be fatal to his credit. As it was, he might be able to tide over his difficulties. He would go to London at once, and try to get the bills held over. And if cotton would only spring a little!

Already Uncle Henry was over the worst of his misfortune, and going about his business alert and composed. But for me, how could I bear the thought of the probable ruin—disgrace even—I should have brought upon my friend and benefactor! I kept up till I had seen him off by the London train. Then I hurried off to Kate to tell of the irretrievable misfortune, and to get a little comfort, where only comfort was possible, from a woman's sympathy.

Kate, when I first told her my news, was overcome with grief and dismay. But she soon recovered presence of mind and courage, and tried to re-establish mine. It was possible to do something in the matter. If we could take no open measures to find out the thieves, we might try secret negotiations. Those who had stolen the notes would likely enough be afraid to cash them at once; perhaps they would be open to an offer, and appreciate the advantages of a good round sum, and safety therewith. Without loss of time, I inserted an advertisement in all the local papers and the London dailies, offering a reward of a thousand pounds for the recovery of the missing notes. But no result followed, whoever was in possession of the treasure made no sign.

Next day came back Uncle Henry from

London, having succeeded in renewing his bills for another fourteen days. It was now the middle of June—all the 3rd of July the delay would expire. There could be no farther credit given, for things were getting worse and worse in town, Gillies and Co.'s failure had caused universal mistrust and want of confidence. But if cotton only sprang an eighth per pound all would be well.

Cotton did not spring, however, but fell a trifle instead. Failures were rife at Middleton as well as in London. The strongest firms were talked about, and Uncle Henry did not escape. Still, he carried on matters bravely; but when the fourteen days had passed, if there should happen no favourable change in the markets, things would be bad with him. I now bitterly regretted that the loss of the notes had not been made public. It would be a pretty story for my uncle's creditors, if he had to call them together—all the more improbable too, as this would be the first that had been heard of it. But it was too late now to say anything about it, would only precipitate matters, indeed, and destroy Uncle Henry's last chance.

Day after day passed away, bringing no improvement in the state of affairs. It was now the last day of the month; on the third of next month, if no help came, uncle would have to stop payment. I was sitting at my desk, the pen idle in my hand, brooding over coming misfortunes, when I heard a letter drop into my box and the quick rap of the postman. It was only a dead letter after all—some letter I had misdirected, no doubt; another piece of carelessness or stupidity to go to my account, swelling by ever so little the great balance against me. Ten thousand pounds! Why, a whole life's slavery would not be an equivalent. I flung the dead letter from me in disgust, and returned to my dismal reverie. There it lay, however, looking at me reproachfully, and I took it up at last to be rid of it. But on tearing open the post-office envelope, I found that the letter within was not in my handwriting, but apparently in that of some illiterate person, and that the address was that of a person I knew nothing about. It was an unopened letter, addressed to "Captain Sam White, Nowland's-row, Middleton." Why had they sent it back to me, who certainly had not written it? The secret was that the envelope was one of mine—its seal embossed with my name and address—and thus it had been sent to

me at once, failing its delivery to the addressee. It was very cool of somebody to make use of my envelope. Still, as the letter had nothing to do with me, I had no right to open it, and I was about to enclose it to the Postmaster-General, asking him to have the letter opened and returned to the original sender, when Kate came in as usual, to see if I had heard anything. "No news again to-day, James?" she asked stoutly; "No news, Kate," and we both sighed; then she looked over my shoulder to see what I was doing.

"Oh, Jem," she said reproachfully, taking the letter from my hands, "you are corresponding with those betting-men again; you are trying to get back uncle's money that way, and you will only make it worse."

Then I remembered that Sam White was a betting-man who had been advertising a good deal lately. I explained to Kate how the thing had happened, and she quietly disposed of my scruples, and satisfied her own curiosity, by seizing the letter, tearing it open, and taking it to the window to read. As she read, her pretty face was puckered up into all kinds of puzzled wrinkles.

"I can make nothing of it," she said, at last, handing me the dead letter.

It was dated the 16th of June, the day after the robbery, but bore no address and no signature.

"Respected friend—Have a litel job lot of calicer prints, ten thowsend yards or so, sewtable for furren market. I'll come over and see the on the furst, and mind ye have the shiners reddy. Owld place, at 'leven it' morning."

"Jem!" cried Kate, when I had finished reading, no light coming to me in the process, "were there any envelopes in the portfolio that was stolen with the notes?"

"Yes, there certainly were a few, and stamped with my name and address on the seal."

"Then that letter is from the thief and the ten thousand yards of calico are the notes, and he is going to meet somebody on the first, that is to-morrow, to get rid of them."

There was no doubt that Kate was right, and I rose and hugged her on the spot at the joy of her discovery. But, after all, when the first burst of delight was over, how were we the better for this letter? The postmark was Middleton; there was nothing in the letter itself to give any clue to the writer. But if we

could find out the person to whom it was addressed and keep a watch on him? The post-office people had not been able to find him; but, although Sam White might have no definite address, there was no doubt that he was still in existence. His advertisements appeared in the papers constantly, although the crusade of the police against betting-men compelled him to keep out of the way. My former experiences stood me in good stead. I found out a man, an occasional tout, who knew all about him.

"Sam White!" said the man, "why he's going to be wedded this blessed morning." He went on to inform me that White was about marrying a young woman with a lot of money, that he was going to retire from vulgar turf business altogether, and for the future bet only with the aristocracy and at Tattersall's. He was going away to Paris for his wedding-trip, and a few of his friends were going to the station presently to see him off, and give him a parting cheer.

Making myself out to be in the category of Sam White's friends, I got permission to join the party, and soon after noon the bride and bridegroom made their appearance at the station and were chased into a first-class carriage by the waiting crowd of admirers, who howled and cheered in the most rowdy fashion. The captain did not seem over pleased with the attentions of his friends, and the bride was decidedly frightened. She was a very pleasant-looking, pretty young woman, by the way, and in form and features reminded me a good deal of Kate. The opportunity was not to be lost, and jumping upon the carriage step, I thrust the dead letter before him, and telling him that it was a matter of life and death, begged him to say what he knew about the writer. He snatched the letter from my hands, crumpled it up and flung it out of the window, bidding me begone for an impudent rascal. The train moved off amid a salvo of cheers from White's admirers, and I picked up the letter somewhat crestfallen and disconcerted. My friend, the tout, sidled up to me again. "Cut up rather rough with you, did Sam, sir? Set a beggar on horseback, you know. Was it money you wanted off him?"

As a forlorn hope, I showed the man the letter, and asked him if he could make any guess as to the writer, adding that it might be five or ten pounds in his pocket if he could find out.

The man's face brightened, and his whole aspect changed. "I don't know the handwriting myself, but give me three hours and I'll find out all about it."

We made an appointment to meet at my office, and punctual to his time the man appeared. He had found out that Sam White was in the habit of meeting some old fellow, not connected with the turf, on secret business at the Three Pigeons, a public-house in one of the lowest quarters of the town, frequented by thieves and other disagreeable characters. The landlord of the inn, one Grinrod, a retired prizefighter, was a fierce and dangerous fellow, and my friendly tout confessed that a misunderstanding about a disputed bet had made him afraid to venture near the place, and he could gather no further information.

The whole day passed away, and nothing more could be done. Kate looked despairingly at me as I told her what had passed. Captain White had gone out of our ken, and out of English jurisdiction altogether; his correspondent was still a mysterious nothing. The clue that had been so marvellously revealed to us, all come to naught. It was enough to make us despair.

CHAPTER III. THE THREE PIGEONS.

THERE WAS a dinner-party at my uncle's that night—a very grand one. I never saw Uncle Henry more gay or, to all appearance, in better spirits, and yet three days at the outside would see him a ruined man. Among the guests was Major Smith, the chief constable of the town, a bachelor and bon vivant, who was still rather a ladies' man, and not averse to making himself agreeable to Kate. He took her down to dinner, and I kept a watchful eye upon them. A great *épergne* of flowers was between us, but in the lulls and pauses in the general clatter I could hear what they were saying. He was very fond of talking about the great people he knew, and had been indulging in a long flourish about his dear old friend and comrade, Lord —, when Kate brought him down to the common level by the question, "Pray, Major Smith, do you know a Captain Sam White?"

"White!" cried the major, rather nettled at being cut short, "White! of what regiment?"

"Oh, I don't know that, but he lately lived at Nowland's-row."

The major's eyes at once assumed the keen twinkle of the chief of police.

"Have you been plunging into the betting-ring, Miss Brown? Sam White is a dangerous fellow. He has the character, too, of being a secret 'fence.'"

That was all I could hear, for the tide of conversation rose once more, and drowned all individual voices.

I did not enjoy my dinner that evening. I felt that we were on the edge of a precipice. It seemed, indeed, likely enough that Major Smith might soon have the task of hauling us off to prison, on a charge of fraudulent concealment of property. What would become of my aunt—most good-natured and helpless of women—and of Kate? The thought was unendurable.

After the guests were gone, Kate and I had a long and serious consultation together. If the next day passed over our heads without bringing something to light, farewell to hope altogether. It was hardly likely indeed that the unknown criminal would keep the appointment he had made, as he had received no reply to his letter. Still, there was the chance that he would.

Would it be possible to get somebody to represent Sam White, and keep the appointment on his behalf? That was out of the question. White was too well known. Then, although we assumed that the Three Pigeons was the "old place" mentioned in the dead letter, yet we were just as likely to be wrong altogether.

Then Kate's face lighted up, and I saw that she had an idea. "You say that the bride of Captain White was a good deal like me. Well, why should I not make believe to be Mrs. Sam White, and go to keep the appointment on his behalf?" I had a great many objections to urge to such a plan, but one by one Kate overruled them. But I persuaded her to make this addition to her scheme, that I should accompany her in the guise of her husband's clerk, or secretary. Finally, we made an appointment to meet at ten o'clock the following morning, and go to the Three Pigeons.

As we pushed open the swing doors of the Three Pigeons, a strong waft of mingled odours—beer and spirits, flavoured with tobacco, and a slight suspicion of wet sawdust—drove against us; a babel of voices, too, surged out, jocose, maudlin, quarrelsome. Kate shrank back and got behind me; for a moment she was not prepared for such an ordeal as this. A crowd of people, chiefly women, whose characters it would be a compliment to call doubtful, were clustered about a

sloppy, pewter-covered counter, wrangling, laughing, snarling, swearing. The most alarming thing was that, at the sight of us, the noise suddenly ceased, and all eyes were directed towards us. The landlord, a huge, brutal-looking man, was baling out supplies of liquor, rigorously exacting the price before delivery, helped by two slatternly-looking women. He glared at us with hot, bloodshot eyes, and seeing that we hesitated at approaching the drinking-counter, fiercely demanded our business. Kate marched up to him with well-simulated boldness. "I am Mrs. Captain White," she whispered.

At once the man's countenance changed and assumed a more friendly aspect, and he led the way to an upstairs room.

"But what do you want?" he said to me, laying his hand on my breast in a threatening way as I was about to follow Kate. "You've naught to do with the captain?"

Kate at once explained that I was the captain's new secretary or agent. Her husband was obliged to keep out of the way, owing to police persecution; but he had an important appointment here, and had sent her and his new secretary to transact the business. In confirmation of this, she handed him the dead letter.

Grinrod spelt it over with a cautious but comprehending face.

"Aye, it's all right, no doubt," he said. "I charge a sovereign for the room, you know." Kate bade me pay this at once; and, as soon as the money had passed, Grinrod remembered that a telegram had just come for the captain, which, perhaps, bore upon the matter in hand. He went to the bar and brought back the telegram. Kate opened it and read it, and handed it over to me with a gesture of despair. It was from "A friend, Howbent, to Captain White, Three Pigeons," laconically, "As thee do not answer, I shall na come."

Now it seemed that all our trouble and pains had been lost. The unknown would not come forth and be revealed. Our chance was gone. The landlord looked at us enquiringly. No doubt he had read the telegram, and knew that it was a put-off.

"Oh, he's not coming, then. Well, why don't you wire him to come over? you can have this room till he comes, only, as it is wanted a deal, I shall charge you another pound for the use of it."

The suggestion was a good one, if we had known to whom to send the message; but, in the latter case, we need not have

been going through this disagreeable, dangerous experiment at the Three Pigeons.

"I don't think," I said, at last, "that my employer would approve of my sending for this man; it looks like being over-anxious about the bargain."

I looked over at Kate, who at once took the cue.

"Yes; I am sure my husband would not like it. But if you, my dear Mr. Grinrod, would kindly let him know, without our knowing anything about it—you know what a temper the captain has—that Captain White is here waiting for him, I would pay for the room and five shillings for the message, cab, and so on, and should be so much obliged to you."

The irascible, suspicious Grinrod was mollified and subdued by the power of beauty.

"I'll do anything to oblige a lady," he said, and went out to despatch the message, evidently knowing quite well where to send it.

Never did hours pass so slowly as those that elapsed, while we were waiting at the Three Pigeons for the unknown thief. The landlord came in and out, doing his best to be civil and attentive, talking about horses and handicaps, and asking for advice upon this race and that, until I was afraid he would discover my shallow, superficial knowledge, and detect me as an impostor. The people in the bar yelled, and quarrelled, and fought; sometimes Grinrod was called out to thrust half-a-dozen of the most intoxicated, those who could drink no more, into the street.

Twelve o'clock struck from the church-clock opposite, time crept slowly on, still nobody came. Another hour struck, and we began to feel that it was useless to wait longer.

Just then we heard a bell ring, and Grinrod bustled in. "He's here, at private door; shall I show 'em up?" Kate nodded. The next few moments seemed an age.

There was a whispered conference at the door; then we heard something on the stairs, thump, thump, thump, as if a heavy piece of furniture were being dragged up. Then the door opened and revealed the cunning, wizened face of Bob Hargreaves.

He had evidently come in hot haste, the perspiration streamed from his face, which he was wiping nervously with his blue cotton handkerchief. He wore the very same costume as when I first saw him, except that the cowskin waistcoat was replaced by one of dirty white cotton.

"I'm late, missus," he cried, making a kind of awkward salute. "And so the captain couldn't come; well, he'd ought to let me know."

At this moment he caught sight of me. I could withhold myself no longer, and rushed eagerly forward. His face became livid, and then green. He turned to escape, but his stick slipped from under him, he came down heavily, his head striking against the corner of the table, and lay there insensible.

It was not a time for thinking of legal niceties, and I had no scruples in turning out his pockets at once, making sure that I should find the missing notes. I soon came to a big, greasy pocket-book and opened it, but the notes were not there. A thorough search only revealed in his possession a half-crown, a few coppers, a return third-class ticket for Howbent, and a pawnbroker's duplicate for the cowskin waistcoat, pledged for half-a-crown that morning.

I was staggered at this last apparent proof of the man's impecuniosity, and certainly the position was an awkward one. Hargreaves, for the moment stunned by the fall, was fast recovering his senses. On the face of it I had been guilty of an aggravated assault and robbery. And I had not a tittle of evidence against the man.

"I think we'd better get out of this as fast as we can," I said to Kate. "Mr. Hargreaves has been too many for us," and I began cramming his things back into his pocket. "Stop," cried Kate, "Jem, I have been thinking; there is just one chance. Let us steal the pawn-ticket."

The thought that was in her mind also flashed upon me. I slipped the ticket into my pocket, Kate put her arm in mine, we marched boldly downstairs and out of doors; we were in the street before anybody had noticed us. Then we went straight to the pawnbroker's shop and redeemed the cowskin waistcoat, carrying it off to my office, where we carefully examined it.

At first sight there was nothing remarkable in the waistcoat; but Kate's attention was speedily drawn to the elaborate way in which the lining was quilted in, and the painstaking stitching about it. It was an exciting moment when, after unpicking some of the lining, she brought the corner of a piece of paper to light. It was a bank-note, and, bit by

bit, as the waistcoat was unpicked, note after note came to light till the whole amount of ten thousand pounds was made up!

You can imagine our joy as we put the missing money into Uncle Henry's hands. He was on the point of calling in an accountant to take charge of his books, and inform his creditors that he could no longer meet his engagements; but the recovered ten thousand pounds put a new aspect on affairs. My uncle's credit was saved.

We sent the cowskin waistcoat to Mr. Hargreaves at Howbent, with a polite note begging him to accept the two and sevenpence-halfpenny we had paid for its redemption, as compensation for the slight damage we had done to its lining—a damage which his skill in his craft would enable him speedily to repair. We saw nothing more of him till the end of three months, when a favourable turn of affairs enabled my uncle to repay his loan with interest. Then Bob was seized with remorse, or some feeling that answered the same purpose, and he confessed to me that he had stolen the notes that we had so fortunately recovered. The devil had tempted him, he said; for he had noticed that, when I locked up the safe, I made use of a key I took from a nail over the fireplace, and that I returned it to the same place. The temptation to clear ten thousand pounds at a blow was irresistible. He watched me out of the office, and had no difficulty in shooting back the lock of my door with his clasp knife. There was no risk; for, had he been found in my room, he would have had a plausible excuse ready. Then he found the key of the safe hanging where I had left it, and was soon in possession of the money he had so recently parted with. He took my portfolio, too, for he had seen me put the list of notes there. He would have gone to London next day and cashed them, had he not heard from me that I had a copy of the list of numbers—may I be forgiven for the falsehood I told on the occasion!—but, assuming that the notes would be stopped, he wrote to Captain White, who, from his frequent visits to the Continent and his habit of dealing with large sums of money, was a convenient agent for the purpose. I fancy that Bob had had similar dealings with him before of a like nature, although he solemnly affirmed that he had not. As Robert said, he was no scholar, and had

not noticed, in using one of my envelopes—for the sake of economy—that there was any but an ordinary device on the seal. If he had he would have thought nothing of it; and he was still in wonder as to the way in which we found out his appointment with White. He had sewn the notes up in his cowskin waistcoat the day after he stole them; in fact, that was his occupation on the morning of my visit. And he secured a place of safe deposit for his money, by pawning the waistcoat on his way to meet Captain White.

After all, Uncle Henry made a lot of money through being obliged to hold on to his cotton; for it rose suddenly a half-penny a pound, on receipt of disastrous news of the new crop. He behaved very handsomely to Kate on the occasion of our wedding the other day. I often shiver when I think of how nearly I had shipwrecked all our prospects for life by a moment's carelessness; and, under Providence and next to my wife Kate, I have nobody to thank so much for getting me out of the scrape as Her Majesty's Postmaster-General, who sent me that unopened dead letter.

WARFARE AFLOAT.

THE war-canoes and periaguas of the savages with whom Dampier, Cook, and La Pérouse came in contact, were scarcely more unlike a modern ship than was the style of craft to which our ancestors applied the name. The fleets with which Harold Hardrada and Norman William crossed to England, the six hundred sail with which Edward the Third swept the narrow seas, were but collections of white or red sailed fishing smacks and coasters. A navy, in the proper sense of the word, could not exist, when no sovereign had the wherewithal to build and maintain a class of vessels exclusively for fighting purposes. Ships were pressed, as men were pressed, in war time, and as many soldiers as they could carry were put aboard them, the crew being expected to work the vessel, as in time of peace.

Twenty years ago, in the mud of a little river on the French coast, there was discovered, in excellent preservation, a vessel really constructed for war—or at least for piracy—that of some old Danish rover of the tenth or eleventh century. It was very long, as the viking of the north loved

his "seasnake" to be, and very low, with but a half deck, and sturdy masts. But the breadth of beam was reasonable enough, and the solidity of build wonderful, the vessel being a perfect bed of timbers, tough, sound, well calked and well riveted. A flotilla of such Norse ships, urged along by oar and sail, could in any but the worst weather grope its way to wherever plunder allured it.

The classical galley was at first small enough. When Egypt was queen of the seas, when Phœnicia sent her barks from isle to isle, and even when Persia fought at sea with Greece for the sway of the Levant, vessels of very moderate tonnage sufficed for every purpose of war and commerce. The real growth of naval architecture began with the long and sharp struggle between Rome and Carthage. The haughty Punic Republic, never so dangerous as at sea, pressed even Rome so hard, that to be left behind in the race of shipbuilding was to be worsted in the game.

The galley, from having a single bank of oars, came to show a formidable array, usually of three banks, often of five, and in the case of some exceptional monsters, such as the Egyptian admiral galley or flagship, even of nine. The fleet with which Pompey sailed to exterminate the Cilician pirates was such as never had been dreamed of at the time of the Punic embassy of Regulus; and such a naval encounter as that between Augustus on the one hand, and Antony and Cleopatra on the other, would have been impossible in the earlier ages of the State. The flight of the queen of Egypt, after Actium, was in itself a prodigy of speed. Her gilded ship, driven along with the full power of countless flashing oars, reached Alexandria as quickly as steam now enables us to traverse the distance.

When there was no adversary, foreign or domestic, left to fight, shipbuilding became a waning science, and three banks of oars the maximum. That was a fleet of triremes from which Pliny the Elder—Admiral Pliny—saw the huge smoke-cloud, streaked with fire, above dead and cold Vesuvius. It is by a venial error that the big galleys, the quadremes and quinquiremes, figure in Hypatia. The sternly practical Roman never laid out his sesterces, except with the prospect of certain profits and sure returns. "My lords" would themselves admit that Devastations and Alexandras were

useless in the absence of any conceivable enemy.

There was a good deal of unavoidable uncertainty, we must remember, in the navigation of the ancients, or of the seamen of the middle ages, which causes them to contrast, perforce, unfavourably with the sailors of to-day. The mariner's compass was only known, in an imperfect form, to the Chinese. There were no charts, no list of soundings, no booklore, circle sailing, quadrants and sextants, loglines, or hydrography. The poor fellows knew the stars, on fine nights, as a shepherd knows his sheep, and they had good memories for creek and headland, and treasured up every slight landmark as they coasted, keeping a bright look-out for signs of mischief. But foul weather and an overcast sky upset all their calculations, and they could but call on their gods before the empire became Christian, on their saints later, and trust that Hercules or St. Peter, Castor and Pollux or St. Januarius, would bring them safe to port.

The little vessels of the north were fairly well handled. Alfred's coastguard ships, swifter than the Danes' vessels, proved how much could be done with scanty means. But the miserable death of Henry the First's heir, on the Caskets, in fine weather, and the wreck and ruin of many a gallant crusading band, show how helpless were the great ships in the haphazard fashion of navigating then in vogue. We still preserve, in naval phraseology, some traces of the bygone state of things, when the fore-castle was a real wooden tower, and the after-castle another, full of archers—when the master sailed the ship, and the captain, with his "souldiers," fought her, and was seasick, very likely, and glad to get back to terra firma.

Henry the Eighth, in a quiet way, perhaps, the wealthiest of European princes, having his thrifty father's hoards to draw upon, and a servile parliament at his back, certainly founded the navy of England. A model of the Great Harry, of fifteen hundred tons, figures in several arsenals and museums. Then there was the thousand-ton Regent, and the Henry Grâce de Dieu, a potent four-master, with three grinning rows of guns on each broadside, and a poop and fore-castle as lofty as oak could make them. Though Elizabeth's navy was effective enough, she had fewer ships, and smaller, than the fifty that the

wifekiller bequeathed to his descendants, while Charles the First's Sovereign of the Seas, launched in 1637, with its eighty-six guns and sixteen-hundred tonnage, long appeared the ne plus ultra of shipbuilding.

Curiously enough, the Don, whose example led or forced all maritime Europe into the costly race of naval competition, performed his chief exploits with apparently insufficient means. Both Spaniard and Portuguese did really creditable work, as explorers and as conquerors, in pinks and caravels of very light tonnage. The ships of Don Henry, the squadron with which Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape of Storms and bombarded Calicut the wealthy, the cruisers that hoisted the red and yellow of Castile on the Spice Islands and the grim and desolate isles of the Antarctic, were mere cock-boats when compared with the average of our modern shipping.

It was the silver of Peru, the cochineal of Mexico, the mineral and vegetable wealth of the fair plundered continent of Southern America, that lent Spain the sinews of war. Because myriads of Indians toiled and died beneath the lash in tropical plantations, or pined in the deep mines of Bolivia, the Most Catholic King could send to sea the huge floating castles, that weighed upon the mind of England as a nightmare would have done. We hardly realise, in our present sense of security, the full meaning of that Spanish Armada which it had cost Philip the Second five years and untold treasure to prepare, which carried its twenty thousand veteran troops, with an unrivalled artillery, immense warlike stores, and two thousand young volunteers of the best blood of Spain, and which, as old MSS. prove, frightened Huguenot France as much as it did ourselves.

Very fortunately, the seamanship by which the Spaniard had won renown seemed to desert him when he put to sea in the great galleons and quadros that no other country could afford to build. We still see, in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, how Nelson boarded and took the unwieldy four-deckers, in spite of all their cannon and musketeers; and Drake, and Howard, and Frobisher had done as much two centuries before. In the naval duals of the Elizabethan epoch, light and handy ships proved an overmatch for the massive leviathans that were slow to bring their imposing broadside to bear upon a nimbler adversary.

Singularly enough, it was by a revival of classical strategy that England was, in the seventeenth century, put into extremest peril. Louis the Magnificent's galleys in Torbay were a more real danger than the fleet with which De Ruyter had burned our ships in the Medway. For, however great the alarm caused in London by the sullen roar of the Dutch guns, the Hollanders had not a single regiment to disembark, whereas the French king had sent to the Devon coast a formidable force of white-coated grenadiers, to co-operate with the expected Jacobite rising.

The galleys were an especially French, as they had been an especially Roman, institution. The force had been patronised by several kings, nor was it until the reign of Louis the Thirteenth that the general of the galleys was made subordinate to the high admiral of France. For harassing an enemy's coast, and for the transport of troops, this fair-weather flotilla was unsurpassed. But a galley of Louis the Fourteenth's time, rowed by wretches chained to the oar, the vilest felons mingled with runaway Protestants, whose sole crime was their attempt to escape to Holland or England, was the nearest approach to a floating pandemonium ever devised. To every ten convicts was allotted a Turkish or Moorish prisoner of war, whose knotted cord fell on the bare shoulders of all who finched, while boat-swain and officers patrolled the narrow space between the row-benches, and plied ratan and lash unsparingly.

It was by sheer fear of physical suffering that the chained rowers were urged to keep the great oars rising and falling with such mechanical regularity. The galley slaves were not expected to fight: there were soldiers on board to do that. But they were expected to row, and no plea of illness or exhaustion was admitted. So far from the sick or weary being sent to an infirmary, they were deliberately beaten to death. Fainting, bleeding, the miserable wretches were to the last regarded as so much mechanism, to be stimulated by cuts of the whip, and when they died, their bodies were unchained from bench and oar, and tossed into the sea.

Our grandfathers winked at a good deal of arbitrary interference with our boasted British liberty, for the sake of maintaining the national supremacy afloat. Those were hard years during which England,

fighting fiercely with France, Spain, Holland, and America, on blue water, and pursued by the jealous hatred of all the neutral north, single-handed kept the sea. That picturesque institution, the press-gang, struck a chill to the hearts of midnight roysterers, not on the coast alone, but far inland. It was not lawful to press burgess, freeman, or potwalloper, of the rotten boroughs of those days. Apprentices were exempt, and so were the mates and masters of merchantmen. But the herd of undistinguished Englishmen, who went abroad after dark, ran no trifling risk of finding themselves unpleasantly transformed into man-of-war's-men.

At the time of Navarino—the "untoward event," as, from the Treasury Bench, it was described in Parliament—the Turkish navy was a very fine one. The Sultan could not send to sea so imposing an armament as that which the Venetians, centuries since, had destroyed at Lepanto; but still France, England, and Russia had to fight sharply before the Turkish and Egyptian three-deckers of Ibrahim Pacha could be burned, sunk, or driven off. The division of duty in Sultan Mahmoud's fleet was simply managed. Greeks trimmed the sails and did what we consider the proper work of seamen, while the Turks served the guns, and stood to their cannon with the dogged valour of their stubborn race.

Armoured vessels, from many extraneous causes, have never yet been fairly tried in fight. In the American civil war, the Merrimac, roughly protected, struck a terror into the Federals afloat, which subsequent experience has not confirmed. At Lissa, the wooden flagship of the Austrian admiral, rammed, crippled, or damaged the cuirassed craft opposed to her. The great Spanish mailed ships, off Carthage, avoided real battle, while in the Paraguay river the strange spectacle was presented of a Brazilian ironclad, boarded and taken, sword in hand, by simple Paraguayans who, when they had won the deck, could not open the plated hatches which led to hold, cabins, and engine-room, and thus abandoned the monster whose vital parts they were unable to reach.

The naval warfare of the future, if less skilfully conducted than that of the past, will at all events be enormously expensive. The line-of-battle ships of Nelson's day, with their terrible show of teeth, carried mere popguns compared to the ponderous artillery, which every year grows heavier. Naval commanders who won their laurels

at the Nile or Trafalgar, could they awaken to behold the hideous and quasi-invulnerable monsters that now burthen the deep and lighten the pockets of the taxpayer, never listen in half-incredulous wonder to a statement of the weight and range of the modern cannon. Certainly, even to fire a shotted gun across an adversary's bows is not a step to be lightly taken, when the shot weighs a ton or so of chilled steel, and the charge costs John Bull seven golden sovereigns.

Torpedoes, fish-torpedoes, and other stealthy and submarine agents of destruction, are pronounced likely to play an important part in future nautical conflicts, while in building rams we have condescended to take a lesson from the brazen-beaked triremes of Athens, Egypt, and Rome. It is probable, however, that ships, indispensable for purposes of transport, will never again be quite so important, or so relatively formidable, as they have been. Even so long ago as the siege of Sevastopol, the combined fleets of the allies suffered more damage than they inflicted, and in the duel between floating and fixed defences, the balance of power surely inclines towards the latter.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MARRINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER LIV. THE SACRIFICE.

THE excitement among the audience in the assize court the next morning was even greater than it had been upon the previous day; the vast hall was, if possible, more closely packed than before, and presented to the prisoner's eyes, as they wandered over it, an unbroken wall of faces, in which it was difficult to pick out those he knew. There was one face among them, however, which he felt had not been present yesterday, and had guessed the cause of its absence; namely, his father's. The old man had found himself unequal to behold his only son in the prisoners'-dock, even though Mr. Redburn had expressed his confidence that he would pass out of it a free man; yet now, when the odds, as Cecil thought, in common with the vast majority of those around him, had veered round, and were apparently against him, there was his father, not many feet from where he himself stood, sitting next to Mr. Everett. His face had grown grayer and graver of these late months, as well it might, but its

expression was, on the whole, less wretched than Cecil had expected; and when it turned towards himself seemed to endeavour to convey some encouragement and hope. In the self-same corner of the gallery that he had occupied before, sat the old man whose hostile looks had previously attracted Cecil's attention, and he too seemed of better cheer; but the joy that lit up his eyes, as they fixed themselves upon him, was of baleful brightness, and he felt that they triumphed in his fall.

Most of the faces that he scanned had a similar satisfaction in them, though not the same malignity. They were pleased to think that a scoundrel who had deserted one woman and deceived another was about to receive his fit reward. Others, again—and this was even a worse omen—regarded him with the pity that tender hearts feel for those in misfortune, even when deserved. In the view of the spectators in general his fate, in short, appeared to be sealed; though their excitement, strange to say, was no whit diminished from that circumstance. Nay, it extended, which it had not hitherto done, to the rows of gentlemen of the long robe who sat between him and the judge. Nods, whispers, and glances of intelligence were interchanged among them, and in time escaped from those narrow limits and flew all over the court. Something of importance had happened, said the best-informed, which would throw a new light upon the trial; but what it might be was left to the imagination.

Some said that a third wife belonging to the prisoner at the bar had been discovered, whom he had married when he was at school, and would take precedence of all the rest. Others, as accurate in fact as in law, affirmed that the second wife had suddenly died, and that the prosecution would therefore fall to the ground. Cecil himself only knew that Rumour was busy by the buzzing of her wings.

As soon as the judge took his seat, Ella was summoned into the witness-box, and her appearance was the signal for the profoundest silence. Her face was of ashen paleness; but though the features were firm and composed, it gave the impression, to a close observer, of tension. It was quiet, but from restraint rather than from inward calm. She looked neither to the right hand nor to the left, but straight before her, where the counsel for the defence was standing, about to commence her cross-examination. Instead of the searching look which that learned gentleman generally used upon such occasions,

he wore an expression of mild magnanimity.

"An incident has come to our knowledge, my lud, since yesterday," he began, "which will, I hope, release your ludship and the gentlemen of the jury from the necessity of hearing any further arguments from either side respecting the present unhappy case. Above all things I would wish to spare the present witness any pain and distress of mind (of which she has endured more than enough already) that can by possibility be avoided; so, without preface or question, I will read aloud the following statement written in the witness's own hand on the night but one previous to her marriage, and given to her (supposed) husband probably upon the following morning—the morning, that is, before that ceremony took place. My learned friend upon the other side will not, as I understand, question the authenticity or genuineness of this document, and indeed the witness herself will admit as much.

"DEAREST CECIL,—Notwithstanding the happiness with which I look forward to our union, and terrible to me as would be the loss of your dear love, I must risk your displeasure—and all its possible consequences—by a revelation of my true position. I cannot permit myself to call you mine under circumstances, however justifiable in my own mind, which may savour to yours of false pretences. The name under which I have passed for many months, and which I still dare to hope I shall exchange for yours, is not my own—it is my mother's name, but not my father's. There have been family troubles, not indeed of a disgraceful, but still of a most painful kind, which have compelled me to adopt it. My father (whom God preserve) is at enmity with me. I need not here explain the causes that have led to it, for there is nothing in them to which my husband could take exception. It has been the result of ungovernable temper upon the one side, and upon the other—on mine, no doubt of temper also; but yet, I trust, not without circumstances of mitigation. In love and reverence for my father I have not failed, though in filial obedience I have been wanting. I have not hesitated to confess to you that I am myself by nature passionate; I do not think I am impatient of control, but my nature revolts against injustice, and in this case injustice has been done to me. I acknowledge, with all my heart, that I have behaved with disrespect towards my father, the man whom, of all others (save her husband), a woman

is bound to revere and honour. I revere and honour him still, and that I deeply regret the breach between us you may gather from the strenuous efforts I have made—and, I am thankful to reflect, successfully—to heal the differences between you and your father. Still, he has cast me off, and even forbid me to wear his name; and I, on my part, have taken him at his word and assumed that of my mother. This I have sworn before Heaven to wear until I have exchanged it for that of my husband, and whatever may be the consequences to me, I shall keep my oath. The matter itself can be of no little consequence to you, but the concealment of it on my part would, I feel, be doing you a great and grievous wrong. Therefore, dearest Cecil, I have made confession of my fault, and do pray Heaven that your dear love may prove great and generous enough to overlook it and forgive, always your loving,

"ELLA."

When the reading was finished, the judge beckoned for the document to be handed up to him, and attentively perused it.

"This is your handwriting, madam, is it?" enquired he of Ella.

"Yes, my lord."

"And it was written on the date assigned to it?"

"Yes, my lord."

Then the judge signed to Mr. Redburn to go on.

"I have, I trust, but little more to say, my lud," returned he, with that sideways bow which is one of the graces of the profession.

"You told my learned friend, madam, yesterday, that you and the prisoner at the bar did not conspire together to deceive the public with respect to the pseudonym made use of at your marriage; but you did not, I am sure, intend by that to swear that he had no knowledge of this deception before your marriage?"

"We did not conspire," answered Ella, in a low faint voice.

"Just so; of that I am quite convinced. Your nature, madam, is not one fitted for base conspiracies. But what may have seemed to be of no consequence—or certainly no harm—may, in the eye of the law, be of great weight. The question I have to ask you—and I hope it will be my last—is a different one from that put by my learned friend, and with the reply to which he was so well satisfied; but your answer to my question will be of even greater importance. It will probably decide the fate of the prisoner at the bar.

That he has wronged you deeply, I, for one, will not deny; but you are not here, madam, as your own avenger."

She bowed in silence; her hands grasped the ledge in front of the witness-box convulsively; even ordinary spectators could see that the moment was supreme with her.

"Are you prepared to swear, madam, that this confession, written out by your own hand, was not perused by the prisoner at the bar, before your marriage?"

"I am not."

A murmur of astonishment and compassion ran through the court, and in the midst of it—which immensely heightened the popular excitement—the prisoner burst into tears.

"I submit, my lord, though I cannot place my unhappy client in the witness-box to corroborate this testimony," observed Mr. Redburn, with confidence, "that, proceeding as it does, as it were, from the other side, it is conclusive; that the charge against the prisoner at the bar has failed in limine."

The judge looked enquiringly over his spectacles at Mr. Pawson, who rose immediately, omitting however to settle his gown upon his shoulders, without which, as is well known, no examination of a witness can take place.

"I have no opposition to offer, my lud, either to the statement my learned brother has elicited," said he, mechanically, "or to the deduction he has drawn from it."

And he sat down again. The excitement of the audience had risen to the highest degree compatible with silence.

"This piece of evidence has taken the court very much by surprise," observed the judge, doubtfully.

"Not more so, my lord, than it has taken me, I do assure you," added Mr. Redburn. "Had I been yesterday aware of the existence of this document—which, however, only came into my hands last night—and of course of the use to which it had been put, I should at once have informed my learned friend, and deprived us all of the great intellectual pleasure of hearing his opening speech."

Here, so closely does comedy tread upon the heels of tragedy, there was a general titter.

"If the counsel for the prosecution has nothing further to say," said the judge, knitting his brows, "it would be wasting the time of the court to prolong the matter. The case is over. Prisoner at the bar, you are discharged."

Then the pent-up excitement of the audience found a vent. The judge, as though conscious of the necessity of its doing so, had withdrawn himself, and the court-house was at once transformed into a Tower of Babel. Ella had disappeared from the witness-box, and Cecil had made use of the first moment of freedom to make his way from the court-house in the company of Mr. Welby, who had provided a closed carriage for him without, which whirled him off at once to Grantham. Amid the strife of tongues, a loud voice had angrily cried out that the case had been sold, and this of course had added to the universal hubbub. It had not escaped the ears of Mr. Pawson, shouldering his way through the crowd towards the robing-room, but had only called up into his face a contemptuous smile. Feeling his gown pulled in the throng, with evident intention, he turned round, and found himself face to face with an old gentleman, apparently a clergyman of the Church of England, but wearing a very "militant" expression indeed.

"If you are the counsel for the prosecution, sir, you have failed in your duty," whispered he, in a low, fierce voice, "and are a disgrace to your profession."

"You use very strong language, sir," returned Mr. Pawson, quietly.

"I have a right to use it; my name is Juxon, and I am Mrs. Landon's father."

"Then come with me," answered the counsel, seizing him by the arm, and carrying him along with him to the robing-room, whither Mr. Redburn had already preceded him. Beside the two queen's counsel there was fortunately no one else in that sacred place.

"Redburn, here is a gentleman with a grievance, that he has laid to my charge, and from which I must ask you to clear me. He accuses me of having done my client wrong, and you know best that that is not the case."

"But who the deuce is he?" enquired Mr. Redburn, with irritation.

"That is my card, sir—the Rev. Canon Juxon—the father of the woman whose name you have just disgraced."

"Forgive me, sir," answered Mr. Redburn, with emotion; "you have every right to speak; but you are wrong in one thing—you are the father of a lady with whose name disgrace can never be associated. I wish I had dared to say as much in court. She is the noblest and most self-denying of women."

"That is true, indeed," assented Mr.

Pawson. "It was your daughter's own hand which placed that document you heard read to-day in my learned friend's possession; and from her own lips did I myself receive express instructions not to question its genuineness."

Mr. Juxon fell, rather than sank, into a chair, and covered his face with his hands; both the learned counsel were silent for some moments—specially retained by common humanity—then one, Mr. Pawson, began to plead for it.

"If you will permit me, sir, I will take you to your daughter, from whom, as she bitterly feels—though it is through her own fault—you have been too long estranged. Just now, of all times, a reconciliation with you would be a balm to her indeed."

"You advise well, sir," returned the old gentleman, rising quickly to his feet, but speaking with some dignity. "Take me to her—take me to her."

So soon as the judge had pronounced those fateful words, "The prisoner is discharged," Ella had left the court-house and returned with Gracie to her inn. It was only a few steps down the street, but her companion felt with what difficulty she traversed them, and how nearly exhausted nature had succumbed under its load. Yet it was only physical strength that was wanting to her. She kept her spirit up and her high bearing, till the door had closed between them and the outer world, and she was alone with her friend. Then she threw herself upon her bosom, and burst into tears.

"Do not weep, my darling," said Gracie, gravely, "it is not for you to weep, for you have triumphed, Heaven knows it, though man may award the victory to another."

"And he will, Gracie. The finger of scorn will henceforth be pointed at me wherever I go. Do you know who it is that you fold in your arms—a woman without a name and shameful?"

"Yes; I know her well," was the low, soft response, "and never knew her more worthy of respect and love than I know her now. If life seems emptied of its joys to you, it cannot be so, long—your reward will come, Ella."

"My reward? joy for me? No, Gracie. The hardness of my lot is that I am yet so young. I am under the same curse with him of old, who said, 'Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness'—and it will endure. Nay, my case is worse, for my very father—"

There was a knock at the door, and Mr. Pawson entered.

"I am afraid, sir," said Gracie, coming hastily forward, "that Mrs. Landon is not just now in a condition to see visitors."

"Nay, I am well enough, though I am no longer Mrs. Landon," interposed Ella, firmly, her vigour at once returning to her with the occasion. "I am under too many obligations to Mr. Pawson to deny myself to him if he wishes to speak with me."

"I am come on no idle errand, dear madam, believe me," said the lawyer, gravely; "and for my excuse I have brought with me a visitor who will, I am sure, be welcome."

He pointed to the door, where stood Mr. Juxon, with eager eyes and trembling limbs.

"Father!" cried Ella, and rushed into his outstretched arms.

"Yes, yes, my darling; if you have lost a husband, you have regained a father," sobbed the old man. "I was hard and harsh to you, but that is all over now. It will never be so again."

"I was so disobedient and bitter," she murmured. Her tone was penitent but very gentle. Her head was lying on his breast as though it had found a place of rest at last. Gracie and Mr. Pawson had at once withdrawn, and father and daughter were alone together.

"We have been estranged," she went on, "but never alienated. I have never ceased to love you."

"I know it; I have heard it proved, darling"—he was referring to the document read in court—"it will never more be questioned." He led her to the sofa and sat down; in their new-found happiness they were for the moment oblivious of the present, and unmindful of external things. They did not hear the rapid step upon the stair, nor the quick knock at the door without. "And Gerard, your Uncle Gerard, has stood by you?"

"Oh yes, father; he has done his very best."

"God bless him for it. I was wrong about that money: he shall have it."

"I am not sure," said a rough, sharp voice. The colonel himself was face to face with the brother he had not seen for many a year. "The law was against me, I confess."

"The law is against her, Gerard," said the old man significantly, caressing his daughter with one hand, while he held out the other to his brother.

"That is true, John," said the colonel,

taking it, "and her case is worse than mine was."

"No doubt," assented the canon, smiling, "though that is not quite the deduction I meant to draw. However, if you will have it so, so be it; forgive me, then, dear Gerard, as Ella has forgiven the wretch who wronged her."

"I will break every bone in his skin if she will only give me leave," answered the colonel. "I passed my word at the first start to submit myself to her and the lawyer, or you may depend upon it she should have been avenged long since. Now we have tried the law and failed, it is high time to appeal to a higher tribunal;" and the colonel pointed to a brand-new horsewhip, which he had laid down beside his hat.

"Uncle Gerard, you pain me by such talk," said Ella, "and I have had enough of pain." Then, seeing how deeply the colonel was moved by those sad words, she beckoned him to her side: "If my calamity were a little less," continued she, "I would almost have welcomed it, since it has made you and my dear father one again."

"I have behaved devilish badly, John, I own," said the colonel.

"And I have behaved worse, Gerard, because, being a minister of Heaven, I ought to have behaved much better."

Ella slipped from between them, and vanished from the room. It was not fitting for her to be a witness to such confessions of weakness from such mouths. It was, however, as it happened, an unnecessary precaution, for the conversation at once took another turn.

"Upon my life, John, this damned scoundrel must be horsewhipped," said the colonel. "I have passed my word to Ella, but you are still unpledged, and, I am happy to see, look strong and hearty."

"I should like to do it of all things, my dear Gerard, but the fact is they have just made me a canon, and I am afraid it wouldn't do."

"Why the deuce did they do that?" said the colonel, with irritation.

"I don't know, I'm sure," returned the other, naively; "it puzzled me as much as it does you—— It's a good whip!" he sighed.

"Yes, and between ourselves, it has not been bought altogether to no purpose. As I left the court-house, I found a young

gentleman upon the steps, whose face was not altogether unknown to me—though his dearest friends would fail to recognise it by this time. His name, I believe, is Whympers-Hobson. He was explaining to an acquaintance the injurious effect that this acquittal would have upon poor Ella's social position, and seemed to derive great satisfaction from it and his own malice, until I caught him by the collar."

"And you gave him a good thrashing, did you?" enquired the canon, with excitement.

"My dear John, I thrashed him within that of his life;" and the colonel marked out upon his little finger about an eighth of an inch in length.

"Thank you, Gerard, thank you—though I am afraid some trouble will come of that. You may depend upon it a fellow of that kind will consult his lawyer."

"He'll consult his doctor first, however, I'll take my oath.—Hush! Here comes Ella. Let us get her off to town at once."

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DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER I. OUR HONEYMOON.

OUR stay by the sea was but brief. In truth, we could only afford a very poor and stinted honeymoon. Really, it seemed to be a holiday of but a few hours' duration. But we were very happy; yet with a sense that we were enjoying a stolen pause of rest, and tranquillity, and retirement. Often it seemed to me that I was as a fugitive from a battle-field. I had gained a place of safety, with some loss of worth, dignity, and self-respect, with a certain injury to my conscience. Still, I was secure for the present. I tried hard not to think of the past. I endeavoured to close my eyes to the future.

It was like a break in a storm. The thunder had ceased; the rain was over; the sun smiled brightly upon the landscape; all was peace and beauty. And yet the clouds might gather again upon the horizon.

But it was not a time for retrospect or for looking forward; scarcely, indeed, for reflection of any kind. I found it difficult to think. My state was too emotional. The life I had entered upon was so new and strange to me; I was too startled to consider it properly. I could not stand aloof from it, as it were, sufficiently to contemplate it.

"Was it all true and real?" I was often tempted to ask myself. Was I not dreaming? Should I not wake presently with a start to find myself still in Powis-place, pledged to marry Mr. Leveridge? I could

only answer these questions by making sure that there was a wedding-ring upon my finger, by stretching out my hand to clasp the hand of Paul.

He was very kind, and tender, and indulgent to me. We mounted the steep cliffs, or we sat together by the shore. The sea seemed basking in the sunshine, rippled and trembled a little, then broke into smiles, as it were, and ran up sparkling in a fringe of foam to touch our feet; then retreated, still clinging to the shingle, almost wailing on its way back among the pebbles, to bound to us again joyously in a minute, and sprinkle our faces with spray. How sweet and fresh was the sea-scented air; how light and pleasant was the breeze sweeping gently over the wavelets, fanning our cheeks when the sun-rays beat upon them too severely! Already, I was glad to note, Paul appeared to be improving in health, and looked somewhat less worn and pale. The sun had brought the colour into his face again, had warmed him back into life. He had been suffering all the winter; but now he seemed really well again. He looked very handsome indeed. It was not without reason that I was proud of my husband. My love found its warrant when my eyes rested upon him.

From the summit of the cliffs we watched the ships—what mere toys the distance turned them into!—steadily riding, or laboriously ploughing along their way down Channel. Before us there seemed to rise up a blue-green wall of sea, ridged, and lined, and puckered over all its surface, and pleasantly variegated of tint, as the waters coursed now over black rock and yellow sand, brown shingle and purple sea-weed, or as the submarine depths varied in their deepness; and now patches

of foam like new-fallen flakes of snow flecked the expanse; and now a soft veil seemed drawn across it as the shadows of the high clouds above—sails floating upon an aerial sea—rested upon it transiently. A warm haze screened the horizon and blurred the distance; but presently the mist cleared, or seemed lifted away, as by unseen hands, from the face of the view. We could see plainly the far-stretching uneven line of the opposite coast. I could feel a trembling pass through Paul's hand. I loved him so much that I was jealous of his love for France.

"You would return, Paul?"

"It is my home, Doris."

"But surely your home now is here with me—your wife?"

"Be it so, dearest; but France is still my birthplace. I am a Frenchman after all—perhaps I may say, before all."

I did not like his saying that. I was silent for some moments.

"You love me, Paul?" I asked him presently. "You are quite sure that you love me?"

"Indeed, dearest, I am very sure," he said, with a kind smile, and yet with a look of surprise. "Are not you very sure too?"

"I try to think I am very sure."

"And you succeed?"

"I cannot always be so sure as I could wish."

"Have I not sufficiently proved my love? Do you not bear my name? Are you not my wife?" He lightly touched my wedding-ring, then he took my hand, caressed and kissed it fondly.

"There are things, I think, about which we never can be quite sure enough. Perhaps I am, at all times, deficient in faith. I know that I am often very envious of the perfect trust and confidence that appear to animate others. But life is haunted, as it seems to me, by doubts and misgivings. When I am happy, as I am happy now, very happy, there comes a question—when will the end come? How soon is my happiness to depart? So, when you tell me of your love—well, I believe it, and yet I feel that my belief is not quite whole or untroubled."

"But, dearest, a wife does wrong when she doubts or distrusts her husband, unless, indeed, she has very good cause, and you have none."

"I have none; I know it. But we cannot force our faith into this or that channel; we are unable absolutely to

control our doubts and distrusts: I hug close to my heart the thought of your love. I am convinced of it, I tell myself it is beyond the reach of cavil or question or suspicion, it is as true as truth itself, and yet—and yet, I find myself trembling; something strikes cold upon my heart. I ask myself—will his love endure? is it really wholly mine for ever? has it been given me past all taking back again?"

"It has, indeed, dear little one," he said, drawing me towards him tenderly. "Why do you invent these ways of wringing and tormenting your poor heart? Do not invite care to come to you, it will come if it is to come, without waiting for an invitation. If we are happy—and we are happy—let that be enough for us. Our happiness surrounds us like a magic circle. Why should we step beyond its limits to find disappointment, sorrow, pain? If you doubt my love for you, may I not, in my turn, with as good reason doubt your love for me?"

"No, you cannot, Paul. If you have, as you say, given good proof of your love, have not I also given proof of mine? I left all, I risked all, to be yours. What kind hearts I have wounded, how many I have offended, what scandal I may have occasioned, what slur cast upon my name, that I might yield myself to you! I showed my love for you by my trust in you. It was supreme, it was absolute. Is further proof needed of me? Well, it is here. I am laying my heart's thoughts at your feet. I can keep nothing back from you. I tell you all. Each and all of my fancies, impressions, fears, perplexities are in turn revealed to you, almost before I am myself fully conscious of them. As these things are born in my heart they are given up to you, as though they were yours by strict right. And perhaps they are, for you are my husband. But, as it seems to me, Paul, only a woman who loves with all her soul can act in this way. I have given my love to you, and myself with it completely. You do not really doubt that this is as I have said: that I am yours wholly for ever?"

"I do not doubt it, Doris."

"I love you so much—do doubt and fear attend upon my love because I love so much? Is it because you love me less than I love you that your love is so free from care?"

"Why should we trouble ourselves with these suppositions, and enquiries, and theories? We are very happy, you and I,

Doris. Well, as I said, let that be enough for us. Let us put questioning, and investigating, and distrusting far away from us. We can but be happy, and we are happy: there is no more to be said."

"Love seems to me so great a thing now. Yet I thought poorly enough of it once. But that was my folly."

"What is it your English poet says, but not altogether truly?"

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart:
'Tis woman's whole existence."

"It is perhaps altogether true. Man can think of other things, live for other things. Can woman? I am not so sure. You, Paul, love me as you say, and I believe. Yet you love France too—not more than you love me—still you love France."

"Surely. She is as my mother; you, dearest, are my wife."

"You would fly to her if you could!"

"Yes, if I could help her. But at present that may not be. It is true this strip of water is soon crossed. A passport in another name, a little disguise, a change of dress, and behold me landed upon the other side, the vigilance of the police evaded and defied. But what would it avail? Nothing; one more Frenchman under the yoke of the charlatan king, that is all. The end would not be brought nearer. It will come in time. We must wait patiently as we can."

"You still call yourself conspirator?"

"Yes, as I told you almost at our first meeting, the exile is always a conspirator."

"But if you cross the Channel and are discovered you will be arrested, imprisoned, your life perhaps may be endangered."

"Not my life—I think not. I am charged with political offences. I am, if they will have it so, an accomplice in the offences—the very grave offences—of others. Still my life is hardly in peril. Chance has so ruled. It did not fall to me to strike the blow, or to attempt to strike it, which would have given back liberty to France. The attempt failed. The losers paid the penalty—it was death. But they knew from the first what the penalty was; and losers must always pay, you know. We will not speak of these things, however." He glanced back un- easily over his shoulder, then laughed lightly at himself. "You make me a coward, dearest. You have turned pale, your hand trembles; I feel myself growing nervous, timid; it is a proof of the

subtle sympathy that exists between us that binds us together."

"You will not go back to France, Paul; promise me you will not."

"I will not go yet, Doris."

"You will not go until it is quite safe for you to go?"

"I will not go until I am wanted—until it is my duty to go."

"But your duty, Paul, is to be with me always."

"That is my pleasure, dearest."

"It cannot be your duty to leave me, Paul."

"We will not discuss it; why should we? It is a thing that may never happen. I may never be called upon to quit your side. But if I should be called upon—if it becomes my duty to leave you, I must go, Doris. I should despise myself—you would despise me—if I were to neglect the call of duty. Come, come, let us not talk more of this subject; not now, at any rate."

I was silent, but I was dissatisfied. I had fancied—it was perhaps but fancy—that there was something cold and peremptory in the tone of his last utterance. No doubt, I was jealous. I had need of all his love. I wanted to occupy wholly his thoughts always, and I could not sympathise fully with his devotion to his country, his determination to conspire without ceasing against her rulers: I could not share his political sentiments, indeed I was not sure that I thoroughly comprehended them. I saw no specially good reason for detesting the King of the French, still less for seeking to destroy him. I had thought, perhaps, too lightly of the offences which had driven Paul from France. Basil had spoken upon the subject, but not very distinctly. I understood, however, that Paul had been concerned new in this plot and now in that. He and his friends, or fellow-conspirators, hoped to bring about a new revolution, and were unscrupulous as to the means they employed to attain that end. Tyrannicide—or what we plain English people preferred to call murder—was involved in their scheme. I remembered now what Basil had said: "There is a certain line of conduct which seems to lead to assassination or to lead nowhere." Then he had added, rather contemptuously, "We will say that it leads nowhere in M. Riel's case."

I was so much nearer the conspiracy now that it lost necessarily much of its vagueness, assumed a certain startling

learnness of outline—became, indeed, something dreadful to me. But I cannot say that I yet held it to be as criminal as I have since accounted it. The French king was scarcely to me an entity or a living creature—he was but an emblem, a remote puppet, whose fate was of little real interest to people generally. He might occupy his throne, or he might be swept from it; it did not matter much what happened to him. It was on Paul's account that I was so much moved and alarmed. The conspiracy in which he was engaged terrified me, in that it imperilled his life. As I gathered, he was bound, if it should be so decided by the drawing of lots or the throwing of dice, to be the active agent in the plot—to advance to the front steps before him had advanced, and make yet another attempt upon the life of the French king. Already there had been something like a series of such attempts. I shuddered as I thought of the fate of Pieschi, Pepin, Morey, Alibaud, Meunier, and the rest.

In truth I was engrossed, blinded, almost crazed by my love. I was conscious of an infatuation I could not resist—to which indeed I fondly yielded myself, with that certain feeling of shame and self-approach. For I had noted the foolish fondness of lovers, the fatuous tenderness interchanged by "engaged couples," the apturous devotedness, the exuberant adoration of the newly-wed. I had not spared my ridicule upon these occasions. I had vaunted my superior sense, my greater regard for the reticences and the proprieties. I had boldly avowed that I could never be as were these others. But I had rested at scars, because I had never felt a wound. I was now really as bad, as blame-worthy as anybody I had ever seen. Paul had taken absolute possession of me.

I wished but for him. He was all in all to me. I could think of nothing but Paul. He leavened my whole life.

"Of what are you thinking, little wife?" he said, as he gently rested his hand upon my shoulder. I turned to him with a start. I felt like one roused from a dream—but the dream had been of him.

"You are happy, dear one?"

"I am very happy, Paul; too happy, perhaps."

"Can we be too happy?"

"Well, yes; because excess of happiness brings with it something of doubt and fear. When the summit is reached, the next step is one of decline, and the

end is in sight. Paul, you will always love me?"

"Have I not assured you that I will?"

"But tell me so again, and yet again. I cannot hear you tell me so too often."

"Then, I love you, Doris, I love you, I love you. Will that do?"

"Ah, but you must not say it like a task. You must say it with your heart, and not with your lips merely."

"Dearest, I think that love is not to be expressed in words." He smiled upon me very tenderly, then pressed me to his heart. "My own darling wife," he said.

We were silent for some time.

"We must not remain here much longer," he said presently. "You see that purple-gray cloud that seems rising from the sea? The weather is changing. We shall have rain in twelve hours' time. We will go back, I think, before the change comes. Now see. We will speak of plain, hard, humble facts. You must be the chancellor of our poor means—deal as best you can with our cramped exchequer. Make the money go as far as you can, dearest, for indeed just now I hardly know where to look for more."

As he spoke he emptied his purse into my hands. Alas! it was a very slender purse.

"The money shall go as far as it will," I said.

"Best of little wives!"

"Ah, Paul, you have married an English wife. Will you not count yourself an Englishman?"

"Well, yes. I am an Englishman—almost!"

But while he spoke his eyes were bent upon the dim uneven line of the coast of France.

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER AND MERCER.

IN FOUR PARTS. PART I. IN LONDON.

Few facts are more curious than that the invention of printing, and its introduction into this country, should have occurred at a period of literary sterility; yet nothing is more certain than that, in the whole of the fifteenth century, but one really important book was written—the commentary of Philip de Comines. It is true that in the more enlightened countries of Europe, the lack of productive power was compensated by work of a hardly less important kind. If no mental movement of any kind was going

on in England; where the ferment of mediæval scholasticism had died out, and left nothing but bad Latin behind it; yet abroad there were signs that men had turned from the grammar and philosophy of the schoolmen, and were seeking to learn accuracy of thought and eloquence of diction from the ancient models, which had been thrown aside by the ignorant fanatics of the early church, who, regarding the precious works of Greece and Rome as merely heathen learning, not only discouraged the study of poets and rhetoricians, but actually erased their works from the parchment in order to cover it with pious legends written in monkish jargon. From Italy the taste for classical learning spread to Germany, France, and Burgundy. Convents were ransacked for ancient manuscripts, which were gradually accumulated in secular libraries. It was thus an age rather of accumulation than of production; of ingathering than of outpouring; of seeking for good old models, instead of constructing clumsy new ones; of imitation, rather than originality. In this work England was far behind the nations already alluded to. Between the England of Chaucer and the England of Shakespeare yawns a great dark gulf, the lowest and most Cimmerian depths whereof are occupied by the exact period in which William Caxton, mercer, translator, author, and printer, dwelt in Bruges, and acquired the art which has placed his name for ever among the roll of England's worthies. The scanty records and obscure chronicles of a stormy time reveal but few of the causes which produced this blank in the history of the English intellect. What little is known of England in the middle of the fifteenth century refers to dreary details of the battles and sieges of a senseless struggle for mere power, unaccompanied by principle or conviction of any kind. It is true that for cruelty, treachery, and wholesale slaughter of mankind, the age of the Renaissance matches any that preceded it, but in the great sixteenth century, men at least fought for something intelligible, whereas, in the England of the period preceding it, the insignificant differences of various branches of the reigning family cost the country a vast amount of blood and treasure. A struggle in which no human being, save the several branches of the House of Plantagenet, and their immediate followers, could feel the faintest interest, brought English civilisation to a deadlock; the only compensation

for which can be found in the extermination of the great feudatories—those sturdiest of all obstacles to the material advancement of the nation. During this dark period, there was in England neither literature nor art, save in the direction of architecture, which shone brightly among gloomy surroundings, as Alpine peaks decked with a thousand icy pinnacles glitter in the sun, while darkness and storm reign far below the serene altitude of their crests. Mere civil war, however, will hardly account for the mental night which spread over England from the appearance of the Canterbury Tales to that of the Utopia; for other nations were fighting in and with each other, and yet, amid the clash of arms, were quickening into intellectual life. During the long reign of Edward the Third, and the troubled life of his grandson, the influence of Italy was distinctly felt in the islands of the northern sea. Gower lent his potent aid to the formation of a school of poetry, carried to its highest perfection by Chaucer; the complaint of Piers Plowman expressed in intelligible form the widely-spread discontent of the people; the preaching of Wiclif and his followers displayed a craving for a new form of religion; the travels of Maundevile exhibited a strange mixture of old-world superstition with a forecast of new truths in physical science. This living, moving England is vividly depicted in the bright glow of the genius of Chaucer. In his pages we see before us an epitome of his England, brilliant at the top, and jovial in the middle; while Piers Plowman paints more roughly, but yet strongly, with that best kind of pathos which is mingled with humour, the privations of the labouring folk, devoured by the exactions of the military and clerical caste. The spirit of the troubadours was not yet dead, but reinforced by the example of the great chiefs of Italian literature. Lessons had been learnt from Dante in the treatment of the sublime, Petrarch lent a particle of his exquisite tenderness to all who could read his poems in the "vulgar tongue," and Boccaccio had taught mankind the art of telling a story. Englishmen had been quick in appreciating the advantage of the study of Italian and Latin literature, and for a brief period advanced towards the van of modern culture. But this step forward was succeeded by a relapse into that deepest of all darkness which precedes the

true dawn. Under the House of Lancaster no single work of a literary kind worthy of the most slender notice was produced—the fugitive poems of Lydgate, the monk of Bury, alone excepted, and the merit of these is very slight. In the meantime, the pursuit of letters was eagerly maintained abroad. Enlightened despots and half-pagan popes kindled that fire of literary and artistic glory which has never thoroughly died out in Italy. On the ruins of ancient Byzantine art, Italian genius built new schools of painting and sculpture. Wealthy scholars passed busy lives in the collection of manuscripts, and employed skilful scribes and patient limners in multiplying transcripts of their treasures. Germany and Flanders developed an art of their own, and France, next in backwardness to England, boasted at least one historian in Philip de Comines, and one poet in François Villon. In England, at the very fountain-heads, learning had dwindled to clumsy pedantry. The University of Oxford was proverbial for bad Latin, the jargon of Scotus and Ockham. Poggio, that diligent and successful discoverer of ancient manuscripts, writing from England in 1420, complains that he could find no good books, and evidently holds English scholarship of light account: “Men given up to sensuality we may find in abundance, but very few lovers of learning; and those barbarous, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature. I visited many convents; they were all full of books of modern doctors, whom we should not think worthy so much as to be heard. They have few works of the ancients, and those are much better with us. Nearly all the convents of this island have been founded within four hundred years; but that was not a period in which either learned men or such books as we seek could be expected, for they had been lost before.” It is easy to imagine the horror of the elegant Italian at finding himself in a barbaric atmosphere, but the worst was not reached. England was not yet so completely out of the world, as she became in the period intervening between the loss of France and the intimate alliance of the Houses of York and Burgundy. There were a few chroniclers of a sort, contradicting each other, and in the main poorly informed. Modern readers can form little idea of the ghastly dreariness of a mediæval chronicle. When the writers are dealing with their own

time, they are clumsy, prejudiced, and ignorant of all literary form and style, but there is a positive value in contemporary evidence which compensates the student for much horrible suffering; unhappily, however, the majority of these chronicles are mere compilations from other documents, and generally begin with the creation of the world—an important but remote event. Wading through a mass of so-called history—sacred, profane, and legendary, all absurdly jumbled together—the reader alights at last upon England and its discovery by King Brute of Troy, with the genealogies of the same. If he do not die in the meantime, he will at last arrive at the period of which the historian knows something, and must then be exceedingly careful how he accepts any statement without verification by contemporary records of some kind or other.

It is a strange picture—full of deep shadows—this England of the fifteenth century, as portrayed by the clumsy hands of chroniclers, and those more faithful limners the writers of the Paston Letters. Amid the frequent apparition of armies may be dimly descried the growing independence of parliaments, and the importance of units of labour, banded together and protected by charters often bought at a high price from necessitous sovereigns. The labourer was perhaps in material comfort not very much worse off than he has been since, but then there was no peace or repose from incessant tumult. Owners of beeves and sheep and fields of golden grain were only too glad to get their corn cut, and their beasts slaughtered, salted, and safely bestowed behind four walls, whence marauders might not win them without a costly struggle. The annals of the Paston family tell us that a state of private war between a great lord and one or more of his liegemen or neighbours was regarded as no unusual phenomenon. If the small suffered from frequent oppression, the great were no better off, for those who escaped the field of battle were only reserved for the headsman. Such intelligence as existed was devoted to the career of arms—the church having sunk into ignorance and sloth, in which the spectre of Lollardy by turns stalked abroad and slunk into byways, awaiting the day when the voice of Luther should repeat in thunder the timid murmurs of Wiclif and his followers, whose utterances could by no means be done away with and abolished.

An age of ignorance was naturally superstitious. Adam of Usk tells us of the burning of the first heretic in Smithfield, and we also see that worthy ecclesiastic, lawyer, and politician—one of the foremost men of his time—marvelling at the spontaneous ringing of the four bells at the corners of St. Edward's shrine at Westminster; at the strange flow of blood from the spring into which the head of Llewellyn-ap-Gryffud had been thrown; at the comet which foretold the death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan; and the apparition in the air of the arms of that potentate, to wit, "a serpent azure, swallowing a naked man, gules, on a field argent." But as darkness, like light, is rarely absolutely complete, it is possible to descry through the mirk the brilliant soldier of Agincourt, Sir John Fastolf—from whom Shakespeare was once absurdly supposed to have drawn his immortal Falstaff—Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, John Tiptoft, the "butcher" Earl of Worcester, and Antony Woodville, busily engaged in collecting manuscripts: a work to which the Duke of Bedford contributed in lawless but wholesale fashion by seizing the royal library at Paris, and carrying it off to this country during his regency.

In the year 1438, a youth from the Weald of Kent came to London—a London like nothing now extant, with its narrow streets crowded with merchandises, and swarming with people clad in coarse materials dyed with the bright colours which light up a crowd; a London destitute of coach or carriage, but enlivened by processions of great ecclesiastics on muleback, and of local dignitaries in the mazarine blue furred gowns, the shape of which is still preserved in the robe of a common councilman. More wonderful is the attire of ladies of high degree, the lofty steeple-crowned head-dress just now developing a tendency to fork out in two wings or horns, the object of many pleasantries among the idle and ribald 'prentices. Westminster is already crowded with lawyers, who have long since entered in and dwelt there, and the great hall is encumbered with Flemish chapmen crying:

Master, what will you copen or buy?
Fyne felt hattes, or spectacles to reede?
Lay down your sylver, and here you may speede.

At Westminster Gate—the sun being at "hyghe pryme," an army of cooks waylay the stranger, proffering bread and ale and

wine, with "rybbs of befe," both fat and "ful fyne." The way from Westminster to London is beset by itinerant vendors crying, "Hot peascods," strawberry ripe, and cherries in rice. Beyond Temple Bar, the shopkeepers, busily touting for custom, implore passers-by to take "peper and safforne, velvet sylke and lawne," and Paris thread, the finest in the land. By London Stone congregate the drapers, striving to sell their cloth; and above all rises the stupendous uproar of the sellers of comeatables, "hot shepes' fete," mackerel, beef, and pies—the clatter of "pewter pottes in a heape," and the sound of "harpe, pype, and mynstrelseye"—all signs that the loss of France, and the quarrels of the great lords of the council, have affected ordinary English folk but slightly in their appetite for food or other entertainment.

From the last book of the Polycronicon we obtain strange glimpses of the deeds done in London during Caxton's apprenticeship to Robert Large, mercer. It was lucky, by-the-way, for Caxton, that those of his day who could read at all read carelessly, or what would have been done with him after Bosworth Field for writing an awful passage, under date 1437-40, in which he describes how one Owen (Tudor), a squire of Wales, a man of low birth—who had many a day before secretly wedded Queen Katherine, and had by her three sons and a daughter—was taken and committed to Newgate to prison by my Lord of Gloucester, protector of the realm, and how he broke prison by means of a priest that was his chaplain, and after he was taken again to Newgate and afterward was delivered at large, and one of his sons was afterward made Earl of Richmond, &c. &c. Mighty pleasant reading for his dreaded lord King Henry, the seventh of that name! Also, he tells us, there was a great dearth of corn in all England, for a bushel of wheat was worth forty pence in many places, yet men might not have enough. Wherefore, Stephen Brown, the Lord Mayor, sent into Prussia and brought to London certain ships laden with rye, which eased and did much good to the people, for corn was so scarce in some places that poor people made bread of fern roots. 'Prentice Caxton, then in the second year of his novitiate, was undoubtedly present at the ghastly ceremony of burning Sir Richard Wyche for Lollardy. The victim was degraded

from his priesthood at St. Paul's, and burnt on Tower-hill, on St. Botolph's Day, and, according to Caxton, died "a good crysten man," and many people, that is to say, of the common sort, came to the place where he had been burnt, and offered, and made a heap of stones, and set up a cross of wood, and held him for a saint till the mayor and sheriffs, by commandment of the king and bishops, destroyed it, and "made there a dung-hill." Another curious sight for the Kentish youth was the penance of Dame Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester. It was not far from his master's house to Cheapside, through which the unhappy lady walked with a taper in her hand. There was doubtless a crowd of prentices at Smithfield at the burning of Dame Eleanor's accomplice, "Margery Jurde-mayn," the witch of Eye, and at the hanging, drawing, and quartering of Roger Bolingbroke, at Tyburn—"on whose soul," exclaims Caxton, "God have mercy." He tells us, too, of a great affray in Fleet-street by night between men of the Court and men of London, wherein divers were slain and many hurt; of the great tempest of thunder and lightning, and the fire in St. Paul's steeple; of the marriage of King Henry and Margaret of Anjou, and of the reception at Blackheath by the mayor and aldermen, and all the crafts in blue gowns embroidered with their devices, and with red hoods. All this is marvellously exciting matter for the youth fresh from the Weald of Kent. Happily, there is no doubt as to the date of Caxton's apprenticeship in 1438, a fact which effectually disposes of his supposed birth in 1412. Thanks to Mr. William Blades—whose *Life and Typography of William Caxton* is a wonderful instance of the happy combination of technical skill with patient research—we know where to look for proof of his hero's apprenticeship.

In the archives of the Worshipful Company of Mercers of the city of London is a folio volume, written on parchment by various scribes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, extending from 1344 to 1464. The contents of the volume include: a rent-roll; the oath of householders; of linen-cloth meters; of liverymen; of brethren; of brokers; of apprentices, on their entry and issue; and divers other matters of interest. Two entries in this valuable volume record three im-

portant events in the life of Caxton. In the year 1438-39 appears the following:

It. John Large } les appntices de miijs.
It. Wilm Caxton } Robert Large. miijs.

This date fixes Caxton's age within two or three years. The legal majority of man—the age of twenty-one—was disregarded by the citizens of London, who in the fifteenth century insisted on a civic majority not attained till three years later. At that time no man could become a free-man and engage in trade on his own account till he had reached the full age of twenty-four, and in view of this the indenture of an apprentice was always so drawn, that on the commencement of his twenty-fifth year he might "issue" from his apprenticeship. This fixed rule necessarily caused considerable variation in the length of servitude, which ranged, according to the age of the youth when entered, from seven to fourteen years. Ten, eleven, and twelve years were not uncommon terms of apprenticeship in the fifteenth century. Beckoning, however, Caxton's servitude at the minimum of seven years, he could not have been more than seventeen years old at the date of entry; and therefore cannot have been born before the year 1421, or nine years later than the date commonly quoted in books of reference. The date when Caxton was admitted to the freedom of his company is not recorded, but it was doubtless shortly after he had issued from his apprenticeship. This, however, is of minor importance, as his admission to the livery of the Mercers' Company, in 1453, is duly set forth as follows:

Leu du grace m cccc liij Et del Roy Henry sime
pius le conquete xxxj.
Entre en la lyvere pm An—
It. Emond Bedeknape . . . vjs viijd.
It^m. Richaert Burgh . . . vjs viijd.
It^b. William Caxton . . . vjs viijd.

Occurring in the before-mentioned book of accounts, the whole passage is erased with the pen; possibly in consequence of the fines on taking up the livery being remitted. In the same year Caxton, with others, is charged with fines to the amount of 3s. 4d., for failing to attend the "riding" of the mayor, Geoffrey Felding; probably in consequence of his absence at Bruges, where he was then settled.

Caxton's master, Robert Large, was one of the richest and most powerful merchants in the city of London. A mercer and the son of a mercer, he was elected warden of

his company as early as 1427, and filled the office of sheriff in 1430. During the apprenticeship of Caxton, in 1439-40, his master—of whom he must have been proud—was called to the mayoralty.

The mercers rode before him, in their new livery, preceded by sixteen silver trumpets; and there were doubtless merry times in Large's house, a huge building at the north end of the Old Jewry—once a Jews' synagogue, then a house of friars, then a nobleman's dwelling, next occupied by Large, and in later times a tavern. Large did not long survive his mayoralty; possibly the festivities of the year told upon the fine old mercer. In April, 1441, he died, leaving out of his ample fortune many bequests, among which were considerable sums for the completion of a new aqueduct, then in progress; for the repairs of London-bridge; for cleansing the watercourse at Walbrook; for marriage portions for poor girls; for relief of domestic servants; and for various hospitals in London, notably "Bedleem," Bishopsgate Without; St. Thomas, of Southwark; and the leper-houses at Hackney. This civic worthy did not forget his apprentices and his "servants," i.e. those issued from their apprenticeship who continued to work for their old master. One of these received fifty pounds—a handsome legacy in 1441—while Caxton and another recently-entered apprentice received twenty marks apiece.

Shortly after his master's death, Caxton left England and went to Bruges, still as an apprentice mercer. In forming this resolution, he was probably influenced by the conclusion of a three years' peace between England and Flanders. Possibly he had, during his three years' work in London, become well acquainted with the Flemings, and he certainly had ascertained the advantages enjoyed by the English merchant adventurers settled there. Perhaps he prevailed upon the executors of Large to transfer him to Flanders, there to serve out the remainder of his apprenticeship, of which he could by no means get quit, save by running away and fighting in the unprofitable wars of the period; or perhaps he was sent, without being asked, to attend to his master's business abroad. There seems to have been little limit to a master's or executor's power of assignment. They were compelled to provide for apprentices, but apparently without limitation as to place, and it was usual to send young men abroad to some great mart, to gain ex-

perience in trade; a practice which prevails in Germany to this very day.

Caxton's change of locality was of great advantage to him, first as a merchant, then as a printer. It must be recollected that in his day London was only growing into a great trading city, Bruges, Florence, Venice, and Constantinople—not yet in the hands of the Turks—being far before it as commercial centres. Bruges had long been not only the seat of government of the Dukes of Burgundy, but the metropolis of trading for all surrounding countries. It was the Venice of the north. Thither from all parts of northern Europe went merchants with their wares; England sending great consignments of wool, then her chief product. As the towns of Flanders depended in great measure on England for their raw material, it may be imagined that Englishmen and their goods were well received at Bruges. Moreover, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy—who had almost from a child been brought up at the English Court—gave great privileges to the Company of Merchant Adventurers, under the name of "The English Nation," by which title they were generally known. Almost all foreign trade in Caxton's time was carried on by means of Trade Guilds, analogous in their constitution to the Esterlings or merchants of the Steel-yard, who in London carried on a prosperous trade for centuries. These associations were governed by laws and charters, and enjoyed privileges, monopolies, and immunities, granted on the one side by their own Government, on the other by that of the country in which they were domiciled in a common dwelling. This practice took its rise from the ignorant jealousy of the people, who imagined that the brutal foreigner was ruining the nation. Frequent tumults compelled foreign merchants to dwell in a semi-fortified structure, of which the old London Steel-yard and the Domus Anglorum at Bruges are good representative specimens. The latter was a massive building, well enough barred and bolted to secure it against any momentary outbreak of popular turbulence, and the company was duly enrolled and chartered, exercising an internal jurisdiction of its own. The Mercers, whose foreign trade exceeded that of all other companies, appear to have originated the Association of Merchant Adventurers in the thirteenth century, under the name of the Guild or

fraternity of St. Thomas-a-Beket, and to have retained the principal management for three centuries, although the Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, and several of the trade companies shared in the privilege of membership.

In or about 1441-42 Caxton left London to become an inmate of the Domus Anglorum, at Bruges, in the humble capacity of an apprentice mercer, and abode in the Burgundian capital—saying rare visits, first to London, and then to Cologne—for some five-and-thirty strenuous years.

THE LAST KING OF YVETOT.

MANY of us, in the course of our reading, have stumbled upon the mention of a king of Yvetot, the king of a petty town and tiny strip of territory, whose country was embedded in the realm of his mighty brother monarch of France, and who yet was left undisturbed for several centuries in the enjoyment of his microscopic sovereignty. So little is popularly known, even among the French themselves, as to the king of Yvetot, that many, who are only acquainted with his name through Béranger's verses—designed as a satire on the ambition of the First Napoleon—are apt to consider both king and kingdom as creations of the poet's fancy.

There is, however, no doubt as to the existence, down to scarcely more than two centuries ago, of a king of Yvetot, in Anjou, although the chief authorities in matters of French archæology differ with respect to the origin of this singular kingdom. Its foundation has often been attributed to a grant of the Frankish monarch, Clothaire the First; and, if this be rejected as fabulous, Morery, La Roque, and a host of others, avouch the fact, that the king or prince of Yvetot, with his subjects, owed no fealty, tax, toll, or tribute, to the king of France; and that successive wearers of the French diadem had formally recognised the right of Yvetot to exemption from all control, fiscal or judicial, on the part of their own officers.

The ludicrous littleness of Yvetot may probably have pleaded for it, since it certainly met with a degree of favour unusual in the jealous feudal ages. The great vassals of the Crown, the dukes of Burgundy, the counts of Foix or Toulouse, paid military service and civil homage to the descendant of Louis Capet. But the village-king of Yvetot was, like the modern

prince of Montenegro, an independent sovereign, not bound to contribute a soldier, or a liard of his money, to the armies or the exchequer of the great state, in which his puny domains lay like an island in the ocean. It may be plausibly conjectured that the King of Yvetot was the representative of some local chieftain, whose alliance with a remote king or emperor of the Merovingian or Carolingian line had been rewarded by a promise of protection.

Louis the Eleventh of France, the great enemy of feudal privilege, played with the petty prince of Yvetot as a cat plays with a mouse, but ended by leaving him his narrow sway intact. Yvetot had its mint for the coinage of silver, its high court of justice, its stone gibbet, and its line of frontier-posts, which the French horse-police did not traverse, and within which the decrees of the French king and of the French parliament were null and void. The lords of Yvetot, it must be owned, were discreet princes, and wore their honours meekly, accepting titles, decorations, and even employment, from their royal brothers in Paris; so that Robert, king of Yvetot, was actually a captain in the Guards of Henry the Second.

Charles du Bellay, King of Yvetot, and Marquis du Bellay, the last of this line of infinitesimal sovereigns, would, in any station of life, have been a remarkable man. Through the effects of an accident—the falling in of a floor, when he was a child—he was rendered what in French parlance was designated as a double hunch-back, since his breastbone, no less than his spine, protruded in an unsightly manner. He was, however, active of body, and probably the haughtiest of his ancient race. By his time, the reign of Louis the Thirteenth, people had begun to see the absurdity of a regal title when attached to the possessor of a town no larger than a considerable village, and it needed some nerve to maintain the traditional dignity.

King Charles of Yvetot assumed his royal honours with some misgivings, perhaps, but in perfect seriousness. Wealthy as he was, he rarely visited Paris, preferring to keep up his own court at Yvetot. The Breton heiress whom he had married, the beautiful Helen de Rieux, encouraged her liege lord in his taste for royal magnificence at home. In Paris she would have had to yield precedence to duchesses and *maréchales* of France, but in Yvetot she was queen, although there

were already ominous signs that the pigmy royalty would not much longer be endured by the neighbouring majesty of France.

Whatever we may think of King Charles's droll sovereignty, he was, at all events, one of the richest nobles in Europe. His patrimony brought him in a revenue of above ninety thousand livres tournois, without reckoning the fortune of his wife, and this, bearing in mind that the value of money was then eightfold what it now is, represents a very large income. But it was to his royal rank that he clung, with a tenacity not quite free from fear, for the traditions of his house told him how frequently its peculiar privileges had been within a hair's breadth of destruction, at the frown of monarch or minister.

The French aristocracy, who declined to address the King of Yvetot by any higher title than that of Marquis du Bellay, cost King Charles many a miserable moment. He could not at Yvetot endure to give his right hand, not to be kissed, but to be shaken by mere bishops, barons, and camp-marshals. And it was only the smaller fry of the noblesse who could be put off with a shake of the left hand. For fear of a dispute and a scandal, he kept M. de la Treyelière, who had come to visit him, for four hours on the lawn before his door, and even had a table spread in the open-air, and a collation laid out for the unadmitted guest. Being compelled to invite General de Basilly to dine, an opportune fit of illness confined the royal host to his bed. But Tallemant des Réaux, in his *Memoirs*, somewhat boastfully relates that he had shaken hands with the King of Yvetot.

The Queen of Yvetot, more generally known by the style of Madame du Bellay, was even haughtier and more unbending in manner than her consort. Her life seems to have been spent in contests on points of obsolete etiquette, which no living scholar, probably, could understand without constant reference to the famous *Dictionary of Trévoux*. It was torture to her if a fair visitor, a step or two below her on the nicely-graduated ladder of social precedence, dipped her fingers in the silver bowl of rose-water without waiting till Queen Helen had set the example; and there were at Yvetot certain rules as to the seats to which guests were entitled: a stool for one, a folding-chair for another—plagiarised from the statelier receptions of the Louvre and St. Cloud.

A king is seldom without his favourites, and Charles of Yvetot, in his old age, chose

his very oddly. A gipsy astrologer, one Montmirail, a bold, impudent impostor acquired an extraordinary influence over the versatile prince, and grew rich at his expense. A tribe of half-wild Bohemians—and we must remember that the gipsies of the period, whose ancestors had been in Europe for little more than two centuries—were by far more picturesquely orientaled than the dusky wanderers of to-day—swarmed in Yvetot, haunted the royal mansion, and robbed on every highway for leagues around. The King of Yvetot was hailed by the dubious dignity of King of the Egyptians; and really seems, in his last years, to have been a sort of regal prototype of Bamfylde Moore Carew.

The follies of this prodigal prince were abruptly ended by his sudden death. He had squandered great sums, had mortgaged his revenues; and was reported to have lavished in gifts alone—bestowed chiefly on unworthy recipients—more than a quarter of a million sterling of our present money. When the kinsman and next heir of M. du Bellay made the usual request to the French king, for permission to assume the royal title, Louis the Fourteenth sternly refused it. It was not the only petty principality, surrounded by Gallic territory, which the magnificent builder of Versailles was fated to extinguish. The monarch who took Avignon from the Pope, Orange from William the Third of England, and suppressed the privileges of his own Navarre, was not likely to tolerate such an anachronism as Yvetot.

It was a tradition in the princely family of Du Bellay that, when Louis the Eleventh, who had a superstitious unwillingness to hear himself spoken of as a king, dined with the then monarch of Yvetot, he startled the latter by suddenly exclaiming to his courtiers: "Gentlemen, there are no longer any kings in France!" but refrained from depriving his puny brother of his titular rank. His successor and namesake, however, proved less scrupulous; nor, after the year 1665, do we find any mention in history of a king, prince, or lord of Yvetot. King Charles was the last of his dynasty.

OUT OF SIGHT.

THE drifting snow piles white and soft above them,
The rain drips wearily on sodden clay,
The keen frost brings his sharpest darts to prove them,
The east wind wails through all the lonely day;
And yet, through bitter morn, and bitter night,
The roots grow slow and surely—out of sight.

Chilled by indifference, drowned deep in tears,
Withered by coldness, stung by subtle doubt,
Crushed by the counsel of world-hardened years,
By poverty's armed cohorts put to rout,
Silent and shy, still forcing to the light,
The pure dumb love is growing—out of sight.

And sweetest of all darlings of the Spring,
The violet nestled in the quickset hedge;
And dearest is the mystic marriage-ring,
Of hard-ried constancy triumphant pledge;
The sunniest morning crowns the roughest night,
The richest treasures ripen—out of sight.

INCORRIGIBLE.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"A MAN who comes and goes to and from his business in the City, on the knife-board of an omnibus!"

"I know: I have thought of that: I shall be able to watch for him coming home."

"A man who will take you to live in a semi-detached villa, on some suburban road no one ever heard of——"

"Yes; they are so comfortable, those semi-detached houses——"

"Small rooms!"

"I like small rooms; how cosy they are of an evening when the curtains are drawn close! I shall have his tea all ready for him, you know, when he comes home; he always looks so tired after his day's work: poor Edgar!"

"You had better say you will have shrimps and water-cresses at once, and then there will be——"

"No further depths of vulgar enormity possible. Well, we will have shrimps and water-cresses then!"

"Katie, you are incorrigible!"

"So Miss Collier used to say!" returned the subject of this flattering remark, with a gentle sigh of submission to fate, as though the quality of incorrigibility were a thing she could no more help than the colour of her eyes or hair.

Let us take a glance at this unmanageable Kate. Dark eyes, deeply set beneath well-defined brows; a square low forehead, round which the burnished locks formed delicate tendrils; a little straight nose, and the sweetest and most perfect mouth, hardly ever close shut, and just, only just, showing a tiny line of pearl-white teeth: as to stature, neither noticeable for height or the reverse, but very noticeable indeed for a supple figure that owed none of its slimness to compression.

There is a gravity almost trenching upon sadness in this girl's eyes, that seems at variance with the sweet mouth; and a physiologist would have predicted from

the union of the two, that when the experience of life should have deepened and developed her character, she would possess much power of endurance, together with a keen capability of suffering.

Such characters are brave even to defiance, and wont to seek little comfort either in self-pity or in the pity of others.

And Katie was one who loved with passionate intensity, when once her tenderness was aroused; only clinging the closer to those she held dear, when others scorned, alighted, or ridiculed them.

She, and her sister Maud, one year her senior, had been left motherless when too young to realise their loss; they had been reared under the care of a governess, who by her devotion and wisdom had almost succeeded in filling a mother's place, but at the time my story opens matters were greatly changed.

Miss Collier had left them to go and reside with an invalid relative, and—greatest change of all—their father, John Draper Stewart, had married again, and a close alliance, the result of similarity of great tastes and ideas, had come about between Maud and her stepmother.

So you see, Katie was somewhat "left out in the cold!"

In fact, as we have just heard her sister declare, she was "incorrigible," and not even the combined wills of the other two, not all their sneers and ceaseless bickerings, could induce her to give up her young lover, Edgar Birley.

I fear that the pretty rebel received underhand encouragement from John Stewart himself, for though the new wife ruled him with a rod of iron, and made him pay a pretty figure for having married a person "well-connected," and a ci-devant beauty into the bargain, he, like the honest City merchant he was, held certain strong notions of fair-play, and roundly declared that he "liked the lad."

Now, to use Mrs. Draper Stewart's own expression, her husband and the obnoxious Edgar were "tarred with the same brush." For she was one of those women who think it no shame to sneer at a husband's profession, and yet, at the same time, by no means disdain to batten in the luxury that is the result thereof.

Certainly, so far as being both "City men," and honest, hardworking members of the mercantile world, Mr. Stewart and Edgar Birley were "birds of a feather."

Here, however, all likeness ended, for while the former by a series of lucky

business undertakings had rapidly become a rich man, Edgar's father had done just the opposite, and the son's prospects had suffered accordingly, and this succession of reverses had gone far to break the health and spirit of old Birley, and to scatter to the four winds of heaven the earnings of a lifetime.

His son, however, seemed nothing daunted, and put his shoulder to the wheel with a will.

No wonder either, with Kate's loving eyes and bright smile to give him courage!

Mrs. Draper Stewart ignored all London lying east of Temple Bar, and if anyone (generally Kate, by-the-way) made use of the word "warehouse," she put her scented handkerchief to her nose, and sniffed plaintively, as though something of an ill savour

Came between the wind and her gentility.

Still her friends were wont to say that "really Amelia had done very well for herself," for they pardoned the merchant's social shortcomings, in consideration of his yearly thousands. Amelia was now engaged in a struggle to do still better for herself, which meant attaining as high a rung of the social ladder as possible. Maud, just nineteen, stately and beautiful, and as vain as any plumed macaw, seemed no bad fulcrum upon which to rest the social lever, and the stepmother was not without hopes that a brilliant marriage might at length assure the family position, and satisfy her own craving ambition.

Maud was "out," but Kate still only fluttered upon the edge of the social world, and ceaseless were the domestic moanings over that "lamentable affair with young Birley."

However, this affair had risen and culminated before the second Mrs. Stewart began her reign, and while Kate was, as that lady declared emphatically, "a perfect child, and quite unable to know her own mind."

"She seems to know it well enough now, at all events," John would make rejoinder, in the simplicity of his heart.

And I think Katie found no small comfort in knowing that her father was Edgar's partisan. She was not one to make her moan over small troubles, but after a long day's nagging from the other two women, it was very nice to slip downstairs as she heard his latch-key in the hall-door, and get a hearty kiss and a "Well, my lass!" that was perhaps not as genteel as it might have been, but some-

how brought a misty brightness to her eyes, a glow of comfort to her heart.

And now, after a rather digressive fashion, we have come back to our starting-point, and can understand Maud's sneers about the semi-detached villa on the suburban road. Kate had a bright, and often a witty answer at the tip of her tongue for all such taunts, but she saw that her lover was heavily weighted in the battle of life, and she suffered with him, and for him, as only a woman who loves with all her heart can suffer.

I am not prepared to take upon myself to say that John Draper Stewart himself was as happy in the big red-brick mansion in South Kensington, of which he was now the owner, as he had been years back, in a far smaller abode, in a less fashionable district. Then he used to dine at home in the middle of the day on a Saturday, and take the little lassies and their mother out for a stroll afterwards; while later in the evening, when the children were in bed, he and the wife were wont to indulge in a little bit of supper, something hot and savoury, and perhaps prepared as a surprise for the "house-father."

Fancy anyone suggesting such a vulgar enormity at the house in South Kensington! Why the very gargoyles on the waterspouts would have blushed!

However, John loved his second wife sincerely, and moreover admired her as a marvel of elegance, so he never grumbled at what were to him new-fangled ways, but tried his best to be a fine gentleman, and if he found the grandeur of his new surroundings occasionally oppressive, he never said so.

Only nothing that his elder daughter, or yet the wife of his bosom, could say, would induce him to hear a word against Edgar.

"The lad's a good lad, and he'll make his way, and the lass is willing to wait."

That was all they could get out of John Stewart.

When Mr. Birley, senior, was unfortunate in business, things naturally became worse for Katie, and even the semi-detached villa began to partake largely of the nature of a castle in the air.

"She shan't be balked though, if I can help it," pondered the successful merchant, lying awake one night, and letting his thoughts "hark back" to the old days that were gone, when his Mary was alive and his income by no means too large for even their simple way of living.

"Her mother married me when things looked blue enough, and the lass shall save her way, God bless her! in spite of—"

But here I fear that John became somewhat disloyal to the "powers that were," so I shall not further chronicle his reflections.

Suffice it to say, he resolved to send for Edgar, and see what could be done in the way of putting him in a responsible position in his own house of business.

He resolved to do this, but just then a rush of important business took up all his time, and kept him at the warehouse late very evening for a week.

"I will write to the boy to-night," said John to himself, on the last day of that week of hurry and bustle. And the next morning, in the midst of his work, he was struck down by a sudden seizure, and taken home to the house in South Kensington, there to linger for two or three days of unconsciousness, and then to pass away to the silent land. Ah, alas! How sad it was to see poor Kate, kneeling by the bed on which he lay, and watching—watching all in vain—for a glance of recognition! To see her holding his lifeless, palsied hand against her breast, longing to feel the poor cold fingers close in hers!

As for Amelia, her nerves could not stand the sights and sounds of the sick-room; so she lay on the sofa in an adjoining room, with a handkerchief in one hand and a bottle of salts in the other, while Maud ministered to her in her sufferings.

And thus John Stewart, the rich City merchant, passed away.

When his will was opened and the contents made public, people wondered.

For by one of those strange dispositions of property often made by men otherwise sane, he had left the whole of his fortune, red-brick house and all, to "Amelia his wife;" and the two girls were left unprovided for, beyond the few hundred pounds that had been their mother's marriage-portion.

In time, as they always do, people got tired of wondering.

And besides, a very wealthy widow is a harming acquisition to society.

As to the widow herself, I should be afraid to say in so many words that she experienced a relief in the disappearance of "dear John" from this mortal sphere; but that, after the first few months of tedious seclusion, she felt a certain re-

freshing sense of lightness and freedom, I fear is a pretty certain fact.

Meanwhile, Maud shed floods of tears over "poor papa," looking lovely all the while too; which is more than ninety-nine women out of a hundred can manage to do: but for all her grief, she took a keen interest in the form and fashion of her mourning, and was serenely glad that black suited her so well.

She shed renewed tears when the said black was put on, and Kate ungraciously enough replied, "What does it matter?" to some comment on the "fit" of the garments in question.

That was what the summing up of the girl's life came to just then.

"What did it matter? What did anything matter, when the hearty, loving voice could never greet her any more, and there was no one to meet at the hall-door of an evening? "The place that knew him shall know him no more." Those words seemed ever in Kate's heart, as, silent and pale, she went about her usual employments.

But of course there was always Edgar.

I hardly know how the child would have borne her burden of sorrow, in these dark days that had come upon her, if it had not been for Edgar: for with her head upon his shoulder, and his arms around her, she could let the tears have their way; and he was too wise to try and offer anything, save a silent sympathy. Yet how precious it was!

How the thought of his hand gently touching her bowed head quieted her throughout the long, long days! How the lingering tenderness of his "good-night" kiss nerved her to bear all the thousand little jars, that daily life with those she differed from in every thought and feeling brought upon her!

Only a very few months after the master of the house at Kensington was laid to rest in the family vault, his widow began to emerge from seclusion; and Maud gladly followed in her footsteps. "Half" mourning was pronounced exquisitely becoming to that young lady's cream-white skin, and so the stepmother and daughter gradually re-entered upon all the old social battle-grounds; pensive and subdued, as became those lately bereaved, but enjoying themselves intensely nevertheless, and much made of by sympathising friends.

But Kate was "incorrigible."

Not one solitary knot of tender pearl-

gray ribbon relieved the sombreness of her plain black dress; no single "white flower, with black foliage," adorned the simple bonnet that rested on her crown of burnished hair.

She went her own way quietly and unobtrusively, making no comment upon the proceedings of the other two; thinking her own thoughts, reading the books she loved, and singing and playing to herself in the morning-room which belonged exclusively to the sisters, and which Maud troubled little enough with her presence.

And here, one evening in every week, Edgar came to see her.

Even Mrs. Stewart, greatly as she longed to do so, and much as she hated the sight of the young fellow, had not ventured to interfere with this arrangement as yet.

So the days of the week for Katie were as beads on the string of time, and in each week glistened one bead of gold!

One evening when he was sure to come—when she never watched and listened in vain for the well-known knock, and the quick firm step along the corridor—one evening when she was greeted by loving words, and held in the strong clasp of arms that had the divine right of love given and taken, to hold her close and fast! Oh, they were golden, happy evenings, those on which her little closely-braided head might rest upon his shoulder, and when the scornful lips might soften into a happy smile, beneath the kisses that told her, better than any words could do, how dear he held her in his heart of hearts! How easy to bear were jibes, and taunts, and sneers, when she had such happy memories to look back upon!

For now that John Stewart was no longer there to take his girl's part, his Kate had hard times of it.

Troubles never come alone; and shortly after the rich man's death, the poor man was called away too, and Joseph Birley died, leaving nothing but debts behind him. Yes though, he left a widow and two delicate helpless girls, both younger than Edgar, who had no one to look to but the son and brother, so you see Kate's airy castle seemed fading out of sight like a dissolving view.

"I told my father on his death-bed they should never want for anything while I could work," said Edgar, holding her little soft hand closely in his own.

She was looking with brave, undaunted eyes up into his face.

What sort of a face?

Oh, not at all like what a hero's face ought to be: quite commonplace in fact, I fear. A firm well-cut mouth and clear, dark, candid eyes, are about all it has to boast of in the way of beauty.

But to Kate there is no such face in all the world!

She does not heed the lines that care, and sorrow, and hard work have graven round the mouth, and on the brow, taking away all the youthful brightness that ought to be the heritage of three-and-twenty years.

The more worn, the more sorrowful that face becomes, the dearer does it grow in Kate's eyes; for all the passion of which her intense nature is capable is poured out in her love for this man, and with it mingles that tender, would-be protecting pity, which savours of a mother's love for her child.

Revolted by the hollowness of the fashionable life in which the two women who are her household companions find all their happiness, she turns to the thought of her lover's reality, his thoroughness, and the stern fight he wages with fortune, as the weary turn to thoughts of rest.

If Maud came rustling and sailing into the room when Edgar was there, and thought to awe and annihilate him by the condescension and magnificence of her manner, not one whit did Katie care.

Her love, she thought, was set too high on the throne of her own loyal heart for such petty arrows to touch him.

So she would laugh when Maud had retired, and kneeling at his side, look up at him with such saucy eyes and smiling lips, that he was constrained to laugh too.

But these quiet happy days were before responsibilities and anxieties pressed so sorely upon Edgar's young shoulders, that they threatened to make an old man of him before his time.

Once—Katie never will forget that time, if she live to be a hundred years—he laid his head down wearily upon her shoulder, and she felt a great deep quivering sob rise from his very heart.

"My darling! oh, my darling!" she said, bending over him, and pressing the dark head against her breast with two little trembling hands.

"My comfort, my own little, sweet, true girl!" he murmured, holding her close. And then her bright, hopeful nature asserted itself, and though tears glittered in her eyes, she smiled as she answered him:

"Your comfort? Why of course I'm your comfort; haven't I pledged myself to be your helpmeet?"

Thus she won him to forget his sorrows and anxieties for a time; but as he left her that night, Kate called him back, and looking very grave, bade him not work "too hard."

"You do not look like you used to do, dear," she said wistfully; "promise me to take more care of yourself?"

So he kissed her and promised.

Yet Katie sighed as she heard the hall-door close; for she knew there are some promises that are hard to keep.

MYCENÆ.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the time that could be spared from the discussion of the everlasting Eastern Question, has been devoted of late to the evolving of theories many and various concerning Dr. Schliemann's wonderful discoveries at Mycenæ. Of Dr. Schliemann himself, the indefatigable wielder of the pickaxe, the ardent worshipper of old Homer, we need here say nothing, as our readers have already had before them a full account of his past career.* About Mycenæ, on the other hand, its geographical position, and its personal appearance, so to speak, it is probable that people are rather more in the dark. Where is it? asks one man, honestly confessing an ignorance which is shared by many, although most people prefer to maintain a mysterious reserve on the point. Of course most people of this sort, although they confess to not knowing exactly where it is, have a general idea, don't you know, that it must be somewhere near Troy, or Olympia, or Athens—or any other Greek name that happens to have remained in their heads from school-boy days. I have even heard one person ask whether it was not in Ithaca. The amount of hazy geographical knowledge floating about in the world, which only requires a little sifting and verifying to be really valuable to its possessors, is surprising. However, my honest enquirer, if you really want to know where Mycenæ is, you must turn to the map. I myself am fortunate enough to have just seen the place, but though I have it all before me,

in my mind's eye, I cannot hope to give much idea of it to others, unless I can presume in them some knowledge of its whereabouts. Well then, get a map of Greece, lay your finger on the Peloponnesus, find the Gulf of Nauplia on the east coast; Argos lies at the head of the gulf, and about four miles north-east of Argos is Mycenæ. To get to Mycenæ you come by sea to Nauplia, an excellent port, and in Turkish days, under its old name, Napoli di Roumania, capital of Greece. Its present name dates from the days when Agamemnon, king of men, here assembled his ships ere he sailed for Troy. From here you drive to Argos, about four miles, and thence to Mycenæ. We came the other way, from the interior to Argos, but this that I have described is the ordinary way.

It was about half-an-hour after midnight when we rattled into the city of King Diomede, feeling half a mind to complain to that monarch of the badness of the road just outside the town, only we reflected that he had been dead some two thousand five hundred years or so, and had probably ceased to take much interest in such questions. We made the best of our case therefore, and turned into most comfortable quarters, hospitably provided for us by the doctor and ex-mayor of Argos. Next morning we were conducted through the town by our excellent host, who spoke French quite fluently. There is not very much to see in Argos, except its magnificent citadel, which hangs above the town; a gray bare rock, terminating a long ridge, and crowned with the ruins of a Turkish fortress, about the foundations of which they say are still to be seen fragments of the old Greek walls. Cut out of the same hill is the theatre, from the top of which, looking northward and eastward, you get a glorious view of the plain of Argos, a richly cultivated stretch of country, covered, when we saw it, with great fields of green waving corn, with here and there patches of brown earth where the soil had been newly turned. Far away in front rose ridge upon ridge of mountains bounding the plain. One of the lower spurs of the nearest range was pointed out as Mycenæ. To the right of these mountains the white houses of Nauplia glittered in the morning sun, the citadel overhanging the town behind, a blue elbow of sea running inland in front. The view on the right was closed in by the sea, with a gray haze hanging

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 12, p. 199, "Dr. Schliemann's Early Career."

over it, and the mountains of Laconia to the south-east. At our feet lay Argos, looking very picturesque with its white houses and grayish-red tiled roofs, dotted about with olives, and mulberries, and other fruit trees, in fresh leaf and blossom, varied occasionally by a dark cypress. Immediately to our left was the citadel, and beyond that again another rocky range of hills sweeping round till they seem to join the masses in front. I say seemed to join, for in reality the road to Corinth lies between them. When I add that bright and hot as the sun was, there were yet heavy masses of cloud hanging here and there above the hills, and throwing dark shadows on to the plain, I have done all that a mere painter in words can do to describe such a scene. My readers must fill in the outlines of the picture for themselves.

But we are for getting Mycenæ. We started from Argos about one o'clock, and a delightful drive we had through the green cornfields. In about an hour's time the road came to an end in the middle of a small village at the foot of a low rocky ridge. Some soldiers were hanging about a small guardhouse as we passed, and these we learnt were part of the detachment told off to take charge of the excavations. The Greeks are tired of seeing their treasures carried off by foreigners, so, though they will allow said foreigners to dig as much as they like, and spend as much money in digging as they can afford, they take very good care that everything that is found is handed over to the Government. A very wise people, as they ever were. Possession and contemplation of the works of their ancestors must precede a proper appreciation of them. They are insisting now upon possession, and artistic appreciation is accordingly already showing signs of growth among them.

Well, we left the carriage in the village below and mounted a winding path which led us upward, though as yet we could hardly see whither, Mycenæ itself being still hidden behind these lower ridges. We knew, however, that it must stand between us and the high bare peaks which rose sheer up beyond. We soon gained the first height, then descending a little we came suddenly to the left upon the famous treasure-house, or more probably tomb of Atreus. It has been often described, so I will confine myself to a very few words about it, for the benefit of those who do

not happen to be familiar with its construction. A fine doorway of huge blocks of stone, with a triangular aperture above, leads down five or six steps into a most remarkable chamber shaped like a beehive, and paralleled, I believe, in Western Europe, only by the Old and New Granges in Ireland. The whole interior is lined with very fine masonry, the average size of the stones being, I should say, about five feet by two. Some are a great deal bigger, and one, that over the doorway on the inside, is of a fabulous size. By rough measurement I made it out to be about thirty feet long, twenty-two feet broad, and four deep, which figures I believe to be rather under than above the mark. The inner surface is scooped out to fit the curve of the building. The outer lintel stone is also enormous. The arch of the interior is got by each stone of the wall protruding slightly beyond the stone below it, so that at last the walls all round meet at the top, where the hive is closed in by a single stone, representing a keystone, though not of course possessing any claim to that title, as the building would stand perfectly well without it. Two years ago this chamber was quite dark and full of rubbish. It has now been cleared out, and light has been let in by raising the earth above, and taking out one or two of the topmost stones. Its substantial contents, whatever they may have been, were carried off long ago.

There is another smaller chamber, leading out of the first, to the right of the door, not however cased with masonry, but roughly hewn out of the rock. Coming out of this subterranean abode, where many mighty kings and heroes of ancient days may have laid their weary bones, we stood once more in the bright sunshine, with the bare gray peaks before us defined with almost startling clearness against the blue sky. Below them and not fifty yards from us, we could now see a height with unmistakable fortification about it, and a bank of newly-piled earth on its lower edge showed where the energetic Doctor had been disturbing poor Agamemnon's well-earned repose. Turning to our left to follow the pathway which wound upwards in that direction, we came upon a second conical chamber, not so perfect either in construction or preservation as the last, but very similar in character. It is approached by a much longer passage, walled in with excellent masonry. Some rude ornamentation is

still visible above the doorway, which is also surmounted by a triangular opening, closed, however, on the inside. This chamber, which has been lately cleared out by Dr. Schliemann, though without much result, has fallen in from about half way up; only one course of stones at all approaches in size those which are used in the tomb of Atreus. I believe no owner has yet been found for this tomb, so I recommend it to the attention of enterprising theorists. There was not much to detain us here, so we ascended and soon found ourselves mounting the path which leads to the famous gateway of the lions. I need hardly trouble my readers with the emotions which well-nigh overwhelmed me at the sight of this world-renowned portal. "Here," thought I, racking my brain to conjure up all the ingredients necessary to proper contemplation of such a scene, "I see with my own eyes the very gate under which Agamemnon, king of men, and yellow-haired Menelaus must have passed with their glittering train as they set out for Troy. Under these very walls, ten years afterwards, false Clytemnestra and her base paramour must have welcomed home the returning conqueror, concealing with soft words and smiles the deadly intent which they had in their hearts. Here Orestes—" but I will spare my readers further rhapsody—which, after all, anyone with a lively imagination and Dr. Smith's classical dictionary at his fingers' ends, can turn out by the yard—and lead the way through the said gate, which passed, we come at once upon the scene of Dr. Schliemann's labours. There on the right are the "diggings," a platform about fifty yards long by twenty broad, surrounded on the three sides which overlook the plain by the old outer wall of the city.

We come first on the circular enclosure, fenced in with a double line of stones placed upright, where were found the bodies of Agamemnon and his companions, together with all the treasure of which we have heard so much. These have now been taken to Athens, where I afterwards saw them. At Mycenæ we had at least the satisfaction of seeing the place where they had been lying buried for so many centuries. We did not, unfortunately, see the carved stone slabs which covered the graves, for we did not hear till we got to Athens that they were still looked up in the village below. At Mycenæ we made most anxious enquiries, but were assured

that everything, without exception, had been removed to Athens. The whole place is strewn with fragments of old pottery, two small pieces of which (pace the Greek Government, who are exceedingly particular about such relics) I pocketed, and still have in my possession. I have not yet made up my mind how I shall label them in my private museum. How would this do? No. 3003, Fragment of Agamemnon's washhand-basin, Mycenæ, 1877. No. 3004, Piece of Clytemnestra's rouge-pot, ditto. I don't think anybody would be bold enough to dispute the nomenclature.

Beyond the circular enclosure above mentioned other vaults have been uncovered, which may also have been tombs, though no human remains were found in them, and no gold—indeed, nothing, I believe, but some pots and pans of various descriptions. Digging has ceased here for the time being, and no one may go on without permission from the Greek Government. I see from Dr. Schliemann's statement the other day that the Greeks mean to take the matter into their own hands now, and will not allow him any further connection with it. He somewhat unkindly prophesies the failure of their efforts, undirected by his experience and skill. Nevertheless, from what I saw of the native overseers who will superintend the work, I think it likely that if there is anything more to find they will find it. Time will show. In the meantime the movements of visitors to the spot are jealously watched by the military guardians. We distressed one of these worthy gentlemen very much by scraping away a little earth with the point of an umbrella. He came rushing up with the warning, "Excavation is not allowed!" and hung about us uneasily during the rest of our stay. As we were coming down the hill afterwards, one of our party picked up a stone, examined it with great eagerness, and then slyly put it into his pocket, taking care that our guide should see him do so. I am sure he thought it was some gold ring or precious gem, for his anxiety knew no bounds, till it was dispelled by an outburst of laughter, which assured him that we had but played upon his fears. He then enjoyed the joke as much as any of us.

Before we came down, we made our way up out of Agamemnon's burial-ground to the top of the citadel. From this point we could make out three lines of wall going

round the hill. The masonry of these walls was chiefly of the kind known as polygonal. In one of them was a very remarkable postern-gate, made of three single blocks of stone, two forming the posts, and one lying upon them. From the wall above the lion gate we had another glorious view of the plain, which in the morning we had seen from the lower end. The sea is now far away on the left, a lovely blue streak with a haze hanging over it. Then comes an amphitheatre of hills, stretching away round till they are broken by the green pass on our right which leads to Corinth. About midway in the circle the citadel of Argos stands boldly out into the plain. A fine enough scene in any case, but, as we saw it, quite splendid. Grand masses of mist and cloud were gathered above the hills which faced us, and through these the rays of the sun forced their way in separate bands, each, as it fell, lighting up hill-side or plain with a wonderful gleam, which made the dark shadows between look darker still. Imagine the surface over which this light and shade was constantly playing to be very much broken, so as to multiply almost infinitely the variety of effect; add to the picture the fresh green and rich browns which streaked the plain below, the blue sky above our heads, the snowy mass of "hoar Kyllene" towering behind the opposite hills, and you will have a scene such as one sees but rarely in a lifetime, a scene which an artist might love to study, but could hardly hope to reproduce.

As we drove back across the plain to Argos, this wonderful interchange of gleam and shadow gradually gave way to a warm sunset glow, followed in its turn by the blackness of night.

So much for our day at Mycenæ. A word or two about the treasures now at Athens, and I have done. These treasures I was fortunate enough to see very thoroughly, the courtesy of the officials in charge being freely extended to my companion, whose labours in the field of Greek archæology have won him great respect at the hands of the Greeks. We saw first in the National Bank the principal gold ornaments, displayed in shallow boxes of cardboard, evidently procured from some milliner's establishment. The first thing to be noticed was the extreme thinness of the gold, then its difference in quality, some being ruddy, some of a brassy yellow. Besides the famous gold masks, which are ugly enough in all conscience, however

mighty the faces they may have covered, there was a well-modelled cow's head in silver with golden horns, cups and bowls of various shape, some much battered belts, breast ornaments, bracelets, studs, buttons, and so on. Nearly all these articles were covered, in repoussée work, with various designs, such as the spiral ornament so common in Celtic remains, circles, &c., as well as rude representations of animals, at full gallop, with legs stretched out nearly horizontally. There was one little tray containing several small jugs, vases, and bowls, concerning which I heard a lady shrewdly remark, "Oh! look there, how charming! of course that must be a tea-service!" I need hardly say that her happy suggestion was warmly applauded by her friends. There were about a dozen very handsome gold rings, chiefly signet, though one or two were of snake form, engraved with designs of figures very vigorously though rudely executed. They rather reminded one of a child's attempts to draw men with a dot for the head, and straight lines for the legs, arms, and body. But, as it has been truly said, the infancy of art is synonymous with the art of infancy. To complete the list of articles here displayed there were one or two ornaments in the form of a cross; a good many clasps or brooches formed by two animals, lions, deer, or dogs, sitting face to face, heraldic fashion; and a few long iron bodkins with crystal handles, described to us, with much probability, as graveurs' tools, but which I have seen called elsewhere shawl or hair-pins.

On the day after we had seen these articles we were admitted to a private view of some other things which are kept locked in a strong room down below, and have only been shown to a few archæologists. These were chiefly fragments of pottery, some of it very Greek in character, some large bronze vases, a three-pronged fork, some swords, and a very remarkable wooden box, with queer little silver figures of animals stuck about it. We saw also a really beautiful silver vase, very modern-looking in design, and a silver elk with large horns, carefully preserved in a handbox. Some days afterwards at the Ministry of Public Instruction, we saw yet a few more things, the most interesting being a bronze key, some flint arrow-heads, and a few engraved gems.

I have not attempted to do more than briefly describe all this treasure. To pronounce upon its age or origin seems a task

at present even beyond the powers of men who have spent all their lives in the study of archæology, though I believe the conviction that at least the germ of Hellenic art may here be traced is rapidly gaining ground. A mere layman does well to hold his tongue about such matters. The general impression the things as a whole made upon me was that they were curious rather than beautiful, and as far as art is concerned, apart from the natural interest excited by the history of its development, might just as well be consigned to the melting-pot, from which some people are malicious enough to affirm that Dr. Schliemann called them into being. It is but justice, however, to the worthy doctor to say that such a theory has the support neither of reason nor of fact.

WHAT HE COST HER.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASHINGBERD," "AT HER MERCY,"
"HALVES," &c.

CHAPTER LV. AND LAST. EXILE.

It was something, of course—and even a great deal—to Ella, that the catastrophe that had overwhelmed her life (for it did no less) was the cause of reconciliation between her and hers. But her shame was too deep and dark to be relieved by this gleam of joy, and her sorrow too heavy to be borne, though so dear and unlooked-for an ally did his best to share the burden. In England, at least, she felt life to be unendurable, and preparations were made at once to take her to another clime. It was arranged that in a few weeks her father and she were to start for New Zealand, a colony much affected by that High Church divine, and in which, as it happened, he was possessed of house and land. She was unhappy, but thanks to the recovery of her father's love, and doubtless also to the consolation that always flows from our self-sacrifices, she could not with justice be called wretched. From those who knew her, she had won a rare respect, deeper perhaps than she had ever enjoyed in the days of her prosperity, when the generosity of her soul had remained latent. By the world at large, which knows so little of those it passes judgment on so flippantly, she was ill spoken of. Its lying tongue described her as a designing girl, who had entrapped her lover, as she imagined, into matrimony,

and whose conduct when she discovered her mistake had been as unscrupulous as it was vindictive. The fear of a prosecution for perjury had alone wrung from her the admission that had set her husband free; and as for the tenderness with which her character had been treated by the opposing counsel, that was accounted for by her pretty face; though, indeed, added the ladies (for it is their opinion for the most part that I quote), "what people saw in her, in the way of beauty, to make so much fuss about, they were utterly at a loss to discover."

The lawful Mrs. Landon (whom, however, they had not seen) was infinitely better looking, and, as they understood, "poor thing," perfectly respectable in every way. How shocking it was to think that she had nearly lost her husband through a base conspiracy, the members of which comprised, besides this profligate and reckless woman, her father, a clergyman of the Church of England, who had doubtless had his own reasons for disavowing their relationship, and her uncle, a sort of military bully, who had made a personal assault upon a young gentleman of rank and fashion, for expressing the same opinion upon the matter which was shared by all reasonable persons. With the world, however, Ella no longer mixed; so that its views were lost upon her. In only one piece of gaiety—and that of a quiet sort—did she take part, before she left England. Gracie Ray was married to Hugh Darall from her house.

This had been arranged, as we know, under different circumstances, and Ella had written to the bridegroom (for the bride would not so much as listen to her) to point out to him how disadvantageous it would be to them, socially, to adhere to the old programme. "Gracie should come to you," said she, "not only without reproach, but without the shadow of it, and, unhappily, the shadow is here." He had written back to say that "his bride's sentiments, as respected the house from which she wished to be married, were also his; and that, of the many reasons for which his respect went hand in hand with his love for her, this was the chief—that she could call herself Ella's friend, and appreciate to the full the magnanimity of her character." He had addressed her, he added, according to her express wish, as "Mrs. Juxon" (for since the result of the trial she had adopted her maiden name), but he was well aware that it had been

within her own power to retain her former title.

So strong indeed were Darall's feelings upon this point, that he would have removed from Grantham, and taken his quarters with his mother elsewhere, so that his future wife might not become associated with those who, of necessity, had been Ella's opponents. At her own earnest desire, however, he had consented to remain at the Wold Cottage.

If his removal would have been a protest in her favour, his remaining in the village was no less so. It soon came to be well understood that, where he was present, the late trial must be, by no means, discussed unreservedly; or, rather, that when the first Mrs. Landon was spoken of, it must needs be with propriety and respect. Strangely enough, however, nothing unpleasant was ever said about her by those who had taken an active part as her antagonists in the late proceedings. Mr. Everett, Mr. Welby, and Helen were all silent, a circumstance which made association with them, on Darall's part, easier than could have been reasonably expected.

As for Cecil, he, of course, never spoke of Ella, and but rarely of anything else. A physical shock will destroy a man, in mind and matter; anything amiss—be it but the size of a pin's point—in a man's brain will paralyse the strong, or render the wisest a drivelling idiot; but mental troubles (as the materialist delights to show) have seldom the same force. It is not often that a single disappointment, disgrace, bereavement, what you will, will wholly change a man. Yet thus it was with Cecil Landon. The consciousness of his late narrow escape from social perdition, the knowledge of his ill desert, and, above all, the humiliation of his very soul, caused by the consciousness that he had escaped ruin through the magnanimity of the woman he had loved, had indeed overwhelmed him utterly. Every grain of self-respect had vanished. He avoided society as though he were a leper, for he felt, even when others knew it not, that his presence was contagion. There were some, indeed, that still called him and still believed him to be almost a martyr—that is, a man who has been very nearly made one. But what satisfaction is it to be thought a martyr, when one knows oneself to be a sneak? Moreover, those more immediately connected with him—Helen and the vicar, for example; nay, even his own father—were also of his own opinion.

He knew that they despised him utterly. His only hope was—which, indeed, came in time to be realised—that their keen contempt would eventually be rounded off to pity.

The one great exception, without which existence would perhaps have been impossible to him, was his wife. Rose believed in him still implicitly, with a credulity which it would have been cruel indeed to have enlightened, and in which, I am glad to say, once for all, she remained throughout her life. She knew that he had been "entangled" by a certain young person, when he was but a boy, and had shown much weakness under great temptation; that a terrible attempt had been made by the same individual to avenge herself upon him, and that—as she, Rose Landon, his lawful wife, had felt quite sure it would—it had signally failed. Her beloved husband had returned to her, purged of his former folly, for which he had been indeed grievously punished, and without stain, save that which he had already confessed to her. For her part she was very willing to let bygones be bygones, but it was by no means to his discredit that the remembrance of his wrongdoing and its consequences still preyed upon his mind. In time, no doubt, his old brightness would return to him, and in the meanwhile she had no reason to reproach him for lack of love. Cecil's devotion to her was complete, and it is but fair to add that it so continued to be. To the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society I have always subscribed—my adhesion; and let me do justice to this prisoner, who has been discharged, though it is true not on the ground of innocence. He did not suffer, indeed, as poor Ella did, though his was the transgression, and not hers, but that is the way in which "a difficulty" between the sexes always turns out—arising, probably, from the sin of our first female parent. And that Cecil Landon was not happy even his greatest enemy would have allowed. He gave up all commercial pursuits, with his father's full approval. That speculation of his in the South of England had not turned out favourably; and, besides, the old man had lost all confidence in him. He preferred to go on toiling alone in the old way, rather than to be assisted by a half-hearted partner, who had also deceived him. But he bought his son a farm at Grantham, by way of occupation for him; and, foreseeing how that would turn out, provided him

with an income sufficient for the simple needs of the young couple, as well as for the agricultural deficit:

If Cecil never became a model farmer, he improved, however, in that line; and if he never rose to the dignity of a model husband, he was better than most. Indeed, Rose had no cause to complain of Cecil, whatever charge might have been brought against him by another; and if he had fallen far shorter of perfection than he did, she would have forgiven him. The knowledge of a certain something that was to happen would have "clothed him with a dearness not his due," even in that case from the first; it filled her with new love for him, and with gratitude to Heaven, that a child was about to be vouchsafed her to inherit his virtues. Helen was thankful, too, with even a more fervent thankfulness, but upon a very different account. She pictured to herself with a shudder how matters would have been *now* had Cecil been convicted, and thanked Heaven that the coming blessing was not a catastrophe and a curse.

The marriage of Darall and Gracie took place, as we have said, in Ella's house. It was the last use she made of it before she left home, and friends, and country—a self-exiled woman. It was a very quiet wedding, with but few guests, but the commissary and his wife were among them. Ella had sent them an invitation without much hope, or fear, that they would accept it; but they did so. It was a matter of general observation that the acting-deputy-assistant-commissary-general did not wear the same air of conscious dignity that had so become him of yore. He might have been a mere lieutenant to look at him; and even somebody else's lieutenant; which indeed he was. Mrs. Ray Number Two (née De Horsingham) was his captain, or at least his commanding-officer.

"How on earth could she have attained her supremacy?" enquired Darall (with the pardonable anxiety of a man who was about to enter the state of matrimony) of Colonel Gerard Juxon.

"My good fellow, it is all through biceps. Look at that woman's arm."

His delight in the fulfilment of his prophecy put the colonel into the highest spirits, and greatly conduced to the success of the day's proceedings.

But when the colonel was gone, and the bride and bridegroom, and all the marriage guests, a great gloom fell upon poor Ella,

notwithstanding that her father did all he could to cheer her.

"I shall be better, dear father, to-morrow," she said, "and still better the day after; and when we have left England, and are really alone together, I shall be your own dear daughter again, as I was before any shadow came between us. But just now I must be alone."

So the old man took his hat and left her for an hour or so, to drain her cup of bitterness to the dregs, and then (let us hope) to cast it aside for ever.

She did not envy Gracie her happiness; but the sense of contrast, as she compared her lot in life with her own, was sharp indeed, and it pierced her very soul. It has been cynically said that this or that is worse than a crime—it is a blunder; and to love not wisely but too well is in woman a blunder that is punished far worse than most crimes. As she sat in her darkening drawing-room, thinking over many things, and finding little comfort, word was brought to her that a lady wished to see her.

"I can see no one to-day," was her reply.

But presently it was told her that the lady had come from far, and on a special errand, and that though her name was unknown to her, her business was of importance, and could not be delayed.

"Then let her come up," said she, wearily; and she came up. A thin, pale girl, with a face full of thought and tenderness, and one which she had somewhere seen before, though she knew not where.

"I have come to you, Mrs. Landon," she began, in trembling tones—

"My name is Juxon," interrupted Ella, coldly.

"Not to me, madam, for I know better," was the unexpected response; "you are the lawful wife of Cecil Landon—I am come here to acknowledge it."

"Who are you?"

"I am Helen Mytton, Rose Mytton's sister."

"Well?"

"You are about, as I understand, to leave England—banished by your own act; the victim of your own magnanimity. Before you go, let one at least of those whom circumstances have arrayed against you acknowledge the greatness of your self-sacrifice."

"I have sacrificed myself neither for your sake nor for that of your sister," was the cold reply.

"I know it, Mrs. Landon. Yet do not forbid us to thank you for it from the bottom of our hearts, but with abasement," and as she spoke she fell upon her knees at Ella's feet. "You have saved a pure and innocent girl from an inexpiable shame."

"Did she send you to say so?"

"No, madam. Thank Heaven, she knows it not; for if she did, the shame would still be hers, as it is mine, let the law say what it will."

"Yet the law shames me," said Ella, bitterly.

"No, madam, no; it is powerless to do that; or if it does, it is a shame in which you indeed may glory. As for me, I respect you; I reverence you above all living women. But for you my sister would be—not in your place, no, no, for then she would be enviable indeed, blessed of Heaven, and to be rewarded by it—but dishonoured and defamed; while her child—Oh, what have I done!"

Ella had uttered a sharp, bitter cry and sank back on the sofa, white and lifeless. In a few moments, however, and assisted by such remedies as Helen knew how to apply, she recovered consciousness.

"Did you say that she will have a child?" she murmured.

"Yes, madam; who, but for you, would be branded as the child of sin and shame."

"And you came here to taunt me with it?"

Then Helen perceived her error. Intending to bring balm she had brought worm-wood.

"To taunt you, madam, Heaven forbid."

"Then wherefore? To thank me? Do you think I want your thanks?"

"Oh no, madam; though I did come to thank you, I had much more in view."

"What is it then you want of me?"

"Forgiveness. Forgiveness for the innocent, who have yet so deeply wronged you. I could not, I dared not, let you leave England without imploring it—without confessing the victory that is yours, though the world calls it defeat. Dear lady, ere you go, forgive us."

"I forgive you!" said Ella, hoarsely. "I forgive *her*! Go, go," added she, hurriedly, as though she could scarce trust herself not to recall her words.

Helen stopped to print one kiss upon the other's unresponsive lips, and hurried from the room.

"Yes, I forgive them," reiterated Ella, bursting into tears; "I forgive them all—

Heaven knows it—but when, oh when, will it permit me to forget!" She was not thinking of Helen then, nor yet of Rose.

Within the week Ella and her father were on the seas; and in due course arrived at their far-distant home. Its novelty was to her of incalculable value; there was nothing to suggest the past, nor wherewith to contrast the present; and Time, the healer, did gradually its wholesome work with her. They made new friends, but it was long indeed before they encountered any old ones, and that—so sad their case—was beneficial to them both. In a few years, however, it happened that Darall was ordered to Auckland, and he brought Gracie with him. They had two children left in Mrs. Darall's charge at home, for whom the young mother in secret pined. "Why not send for them and grandmamma, and make your home here?" said Ella; "you are resolute, I know, to accept nothing as a gift from hands however friendly; but my father has purchased land, and wants an honest tenant such as your husband. He has a turn for farming, and the time is favourable. Why should he not leave the army, and live here in comfort, with his boys and girls about him? That no advice could possibly be more selfish, darling, I am well aware, but—confess, is it not good advice?"

"If I could only persuade Hugh," sighed Gracie. For her part, she was well content to be wherever he was, and did not mind being poor; but there were the children—and more to come, perhaps—and, even as matters were, it was very hard to make both ends meet; yet she hesitated about so great a venture. But Ella took Hugh in hand, and aided by the good Canon, and much unscrupulous assertion of the kind on which angels smile, carried her point, so that the Sapper became a Settler, and delved and built, and, all things running smoothly with him, prospered. To Ella this proved a very Indian summer of happiness, late and unlooked for, but which was also lasting. The two households were separated by no great distance, and in love were one. It was very rarely that the Canon and his daughter were now alone, and when it was so, they were far from unhappy. Ella never could do enough to show her affection for him who had left all and come across the world for her sake; and, thanks to that loving service, it was but seldom that the sense of loss intruded

on her. It never showed itself to another—save once. They were alone—she and her father—one winter time, and the old man's eyes failing him at night, she was wont to read to him aloud his favourite old-world books; among them, Dryden. He had chosen the play that contains perhaps the finest scene of passion, betwixt woman and woman, in the whole range of dramatic literature, where the wife of Antony reproaches Cleopatra as having caused her husband's ruin, and Cleopatra thus defends herself:

Yet she who loves him best is Cleopatra.
If you have suffered, I have suffered more.
You bore the specious title of a wife,
To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world
To favour it. The world condemns poor me,
For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,
And the glory of my loyal house,
And all to bear the branded name of—mistress.

Ella, poor soul, broke down. The compelling hand of genius, shaping a worn theme dug from the forgotten past, had still such power to wring the living heart.

For *she* had lost her honour, lost her fame for one whom (all unlike the Egyptian queen) she had not deserted, but who had deserted her.

That was what he had cost her; simply all that a true woman values as her own. It was a bitter moment, and she could not hide its sting; but it passed by, and there were no more of such.

Of what was left to her of life's sunshine she made the most, since she made sunshine for others. She had her father still almost as alert as ever (though the fire of the Juxon temperament waxed somewhat fainter), and Gracie for her dearest friend, and Gracie's children—who love her, as well as they may, next to their own mother—in whom to revive her youth. A woman's not unenviable portion—as women's portions go. The consequences of marrying one's first love have been known to be even more disastrous than in her case.

No apprehension, of mischance, by-the-bye, would have deterred the Rev. Samuel Welby, if only the Fates and Helen Mytton would have permitted him to try that experiment. She never married him, however, and he remained her faithful but hopeless lover. Nor did this make him unhappy: there are some men who have no objection to the rôle of Tantalus in

love, and the vicar was one of them. They never quarrelled like real lovers, and had only one topic of disagreement. When he would extol her virtues, calling her the guardian angel of her sister's happiness—as indeed she had been, keeping the bitter truth, or those who would have told it, from her tender ears with flaming sword—she would answer, "Tush: her true guardian angel is on the other side of the globe."

"But, my dear Miss Helen, you would surely not compare yourself with that—ahem—exceedingly emotional young person?"

"Certainly not, Mr. Welby; it would be a piece of conceit beyond my powers of assurance. You are good enough to say sometimes that I am 'one in a thousand.' Without questioning your figures, though I have great doubts of them, I may certainly say, that if it be so, the woman you speak of is one in a million."

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BY

R. E. FRANCHILLON,

Author of "Olympia," "Pearl and Emerald," &c. &c. &c.

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PRICE TWOPENCE

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. I. DEEPWEALD.

CHAPTER I. LOCKSLEY HALL.

"LET it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain, or hail, or fire, or snow—

For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go,"

declaimed, in pompous monotone, the curate of St. Anselm's.

"Oh yes!" exclaimed an eager voice in answer, "but wouldn't it be ever so much better to make the tuck the depth of the hem?"

It was hot enough, more than hot enough, in Deepweald; but the twice-baked streets were Arctic compared with Mrs. Swann's drawing-room, where the Reverend Reginald Gaveston, curate of St. Anselm's, would have thrown off coat, boots, and shirt-collar, had it not been for the unfortunate presence of fifteen ladies, who might make rapture easy, but comfort impossible. And he was terribly thirsty, not for the applause of his fair audience, but for one deep, fragrant draught of the cider cup that he knew was to be found on the King's Mead, where the Deepweald eleven was playing a match of sunstroke. Reading the last new poems of the last new poet, in days when even clever people were vain of being thought to understand him, was very warm work indeed, especially when his most effective bursts were constantly being cut in two by the snip of fifteen pairs of scissors, and his most pathetic bits greeted by the maddening shriek of rent calico. But it was the cause of charity. The

fifteen followers of St. Dorcas defied the heat, and the only man among them dared not complain.

"How delightfully you do read, Mr. Gaveston!" said a lady at the table. "Much better than William Tyler, in my opinion. You never have to put in a full stop whenever you come to three syllables. And you always do select such instructive works for perusal—yes, 'the feelings' are 'treacherous guides;' and then, that part about young Hall's father being killed in the battle—that was so sad, and yet so true! Battles are horrid things."

The curate, though far from unused to ladies' praise, looked a little puzzled. "Young Hall?"

"That was his name—wasn't it? Locksley Hall? The young man, I mean, that was so ill-used by Amy—or was that 'the individual Withers,' who comes into another line?"

"I didn't understand it quite like that, Miss Hayward," said another. "I fancied 'the individual Withers' wasn't meant for a man. 'The individual withers and the world is more and more'—that means, the more a man shrivels up, the bigger we all grow—doesn't it, Mr. Gaveston?"

"Nonsense, Annie," said Miss Hayward, a little scornfully. "How can the same things get bigger and smaller? You might as well say the hotter it gets the colder it gets—mightn't you, Mr. Gaveston?"

"Ah, but it's in poetry, you see," said another critic. "All sorts of things happen in poetry—don't they, Mr. Gaveston?"

The curate shifted his legs and stroked his whiskers. "Well—you see—" he said, twisting round and round the longest hair he could find in them, "the individual isn't exactly a man—that's what it means

—he's an individual. It doesn't do to look for too much meaning in poetry, you know. Of course it's all there, and you can feel it, and all that sort of thing, but there'd be no good in not writing in prose if a thing was meant to be explained. Depend upon it, if you can understand a poem right off, it isn't worth reading. That's what makes the Greeks and Romans—Homer, you know, and Virgil—the greatest poets in the world; it takes a man a dozen years of his life to make them out at all, and even then they're hard without a translation. How hot it is, to be sure! What do you think of it, Miss Swann?" he asked the daughter of the house; the youngest in the room save one, and the prettiest save none, so far as bright rosy cheeks, bright brown hair, and the brightest and readiest of smiles could make her so.

"Yes, it is warm. How glad you must be the meeting's over! If I'd been you, we should have gone without our reading to-day. Isn't there some cricket, or something of that sort, going on in the King's Mead?"

It was hard upon the curate. It was not for the sake of reading Locksley Hall to fifteen ladies in a close room, with the thermometer ninety degrees in the shade, that he had given up the luxury of sprawling at full length on the broad turf of the King's Mead and criticising, over a tankard of cider-cup, the play of the Deepweald eleven, with all the gusto of an old fast bowler. And now he was as good as told by the owner of the bright gray eyes, for whose sake he had sacrificed himself upon the altar of St. Dorcas, that he was a fool for his pains. Miss Hayward watched his face and smiled to herself.

"How can you be so childish, Bessy?" she said, with a superior air. "We have had an intellectual treat, which has been properly appreciated; and I'm sure reading Mr.—Mr.—Locksley is better than playing at ball with a parcel of sprouts; they're nothing more. Please explain to us, Mr. Gaveston, if you'll be so kind, what was the Mahratta war, and where it was, and which side won. And what the young man means by saying it's better to marry savages than ladies; 'squalid savages,' he says—if it wasn't poetry I should call it disgusting. But of course if he meant what he said you would not have chosen the poem, Mr. Gaveston. Or perhaps Miss Swann will tell us about the war?"

"Please, don't ask me," said the young

lady mildly, and without losing for a moment her good-tempered smile. "I never got so far as that war. I was only in the Wars of the Roses when I left Miss Simpson's."

"And most appropriate, I'm sure," said the curate, who had himself never advanced beyond the second Punic war, and had found no time for reading, except aloud, since he had taken orders. He was not quite sure that "the Wars of the Roses" was not the name of some fairy tale; but he fancied that he had paid a compliment in public, and coloured slightly. If not particularly wise, he was not as yet quite spoiled out of blushing by his reputation for omniscience among the ladies of Deepweald. Miss Hayward caught the faint blush and frowned.

"Then, Bessy," she said, "you ought to be glad of the opportunity of extending your information. I am. That is the advantage of having a really clever man to read to us at our meetings——"

"But it's not such fun as when William Tyler reads to us," said another young lady. "He doesn't only read all the words, but half the letters; and he makes such faces that it's as good as a play."

The curate had his private reasons for hating and despising Mr. William Tyler; and Miss Swann was not displeased to know why. He caressed his whiskers with renewed complacency. He knew that he never bungled at the hardest words, and was certain he never made faces; and how was he to guess that his graceful trick of stroking his whiskers had, only last week, made sport for the benefit of William Tyler?

"And now," said the irrepressible Miss Hayward, "we are going to hear all about the Mahratta war."

She honestly believed that the curate of St. Anselm's was a vitalised encyclopedia, and had just tact enough to see that he had one little masculine frailty—a desire of being thought well-informed. He stroked his whiskers once more, and envied William Tyler. That admittedly ill-informed young man would have dismissed the Mahrattas as "Oh, a lot of niggers, don't you know, like the Ojibbeways, that we licked, you know," and nobody would have thought the worse of him. But when the curate spouted

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil
starr'd,

the line did convey a filmy idea to his brain, and he would have been amply con-

tent with his resonant mouthful had he not been called upon to ask himself, "What is a Mahratta?" "Confound her!" was as near his lips as the words could come without trespassing on his white choker.

"Well," he began, "a Mahratta's a sort of Indian." Suddenly he stopped, and turned crimson to the roots of his hair. What hideous blunder could he have made to send a regular giggle round a room of Deepweald ladies who would have believed him had he told them that a Mahratta was a kangaroo? "Surely they're Indians," he thought, "or can it be the name of a town?" But he suddenly caught sight of Miss Swann's fair head bent gravely over her flannel, and a choking sound from one corner of the room relieved his mind from the thought that he had been the object of the general titter. It was a waking snore.

"Beautiful—beautiful!" said a pleasant voice from the sofa, mellow with the soft after-luncheon dreams of a stout person on a hot afternoon. "Thank you so much, Mr. Tyler; it's so kind of you to come and keep us awake over our needles. What is it? Paradise Lost, I suppose?"

"Oh, mamma," said Miss Swann, "you must have been dreadfully sound asleep! It's Mr. Gaveston; and he's been reading Locksley Hall, out of the circulating library."

"Asleep, my dear? Not a bit; I heard every word, and it was beautiful. I always shut my eyes when I'm listening to reading. But as to sleeping, out of my bed, I never do, so I can't have been doing it now. You had better ring for tea."

If Mr. Gaveston was inclined to be in love with the daughter, he was at that moment over head and ears in love with the mother. She had saved him from Miss Hayward and her Mahrattas. He eagerly anticipated Miss Bessy in ringing the bell, and stood warming his back at the shavings in the fireplace, stroking his whiskers, and resolving to look out Mahratta in the dictionary as soon as he got home. Standing there in the midst of the fifteen ladies of Deepweald, it was hard to say whether he looked like a wolf among lambs, or a lamb among wolves. He was a handsome, what some people called an elegant, young man, with mild and regular features, who, it was said, had twice been plucked for his degree. But as this was by no means inconsistent in the feminine mind of Deep-

weald with his having taken the highest honours—if indeed the two terms were not synonymous—as he was really good-looking, was well-connected, was curate of St. Anselm's, and had expectations as well as an aristocratically-flavoured name, he would have been quite perfect had not his general taste for ladies' society lately shown symptoms of concentration upon Bessy Swann. It was since this was noted that his trick of stroking his whiskers had also drawn public attention, and had become a topic of Deepweald scandal.

The round table was soon cleared of its débris of flannel and calico, and Mrs. Swann, shaking off her drowsiness, seated herself before the urn. Fifteen or sixteen people in a close room, round a kettle of boiling water at the hottest point of a hot afternoon, was not a very refreshing experience. But neither is the House of Commons itself, on a sultry summer night. Comfort must yield to duty; and Mrs. Swann's tea-table, though but that of a land-agent's wife, was a parliament, and often a high court of justice as well.

"Of course you are all going to the concert on Thursday week, Mrs. Swann?" asked Miss Madox—she whose eager tongue had first welcomed the reader's finis. "Have you heard Lady Quorne is to be there?"

"Indeed? Of course I should like to take Bessy very much—she is so very musical. Will it be good, Mr. Gaveston? Do you think we ought to go?"

"Holloa, young ladies!" said a voice from the door, which somehow, even without the aid of sight, suggested a florid man in glossy black, whose mere "Holloa!" was accepted as a triumph of wit and humour. "What treason are you plotting now? Perhaps, somebody will find me an odd corner at my own tea-table? Warm work, isn't it, Gaveston? You're a lucky dog, by Jupiter; but, then, you persons have a way with you—I never had so many pretty girls all to myself all at once, I can tell you. Don't disturb yourselves, ladies; I don't mind a bit of tight squeezing in such company. Well, whose character's gone now? Not mine?"

"How can you be so ridiculous, John!" said his wife, with beaming pride in her husband's brilliancy. "I was asking Mr. Gaveston if he didn't think we ought to go and hear—that concert in Shire Hall, you know—I never can remember names."

"Barbagianni and Corbacchione," said Miss Bessy, fluently, "and Ranuzza and

Katzkorff and Clari." She gave the curate the slightest glance, but it was enough for his cue.

"It will be quite worth going to," he said. "I shall go."

"Then so shall I," said Miss Hayward, decisively. "It says in the bills they're from the opera, and the best people go to the opera. It isn't like a common play."

"I have no objection to the drama," said the curate, "when it is properly conducted; and then the Shire Hall is not a theatre. I have not heard about Lady Quorne; but I know, for a fact, that the Palace and the Deanery will both be there. I heard Clari once, in Exeter Hall; she is a second Malibran, they say."

"She may be a third What's-her-name," said Mr. Swann; "but, though tickets don't cost much, new gowns do, as you'll find when there's a Miss Gaveston, not to speak of a Mrs."

"I won't ask you for as much as a new ribbon; there, papa!" said Bessy.

"There's more ways of getting than asking, Miss Bessy. What does your papa say to it all, Miss March?" he asked, turning half-round to a remote corner of the room. "If he thinks it the right thing to go, I shall feel I'm not buying two new gowns for nothing."

It has already been said that Bessy Swann, with but one exception, was the youngest in the room. Miss March was that one exception.

She was little more than a child in looks; noticeable for nothing but silence, and the unevenness of her stitches. She was low of stature, and thin almost to meagreness; even her clothes were awkward, and increased her general air of oddity. The complexion of her thin face was of a very pale and uniform brown, not clear, and entirely without a tint of fresher colour; her mouth was rather too large, with flexible lips that were moderately full and still almost infantine in their curves; her nose was slightly aquiline; and she had an exquisitely delicate pair of ears, behind which was drawn, with a desperate attempt at smoothness, a mass of hair, coarse in texture, without any gloss, and as black as a coal. Her forehead was low but broad, and remarkably full at the temples; her brows were as black as her hair. The ladies of Deepweald must have been used to her indeed not to spend their whole afternoon in staring at such a fish out of water. But, plain and ungraceful as she was, she had one glory—

her eyes: startlingly large eyes they were, of a deep golden brown, full, not of light indeed, but of a steady fire, that looked incapable of either flaming up or dying down. So that even these, with all their glory, looked likely to lack the beauty of expression.

She was drinking her cup of tea, well-nigh as awkwardly as she had been sewing, when she heard herself spoken to. Everybody else always laughed or smiled when that wag, Mr. Swann, said even so much as "Good morning." She only looked as grave as a judge as she answered at once, with less appearance of commonplace shyness than might have been looked for, and in a sweet voice, rather deep for her age:

"I don't know what my father says, because he has said nothing."

"Well, he couldn't very well say less than that, anyhow. A wise man, March; he's not to be done into a new gown, I'll be bound."

"Ah, but, Celia dear," said Mrs. Swann, quickly, feeling that to joke about new gowns to her ill-dressed guest was for once a jest out of season, "we know that Mr. March is a very peculiar man. Of course he'll go; and of course you'll go with him. As a musical man, he'll want to hear— What's her name, Bessy?"

"Mademoiselle Clari, mamma."

"Won't he, Mr. Gaveston?"

"I should say so; certainly. I daresay Miss March has often heard him speak of Clari?"

"No," said Celia March. "I never heard of her."

"Never heard of Clari?" said the curate, beginning to feel on safer ground than in the matter of the Mahrattas. "How extraordinary—and your father a musician! You must hear her, then. It isn't every day the greatest singer in Europe comes to Deepweald. I heard her in Exeter Hall, in something of Handel's—I forget what; but there was the Dead March in Saul in it, I know. She went up so high I thought she'd never have come down again; and she shook like—like—an aspen! And such a handsome woman, too—"

"Handsome is that handsome does," said Miss Hayward. "Those singers are not always the most respectable."

"Well, if she's not an angel, she sings like one," said the curate. "And the Palace is going."

"And Lady Quorne," said Mrs. Swann. "There can't be much wrong about her, if

she's patronised by Mrs. Harding and Lady Quorne."

"Thank you, papa!" said Bessy.

"For what, if you please?"

"For going to say that you're going to take tickets for mamma, and me, and you."

"Well, that's cool! There's a lesson for bachelors, eh, Gaveston? And just as if I could spare the time to go to a singing-match on a Thursday—on a market-day! And fiddling isn't in my line. Give me a fife-and-drum band, and The Girl I Left Behind Me. I like a tune one can hum and keep step to."

"Can I be of service?" asked the curate. "I will save you the trouble of taking the tickets; and I will take charge of the ladies, if you can't spare the time."

Miss Hayward drew herself up, and the corners of her mouth down. There was something positively shocking to a well-regulated mind, in the way that the Swanns were actually conspiring in public to catch poor Mr. Gaveston.

"And, Mr. Gaveston," she asked, as sweetly as she could, "would it be asking you too great a favour to take a ticket for me? It would be so nice if we could all sit together, and be told, by somebody who knows, what we ought to admire. And you have such exquisite taste, Mr. Gaveston."

"Delighted, I'm sure," said that innocent young man, inwardly foreseeing that just three untaken places should be together, and that the only one left should be far enough away.

"Oh you women! oh you parsons!" said Mr. Swann. "I suppose you've managed among you all to leave me nothing to do but pay. What, is that your manners, Celia, to go off without saying good-bye to me?" he said to that least of his guests, as she was quietly going off alone between two chattering batches of departing visitors. "Tell your father from me—from me, mind—that you're to go to this fiddling; and if he can't find the time to take you, I'll give you a ticket, and you shall go with Mrs. Swann and Bessy. Don't say a word, my dear—give me a kiss, and that's a fair bargain. Poor girl," he said when she had gone, "she don't get much play from year's end to year's end. This Dorcas thing of yours is the only outing she gets, I'm afraid. March is a clever fellow, and all that, and knows his trade; the Hardings think no end of him, but he's no more fit to be the father of a growing girl than of that tea-kettle."

"I'll take care of her of course, John, and welcome," said his wife, "but I do wish she wouldn't wear quite such frights of things. She's just like a scarecrow; and with the Palace, and the Quornes, and the Deanery going to be there and all, they'll think we've got poor relations. However, it will be a charity to the poor girl, as you say. And if you find her a ticket, I daresay I can manage to give her something to go in."

Even Miss Hayward had, at last, to leave the curate alone in the hands of the enemy without being by to protect him. He and Bessy stood talking in the window, when the girl for whom these good-natured plans were being formed passed below them on her way home.

"Isn't she a queer girl?" Miss Bessy was saying. "I wonder what she'll ever grow into; and that fright, her father! It makes me shudder all over to look at him. Is it true he beats her? Who could her mother have been? And what things she does wear, to be sure—and how she does put them on; with a pitchfork, I should say."

"She has a sweet voice, though, and wonderful eyes."

"Do you think so, really? They always put me in mind of saucers, and her face is so thin and small; they make her look as if she'd just had a fever."

"I mean for eyes that are not blue," he corrected himself, looking into Bessy's, which were gray.

"There was something about hazel eyes in what you were reading; 'the spirit—deeply dawning—in the dark of hazel eyes—' something like that: do you call Miss March's eyes hazel, Mr. Gaveston?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. P'raps so. But what a poetic nature you have, and what a memory! And I'm quite sure yours are blue."

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER AND MERCER.

IN FOUR PARTS. PART II. AT BRUGES.

A NEW world opened before Caxton on his arrival at Bruges. A barbarous country, misruled by a mob of unruly nobles, was exchanged for the wealthiest and best-governed community in Europe, the Republic of Venice perhaps excepted. In some respects, indeed, Bruges resembled rather Florence than the city of the Adriatic, as Philip the Good had many more points in common with the Medici

than with the Doges of Venice. Both were private traders on an immense scale, both liberally patronised the arts and such current literature as existed. Both encouraged the discovery and transcription of the works of the poets, historians, philosophers, and orators of antiquity. In both families the love of letters was hereditary. Under Philip the Good the library at Bruges contained the then extraordinary number of two thousand works, the greater part of them being magnificent vellum folios, beautifully illuminated, bound in velvet, satin, or damask, studded with gems, and protected by gold clasps, jewelled and chased. At Bruges was employed in the duke's service a complete army of authors, translators, transcribers, illuminators, and bookbinders, who took care that their patron should not want a bard to sing his praises. The volumes produced by the duke's staff of artificers were not all destined for his own library. Manuscripts, conspicuous for size, for the beauty of the vellum, the elegance of the writing, the number and artistic merit of the illuminations and ornaments, and the luxury displayed in the bindings, were deemed fitting presents for princes; and the great wealth of the Burgundian nobles enabled them, as inventories of the period testify, to indulge largely in this elegant species of liberality. Hardly second to his sovereign as a lover of books and a patron of their makers was Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de Gruuthuyse, the same who received Edward the Fourth during his temporary flight into Flanders before the crowning triumphs of Barnet and Tewkesbury, and who was rewarded with the Earldom of Winchester. Under the patronage of this nobleman was established at Bruges the Guild of St. John the Evangelist, composed of the various classes of craftsmen employed in the manufacture of books. It was at this moment, while the pursuit of literature in Bruges was most ardent, while bookish people resorted from all parts of Europe to Philip the Good as to a second Mæcenas, that young Caxton was transferred from the Old Jewry to the brilliant capital of Burgundy, and dwelt in the full blaze of such light as shone in Europe. There he met the dealers in manuscript books, who drove a rich trade between Italy, France, and Burgundy, and there he heard of the new things done by the quick-witted men of the south. As the ancient civilisation of Byzantium was

quenched by the Osmanli and the city of Constantine consigned to utter darkness, the south and west of Europe sprung into new and brilliant life. Italy vibrated with mental life. Pope Nicholas the Fifth, in the eight years between 1447 and 1455, founded the Vatican library, and furnished it with five thousand volumes. Translators were busily at work, mostly in rendering Greek authors into Latin—to wit, Diodorus Siculus, Xenophon, Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Appian, and Strabo. Hallam does full justice to Pope Nicholas the Fifth: "How striking the contrast between this pope and his famous predecessor Gregory I., who, if he did not burn and destroy heathen authors, was at least anxious to discourage the reading of them! These eminent men, like Michael Angelo's figures of Night and Morning, seem to stand at the two gates of the Middle Ages, emblems and heralds of the mind's long sleep and its awakening." Among accumulators of books, even Pope Nicholas was outshone by Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, who took advantage of the dispersion of libraries after the capture of Constantinople to purchase Greek manuscripts, and employed four transcribers at Florence, besides thirty at Buda, to enrich his collection.

The effect of the extraordinary demand for books, old and new, good, bad, and indifferent, was to produce a supply. When scribes could no longer write fast enough for the wants of their princely employers, certain thinking men set about to meet the difficulty, and it is more than probable that, as in the case of the steam-engine, the locomotive, and the electric telegraph, several persons were for years working independently of each other, in parallel lines, as it were, approaching nearer and nearer to the solution of the great problem. The certain knowledge now possessed of the history of the three great inventions alluded to, induces the belief that in every great centre of book production in the fifteenth century cunning artificers were striving to abridge the labour of transcription. It is therefore hardly necessary in this place to discuss the comparative claims of Coster and Guttenberg, Schaeffer and Fust, to the invention of printing. Block-printing, the poor relation of wood-engraving, had long been practised. An intelligent workman continually employed in engraving the legends on the pages of the block-books, and feeling the great need of a more rapid production as

the demand for books grew stronger, would necessarily be impressed with the advantage to be gained if the letters which required so much care and time to form could only be re-arranged without re-cutting. The best authorities now concur in the opinion that, although the art of printing was first perfected at Mayence, the earliest use of movable types must be recognised in the rude specimens attributed to Laurence Coster of Haarlem, who died in 1440, and whose efforts were probably improved upon by his workmen. The evidence in favour of this view is reasonably clear. There is preserved in the archives at Lille an original manuscript containing a diary of Jean le Robert, Abbé de St. Aubert de Cambrai, among the entries in which the two following are especially worthy of notice, as showing that little books for the instruction of youth, of rough and common workmanship, were printed and sold in Flanders within a few years of Coster's death, and in the early part of Caxton's residence at Bruges.

"Item. For a printed Doctrinal (doctrinal gette en molle) that I have sent for to Bruges by Marquet, a writer of Valenciennes, in the month of January, 1445 (i.e. 1446), for Jacquet, xx sous tournois."

"Item. Sent to Arras a Doctrinal for the instruction of dom. Gerard, which was printed (jettez en molle), and cost xxij gros. The same Doctrinal he returned to me on Christmas-day, 1451, saying that it was worthless and full of errors, he had bought one on paper for xx patards."

Appropos of these examples cited by M. Bernard in his *Origine de l'Imprimerie*, Mr. Biades exclaims: "Jettez en molle!—cast in a mould!—what can this expression mean, except that the 'doctrinals' were printed from cast types? As applied to manuscripts, or to stencilling, or to block-printing, 'jettez en molle' has no meaning whatever." We must remember that printing at first came into competition with only the block-books and the very lowest class of manuscripts used as school books, for which it was employed as a cheap substitute. These "donatuses," "doctrinals," and other like productions, being rude and necessarily cheap, it is not surprising that the printers of them have not appended their names as they might have done to books more worthy of preservation, nor can it be wondered at that they have disappeared, when large books of a much later date and beautifully

printed are in many cases either lost altogether, or represented by a few copies.

Thus it would appear that printing grew in Flanders concurrently with its surprising development at Mayence, were not data much against this theory. In the early history of typography, the dates of imprint cannot be held to prove that the book was not printed later than is stated, but it may be held as conclusive proof that it was not printed earlier. Now there is no proof that any press for high-class printing existed in Bruges before 1470, or fourteen years after the superb Mazarine Bible issued from the Mayence press. On the question of priority of production Caxton's own authority is of the greatest importance. It was long after his return to England that he wrote the *Liber Ultimus* of the Polycronicon, and therein this singularly clear-headed man, who had been resident in Bruges through the whole period of the development of printing, and must have been cognisant of all at least that had been done in Flanders, writes under the year 1456: "Also aboute this tyme the crafte of empryntyng was fyrst founde in Magounce in Almayne, whiche crafte is multiplied through the world in many places, and bookes ben had grete chepe and in grete nombre by cause of the same crafte." This curt notice has the immense advantage of being written by a contemporary author, who from the nature of his craft must have been perfectly acquainted with the subject he was writing about. Caxton had judgment, experience and technical skill, and yet ignores utterly the claims of Coster and his followers. On the other hand it would seem that, though printing spread through Europe from Mayence, the very man, who, until recently was supposed to have instructed Caxton in the mysteries of typography, ascribed the first invention of movable types to the Dutch. The account of printing as narrated by Ulric Zel of Cologne to the anonymous writer of the *Cologne Chronicle* in 1499, is as follows: "In the year of our Lord 1450, which was a golden year then men began to print, and the first book printed was a Bible in Latin, and it was printed in a larger character than that with which we now print mass-books. Item. Although the art was discovered at Mayence first in the manner in which it is now commonly used, yet the first example of it was found in Holland in the donatuses which were before printed there. And thence is derived the beginning of thi

art, and it is more masterly and subtle than the ancient manner was, and by far more ingenious. Item. From Mayence the before-mentioned art at first came to Cologne, thence to Strasbourg, thence to Venice. The beginning and progress of the before-mentioned art was told me by that worthy man Master Ulrich Tzell of Hainault, printer at Cologne in the present year 1499, by whom the before-mentioned art is come to Cologne."

Gutenberg, Fust, and Schaeffer set a noble example to their followers. As Hallam puts it: "The high-minded inventors of this great art tried at the very outset so bold a flight as the printing an entire Bible, and executed it with astonishing success. It was Minerva leaping on earth in her divine strength and radiant armour, ready at the moment of her nativity to subdue and destroy her enemies." With every deference to the author of *The Middle Ages*, the writer sees no reason to believe that the Mazarine Bible is the work of a 'prentice hand. Gradual improvement had been made from the small donatuses and doctrinals circulated in Holland, and the partners in the Mayence press must have been at work ten years at least, before the famous Bible was produced, admitting the authenticity of the entry in the copy in the Paris library, importing that it was completed in binding and illuminating at Mayence on the Feast of the Assumption, 1456. This Bible can hardly be called rare, as, since its discovery in the library of Cardinal Mazarin in the middle of the last century, at least twenty copies have turned up in private libraries. It is a sumptuous book. The majority of the copies are on vellum, printed with strong, black, and handsome characters, very superior to any work produced by Caxton, although he did not begin printing till twenty years later. The reason for this costly style of production is to be found in the desire of the early printers to rival the beautiful work of the transcribers and illuminators. They held themselves bound to produce beautiful as well as legible work, and many of them suffered severely for their ambition. In 1472, Sweynheim and Dannartz, who set up their press in the monastery of Subiaco, are found presenting a petition to Sixtus the Fourth, wherein they complain of their poverty, brought on by printing so many works that they could not sell. They had devoted themselves almost entirely to classical literature, and had printed alto-

gether between twelve and thirteen thousand copies.

The first reduction in the price of books by printing is said to have been four-fifths, and the desire for books, not in the learned languages, increased enormously. Printers were enabled to stipulate for advantageous terms on settling in a city. The Senate of Venice granted an exclusive privilege to John of Spire in 1469, for the first book printed in that city, his edition of Cicero's *Epistles*. Another instance of protected copyright appears in favour of a missal for the church at Bamberg, printed in 1490. Aldus also secured protection for his edition of Aristotle. More frequently, the civil power came into contact with the printer in a very different manner. Censorship in various forms, the destruction of prohibited books by the common hangman or his deputy, has existed from very early times. The Universities of Paris, Toulouse, and Bologna exercised a strict supervision over books, even in the manuscript period, but, when printing was invented, the orthodox everywhere took the alarm, and Church and State clung closely together to prevent the dissemination of unwholesome doctrine. Berthold, Archbishop of Mayence, has the doubtful merit of being the first to appoint a regular censorship of books in his mandate of 1486.

In the very early days of printing, William Caxton, although subject to the valuable influences of a great centre of civilisation, gave but slight attention to matters literary. When he came to Bruges he had three or four years of apprenticeship to work out; and, doubtless, stuck closely enough to the *Domus Anglorum* till he became a full-fledged mercer. That he was not long in getting into business on his own account, and was successful in conducting it, is proved by the fact that, in 1450, he was a sufficiently solid man to be deemed good security for John Granton, of the Staple at Calais, in the sum of one hundred and ten pounds—equal to at least a thousand of modern coinage. Saving his admission to the livery of the *Mercers' Company* in 1453, we now lose sight of him for ten entire years, during which, however, he must have grown in wealth and importance, for in 1463 he appears in no less a character than that of governor of the "English nation" at Bruges. On entering into office, he acted under a treaty of trade between England and Burgundy,

which had been in force for a long time, but would terminate in 1465. It was highly necessary that this treaty should be renewed betimes, and King Edward the Fourth accordingly issued a Commission, dated the 24th October, 1464—joining in one embassy a clever statesman and a successful merchant. These were Sir Richard Whitehill, Knight, who had already been employed in several important embassies, and William Caxton, who, as the chief Englishman at Bruges, was “a most fit person.” Negotiations were unsuccessful, despite a convention of lords; and, moreover, the Duke of Burgundy decreed the exclusion of English cloth from his dominions. Possibly this was a concession on the part of Philip to popular clamour, for ideas of reciprocity were not familiar to the Flemings, whose idea it was that England was made to grow wool, to export it to Flanders, and buy it back again in a manufactured form. It was an anxious time for Caxton till the death of Philip in 1467, when the accession of Charles the Rash turned the tide of affairs in favour of England. In the succeeding year, an embassy greatly affecting Caxton’s fortunes came to Bruges. Lord Scales, John Russell, and other ambassadors, concluded a treaty of marriage between Charles and the Princess Margaret, sister of Edward of England. In June, the marriage was celebrated at Bruges with great pomp, and mighty tiltings and joustings, of which a curious account, by an eye-witness, appears in the Paston Letters. After the wedding, at which Caxton appears to have made the most of his opportunities, came a renewed discussion on the treaty of commerce.

The “enlarging of woollen cloth” in the dominions of Charles having been secured by the efforts of Caxton and his associate ambassadors, Redeknape and Pykeryng—he is next discovered at work translating *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troye*. No great advance, however, is made—Caxton being governor of the English nation—a post which he occupied to 1469. After this, Caxton is not quite easy to comprehend. A wealthy merchant, enjoying a position of trust, honour, and dignity, dwindles suddenly into a “servant of the Duchess of Burgundy,” undoubtedly in court favour both in Flanders and England, but without recognised rank or position. Of the misfortune—for misfortune there must have been—which reduced Caxton to the rank of a clerk or court

scribe, no record remains, nor does any trace appear of his sometime wealth. Did his argosies meet with the fate of Antonio’s—or did he realise all that he had, lend it to the Duke of Burgundy, and lose it for good and all, when the rather thick-skull of his master was laid low? Whether these hypotheses are sound or not, there is naught to prove in Caxton’s works, which indicate a distinct desire to “sink the shop” in the scholar and courtier, the friend and servant of Duchess Margaret, of my Lord Scales, afterwards Earl Rivers, of “malmsey butt” Clarence, and other puissant lords and ladies. Yet it is more than probable that he did not abandon the mercery business altogether. Edward the Fourth of England and Charles the Rash traded largely on their own account, and it is likely enough that Caxton’s royal mistress also speculated in a few cargoes, and required his assistance to manage her commercial ventures. In March, 1471, he is found in receipt of a yearly salary, and other advantages—but contrariwise, is instructed to push on with his translation of *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troye*.

Whatever the precise nature of Caxton’s duties to the Duchess of Burgundy may have been, it is evident that he was thoroughly in his element as a translator. It would seem that he had much leisure, and was, moreover, untrammelled, at least at this period, by domestic relations. One commentator opines, that Caxton’s restoration to Earl Rivers’s English version of the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, of a bitter satire against the fair sex, is a proof that England’s first printer lived and died a single man; but many competent authorities hold this reasoning to be inconclusive, nay contradictory. He was probably unmarried while at Bruges, as the rules of celibacy were very strict among the guilds living beyond sea, as indeed were all their rules of life specially constituted to avoid giving umbrage to the prejudiced lower orders. The Steel-yard Merchants had a stringent law on the subject, and probably the Merchant Adventurers imposed a similar restriction. Yet there is a curious entry in the accounts of the church of St. Margaret, Westminster, in which Caxton himself was buried in 1493–94. “1490–2. Item, atte buryng of Mawd Caxstone for torches and tapres, iijs. ijd.,” a circumstance suggesting, that perhaps the satire was included in the *Dictes and Sayings of the*

Philosophers, by Caxton, one day after a quarrel with his wife. In the better known relations of his life, he certainly had no occasion to complain of ill-usage from women, as the king's sister, Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, was his steadfast friend and supporter, as was also Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, mother of King Henry the Seventh.

ORANGE-BLOSSOMS.

SWEET quivering blossoms, gold and white,
We chose you for our bride aright;

She copies well your part;

Her trembling form is full of grace,

A maiden whiteness in her face,

But love's own gold at heart.

Wreath, happy flowers, among the curls

That, breaking from a string of pearls,

Wave brightly on her brow;

Lie, happy flowers, upon her breast,

That flutters with a sweet unrest;

She kneels to take a vow.

A vow that looses all the bands

Of early youth, and at her hands

Henceforth we can but crave

A portion of the love and fear,

Obedience ready, tendance dear,

Whose whole we used to have.

Ah well, ah well! true love forbids

One selfish tear should stain the lids

Of parent-eyes to-day.

With mirth and music, smile and bloom,

We cheer the parting from our home,

And speed her on her way.

We leave the gay and thoughtless throng,

To mark the day with feast and song:

We need a quiet hour.

We seek—to give our sorrow vent,

To win our olden, calm content—

Our daughter's maiden bower.

We look within her chamber door,

We sadly pace the empty floor

She gaily used to tread;

Each gives to each a tender smile,

And our hearts silently the while.

Take comfort from the dead.

Aye, from the dear dead gathered in!

No earthly lover was to win

Our long-lost lily white;

For her no tree grew orange-bloom,

For her no love-lit, wedded home,

No passionate delight!

But God's deep peace for evermore,

And fadeless blossoms from the shore

Of farthest Paradise.

For orange-wreath, an amaranth crown,

For altar-vow, the bowing-down

With seraph's sinless eyes.

God bless our bride! her heart and hearth,

With gifts of highest, deepest worth;

Her life is ours no more.

But one is wholly ours to love,

God keeps her safe for us above,

As we in our heart's core.

INCORRIGIBLE.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

WHEN John Draper Stewart had "slept with his fathers" some year and a half, and Katie had begun to appear in the social world again, an event of magnitude hap-

pened to the wealthy and ambitious widow.

She made the acquaintance of a "live lord." Rather a nice lord, too; not particularly overdone with brains perhaps, but a thorough gentleman; kindly-hearted, pure-lived, and refreshingly unconscious of his own social value, by reason of that guinea stamp—his title.

Such was Lord Paul Nethercliffe, upon whose arm the happy, radiant relict of John Draper Stewart, merchant, did on a certain occasion mount the staircase of a house in Lowndes-street; the hostess of which mansion had kindly asked about four times the number of people it could possibly hold, to crush themselves and each other in the drawing-rooms and on the staircase for three mortal hours.

And among this crowd Lord Paul Nethercliffe first saw our Kate.

Also he displayed unmistakable signs of being what Mrs. Stewart called "taken" with her. Not that that was anything very remarkable, though, for people had a way of being "taken" with Kate. Nothing makes a woman so thoroughly charming as an utter lack of affectation and self-consciousness, and Kate possessed this perfect ease of manner to perfection; for was not her heart garnered up and safely given into Edgar's keeping? What need she care for the opinion of any other man living?

"My dear," said Mrs. Stewart plaintively to Maud in the seclusion of her dressing-room, "it is enough to aggravate a saint—Lord Paul is thoroughly épris with the girl, and to see her chatting to him in that matter-of-fact sort of way, just as if he were her cousin, or her brother-in-law, or some such useless personage! I must say your dear father was greatly to blame in permitting that foolish affair with young Birley; but then, poor man, he never had a grain of savoir vivre!"

"But you know we knew the Birleys long ago, when Kate and I were quite little mites, and Edgar was always fond of——"

A prolonged fit of coughing on the part of her auditor warned Maud that she was touching upon unwelcome topics, so she shifted her ground, and suggested eagerly: "Do you think Kate will tell Lord Paul Nethercliffe she's engaged?"

"What?" almost screamed Mrs. Stewart, desisting from the task of brushing her still abundant hair, and looking at Maud with horrified eyes, and a hair-brush poised in mid air.

"Well, you know she is capable of it," persisted the girl; "you know when young Randall——"

"Spare me the recollection of that unhappy episode," broke in the other; "there was something so—so positively wanting in delicacy in Kate's conduct!"

"Oh well, I don't know that," said Maud, flushing at the offensive term. "I think she might have remembered that you dislike her engagement being talked about, but then it's just her downright way; she always says she hates sailing under false colours."

"Such a coarse expression! All nautical expressions are coarse!" said Mrs. Stewart, with the sweeping arrogance that ignorance is so often apt to display.

It was at length resolved between these two, that, if possible, all knowledge of Kate's "entanglement" should be kept from Lord Paul. Maud regretted that the chance of a title had not come in her way; but, failing that, to have a titled brother-in-law was a delightful idea; and then—as her stepmother observed confidentially—"you never know what may happen, and those Birleys are evidently a delicate family; why, my dear, the young man himself looks like a ghost!" Truth to tell, never had Mrs. Stewart felt so hopeful of Kate's engagement being broken off as now, for Edgar seemed destined indeed to prove the truth of those words, "The race is not always to the swift, or the battle to the strong."

He had energy, and courage, and perseverance enough to set up a whole firm of City merchants, but the tide of luck seemed against him.

His mother, broken-hearted by the loss of the husband who had been the centre and mainspring of her life, had a long and dangerous illness. We all know the expenses that severe sickness entails, and the family finances had to be stretched to the utmost, and, even then, no amount of pulling would make both ends meet.

Then that year was a bad one in the mercantile world; several large concerns "went" for vast sums, and swamped lesser lights of commerce in their own ruin, as a sinking steamer sucks into the depths below any small craft in its vicinity.

Under these circumstances, "getting on" was about as up-hill work as could well be conceived, and I almost think Edgar would have lost heart altogether at times, if it hadn't been for the cheery little woman who greeted him with such a loving

smile on that golden evening, that came round once a week.

You must understand that Edgar was never asked to break bread in the big house at Kensington; and another arbitrary rule was, that Kate never visited his "people," as Mrs. Stewart was wont to term his family. Truth to tell, the Birleys were not the only old friends that John Stewart had had to give up, just for peace and a quiet life in the domestic tent; and his daughter Kate, as averse to wrangling as he had been, was content to be ruled as he had been—for the present. When she was Edgar's wife, his people would be her people.

"It 'urts my feelin's to see Miss Katie's young man treated as if he was dirt hunder their feet! so it does," said a tender-hearted footman to the cook of the Kensington establishment.

"There's a deal of things done in this world," replied that potentate, "as wouldn't never be done if some people's 'eds wasn't pillered in the silent tomb;" a remark that met with unanimous approbation in the kitchen conclave.

But though yielding in many ways, Kate was incorrigible in one particular.

She would make no engagement for that one evening in the week, when for two happy hours Edgar was all her own.

"It is light, and life, and strength to me to know you are waiting for me here!" he said to her once, when things were looking very black indeed.

Perhaps another woman than Kate would have simpered and said coquettingly, that she was "sure it wasn't anything of the kind."

But that was not Kate's way.

She just looked up at him with her grave, tender eyes, and said: "I know it is," while in her heart she registered a vow that never, come what might, should that "light, and life, and strength" be lacking!

When that "season" was drawing to a close, there came an evening when she put back the dark locks from her lover's forehead, and after a long look into his face, gave a heavy sigh as she said:

"I'm afraid, Gar, you forget your promise sometimes, dear?"

"What can I do?" he answered, crushing her hands in his.

Yes; that was just it! What could he do?

By giving up even one week's relaxation in the year, by taking other men's work

upon his own shoulders, by going early to business, and staying late—far later sometimes than he would have liked to tell his darling of—he hoped to climb into a certain post that was expected to be vacant by the end of the year.

Then he would rest.

"You look, oh, such a weary boy!" said Kate, as he left her that night.

"I am always tired, more or less—generally more," he answered, smiling; "one must be, you know, just when there comes a pull upon one; but the end will come some day, and then, my darling, no one shall take you from me."

I linger upon the record of this one evening, you see.

Kate sat beside her lover's knee, and listened to the story of his hopes and fears, entering into even the smallest detail of his plans, as only a loving, helpful woman can do.

But ten chimed all too soon, and Edgar rose to go. "Good-night, my own!" he said very tenderly, and holding her close—close in his arms.

He was standing just under the hanging lamp in the middle of the room, and Kate thought she had never seen him look so worn, and wan, and haggard.

She threw her arms about his neck, and for a moment the brave heart failed.

"Yes, yes; your very own!" she sobbed in the passion and sorrow of the moment, "remember that, always; and, oh, love! take care of yourself, because I am your own, and because my heart would break if I lost you!"

"Dear heart!" he murmured, very softly, with his lips on hers.

"We need not be at this *soirée musicale* until eleven, so you would have plenty of time to dress after Mr. Birley is gone," said Mand to her sister.

Now it was one of the tiny barbed arrows with which she was wont to pierce Kate's heart, this calling their old play-fellow "Mr. Birley."

"Well, if you wish it so much, dear, I will go," she said, unable to repress a little shiver as the arrow went home.

"Lord Paul Nethercliffe is going with us," said Mrs. Stewart purringly, from the depths of a luxurious causeuse.

"I'm glad of that," put in Kate heartily, "he's the pleasantest and most unaffected man you know, mamma—though he is a lord."

Mrs. Stewart and Mand exchanged a glance.

The evening of the *soirée* came, as evenings are apt to do whether we want them or not, and Katie's dress, all pure white, and light as sea-foam, reposed in state upon her bed.

"I want everything to be quite ready for me to put on, as I shall not have much time to dress," she had said to her maid. And that damsel fully entered into the "reason why" of this caution, and acted promptly upon her young lady's orders.

And thus, with all *toilette* cares dismissed from her mind, she went down to the morning-room to wait for Edgar's coming.

How the moments lagged! how slowly the clock ticked out each minute!

She had said very little about it in her customary weekly letter to him, but the fact was Kate had had an anxious time of it these few days past.

There had been something in Edgar's face when she saw him last that suggested that most uncomfortable of all ideas—breaking down.

Now we most of us know what it is to see those signs in a face we love; a look as though the strain has been too long continued, and though the courage still holds good, the physical powers are running low. Then there had been no answer to her letter; a rare thing that.

Well, the lamplighter had gone his rounds, and all down the wide street the lamps glimmered palely in the summer gloaming.

Last night Kate had watched him at his task, and said to herself:

"When he comes this time to-morrow, it will mean that Gar is coming. . . ."

And as the big sonorous bell of the church hard by had rung out eight deep notes, she had thought: "To-morrow, when I hear it, it will say to me that he is coming—coming—coming."

But "to-morrow" was here now, and eight o'clock had gone long ago, and yet Edgar did not come.

The tender-hearted footman, coming in to see if she would take some coffee, knew well the weary watch that she was keeping, and in his sympathy he found himself listening "with all his ears," as he afterwards told the cook, for "Mr. Hedgar's knock."

Alas for the poor little wistful face at the window, that knock never came!

Meanwhile, above-stairs, Mrs. Stewart and Mand were holding solemn council of

war, and in her hand the former held a letter addressed, in somewhat uncertain caligraphy, to "Miss Kate Stewart." She held it very much as she might have been expected to hold a live serpent, had such a creature penetrated to the sacred precincts of her dressing-room.

"A boy brought it," said Maud, "and I happened to be coming in at the time; it is Jessie Birley's writing, and so I thought it best to keep it till you woke from your doze. Depend upon it, it's some silly message that will keep Katie from going with us to-night."

"My own impression is that that young man has heard of dear Lord Paul's attentions to Kate; and there is some underhand work going on in consequence."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Maud, spitefully; "and how provoking too, if she won't go to-night, after your telling Lord Paul she was sure to be there, and that speech of his about introducing us all to his aunt, Lady Pierrepont!"

"I think this letter will keep till the morning," said Mrs. Stewart, after a long and reflective silence. So they put it on the chimney-shelf, and for its greater safety laid a letter-weight bigger than itself upon the top of it.

Half-an-hour later Maud put her head, all beautifully dressed, and adorned with dew-spangled lilies, into the room where that sad-eyed girl still kept fruitless vigil.

"Mr. Birley will never come at this time of night, Kate. What is the use of your waiting? You'd better come upstairs and dress, or you'll be sure to keep us at the last."

"Oh dear!—must I go?" said Kate, wearily.

"Well, you know you promised, and mamma will be disappointed, and so will Mrs. Delaney; besides, I set my heart on us going to this affair together."

So there was nothing else for it.

"I never saw Kate look to such disadvantage!" whispered Mrs. Stewart in Maud's ear, as the group entered Mrs. Delaney's drawing-room.

Now the group included Lord Paul, by-the-way, and he seemed to see no fault in Kate's looks! Yet there is some truth in what her stepmother says. The poor little lass is "pale as her smock," and the spotless robe, that is gathered up to her slender throat, makes her look like a lily, or a snowdrop. At least so thinks Lord Paul Nethercliffe.

You see it was the very first time in their three years of betrothal that Edgar had failed to keep tryst with his dear love!

Towards midnight Mrs. Delaney's rooms began to "fill."

That is to say, you began to find it difficult to move about, and occasionally had to stand with your arms pinned down to your sides, as if you were a trussed chicken.

So Kate, attended by Lord Paul, sought refuge on a broad landing where groups of flowering plants and dimly-burning coloured lamps made quite a little fairy-land.

As they gladly lingered in this cooler atmosphere, and while Kate was thinking longingly of her quiet room at home, and in imagination writing to "Gar," to know what had kept him from her side at the appointed hour, two men, standing in the doorway near which she was seated, began to talk of something that had happened that afternoon in the City. "The poor fellow looked like death," said one, "and the crowd behaved as a London crowd always does, abominably; crushing about us, so that we could hardly get him up from the pavement. Fortunately Feversham, of St. Bartholomew's, was with me, and seeing the case to be a deuced bad one—heart or something of that kind—he grew peremptory; so we got the fellow into a cab, and Feversham went home with him."

"Then you found out who he was?" chimed in the other. "That was lucky, I must say."

"Yes; and wasn't it odd, he turned out to be a son of that old Birley who went to the dogs two or three years since, and whom my father knew intimately at one time."

While this man was speaking, Lord Nethercliffe felt a hand grasp his arm convulsively; saw a white despairing face raised as if in protest against some sudden agonising blow; and in a moment he was standing by Katie's side, and supporting her on his arm.

By a mighty effort she recovered herself from a momentary unconsciousness, and shrinking back, covered her eyes with her hand.

Then after a moment or two of silence, during which he had shielded her carefully from the observation of others, Kate looked up at him and spoke. "Lord Paul," she said, "you have always been very kind to

me—ever since I knew you—and now I want you to do something for me. Will you wait at the cloak-room door while I get my cloak? and then—I want you to take me somewhere, to see—a—friend—who is ill. I must go,” she added, seeing the astonishment he felt, written on his face, “and if you won’t take me, I must go alone.”

“But had I not better go and find Mrs. Stewart, or your sister?”

“No—no—no,” said Kate, holding tightly to his arm, and trembling, as he could feel, from head to foot. “Either do as I ask you—and may God be with you in your own hour of sorrow if you do—or leave me—and let me go alone!”

Five minutes more and they were speeding along eastward, as fast as a hansom could carry them.

Twice only had Kate spoken.

Once to give the address of Edgar’s home, and again to say, under her breath:

“Tell him to drive fast, please.”

Then she leant her head against the side of the cab, and oh! the awful, fixed look of agony upon her poor little dead-white face! Her hands, clasped one in the other, lay upon her lap, and writhed and twisted in an anguish of impatience.

There was such passion, such pathos, in the girl’s silent might of suffering, that Lord Paul Nethercliffe was held dumb by a reverential pity, such as in all his life before he had never felt for any human being!

He dared not ask her one single question; any selfish hopes that he had ever had with regard to her died out utterly; he recognised that she was a woman who loved passionately and intensely some other than himself, and that that loved one lay sick, perhaps—who might say?—unto death. To help her, to comfort her, that was all he hoped for now.

In silence they traversed the still restless City, the city that never seems to sleep; and at last—at last—the goal of Katie’s agonised longing was reached.

It was a small house, in a narrow street, and lights moved about in the rooms, as you may always see when sudden illness, or a still more ghastly visitant, is present.

Someone rang the bell; then the door was opened by Edgar’s youngest sister, Jessie.

She gave a little pitiful cry at the sight of Katie standing there in all the grandeur

of her floating robe, with jewels glittering in her coronal of hair, and then she caught her by the hand, and, without a word, led her up the narrow stair.

Lord Paul Nethercliffe dismissed the cabman with a fare that opened the man’s eyes to their fullest extent, and sent him homewards jubilant; and then he waited in the little dingy parlour, whither his own sagacity, in default of any other guide, had led him to penetrate. Indeed there was nothing for it but to wait, until it pleased someone to remember his existence.

He could hear from the room above the sound of a woman’s wailing cry. For Katie knelt by her dead love’s side, and, with her cheek pressed against the still white face that would never, never more greet her with smile or kiss, made her desolate moan: “He never said good-bye to me! Oh, Gar! my darling! you never said good-bye!”

Towards two in the morning Jessie came softly into the room where Lord Paul still waited. She carried a small lamp in her hand, and set it on the table. Then he saw a pale, delicate-featured face, framed in bands of golden hair.

Once, twice, she essayed to speak, and failed. At last the words came. “She—Katie—says, will you go and tell Mrs. Stewart that she is here—with us—and that they must not expect her home for awhile?”

Fain would the man have uttered some word of sympathy; but he had been little used to scenes of sorrow, and had never yet encountered the presence of Azrael, Angel of Death; so the tongue that was glib enough among the denizens of the world of fashion, stammered and found no words in the presence of a girl’s sorrow.

“You know,” the poor child went on, her face looking weirdly sad in the flickering light of the lamp, “Miss Stewart—Kate—was engaged to Gar—to my brother I mean; they had been fond of each other from children, and now—he is dead.”

Her voice broke; her tears fell hot and fast.

“I am so grieved—so sorry—I did not know——” faltered Lord Paul, feeling very much as if he were in a dream.

“I am sure you are sorry,” went on his companion, recovering herself, “and if you saw Katie—Oh, it is terrible to see her, and to hear her weeping! They brought him home this afternoon; he had fallen in the street, somewhere in the City. Mother

was the one who opened the door, and he knew her, and spoke to her; he said no one was to be frightened; but he grew worse after we had taken him upstairs; he could not get his breath, and—we could not make out what he said, but it was something about Katie: we knew that he was dying: the strange doctor who brought him home told us so; and we sent a letter to Katie—every minute we thought she would come. . . .”

The story seemed very hard to tell, and listening to it, Lord Paul Nethercliffe's lip actually trembled with agitation.

It was all so new to him, this awful grief, this terrible form in which death had come and taken the darling of that humble household!

For the first time in his easy-going, pleasant life, he was brought face to face with reality.

“I know now I should have telegraphed—she might perhaps have seen him then, or even if she had got the letter; but it seems she never did. It is kind of you to be so sorry for us. I see you are so by your face; but oh, you can never know! no one can know what Gar was to us all! He died of hard work—of working for us—here in this city—where people are so rich; he—”

As the girl was once more silenced by the rising tide of grief, Lord Paul Nethercliffe hated the thought of his own wealth and his own prosperity; he had never thought that there were such people—such sorrow—such weary struggling in the world!

“Is there nothing I can do?” he said eagerly, in the plenitude of his sympathy.

“Yes,” answered the girl with a gentle dignity that struck him the more in thinking of it all afterwards; “I have told you what you can do. Go and let Mrs. Stewart know that Kate is here, and tell her how it all happened, as I have told it to you. Kate asked me to tell you she would thank you one day for all your goodness to her to-night, and now—good-bye.”

She held out a little cold hand, in farewell, and so he went his way from that house of mourning.

And now what more shall I find to tell of Katie's story?

Truly not much.

How she lived through the days, and the weeks, and the months, that followed Edgar Birley's death, you best may know who have waded through just such a

troubled sea of pain; you who have had to take up the dropped thread of your daily life, and bear, as God may have given you strength, the burden of the days, and months, and years, that are desolate by reason of a silence, that is the unbroken silence of death.

Mrs. Stewart forgave the horrible impropriety of that midnight drive with Lord Paul Nethercliffe. Let us hope her pardon was given in consideration of the low, heart-broken moan, that was Kate's only comment, or reproach, on the treachery of that withheld letter.

The motive that influenced her step-mother and sister to act thus towards her she never suspected, and guilelessly believed them, when they told her that the delay had been an oversight.

“You did not know! you did not know!” she moaned through white lips, and Maud was so penitent that she nearly betrayed both herself and her accomplice.

Nearly, but, fortunately, perhaps, for Mrs. Stewart, not quite.

As time went on it transpired that Lord Paul occasionally called at the house in the narrow street in the East District; therefore, Mrs. Stewart smiled upon Kate's frequent visits to that ungentle locality, and alluded to Edgar's untimely “demise” as being one of those “ways of Providence” which are very apt to strike us as being “all for the best,” when they chance to chime in with our desires.

And so it came about, that one day, about a year after all these sad things that I have told you of happened, Katie—an older, sadder Kate than you and I have known in the past—came home from Mrs. Birley's full of some important news.

“Mamma,” she said, taking off her hat, and pushing back the tendrils of rich brown hair from her brow, “do you know that Lord Paul Nethercliffe is going to be married?”

It was long since Katie had had such a bright smile on her face, and Mrs. Stewart cast a triumphant glance at Maud, as she answered:

“Indeed! I think I can guess who the lady is.”

“He is going to marry Jessie Birley,” said Kate, simply. And then, with a far-off look in her grave, sweet eyes, she added with a faint tender smile: “How pleased Gar would have been!”

Mrs. Stewart shivered and sighed, and there and then, once and for all, gave Kate up hopelessly.

Truly, the girl was “incorrigible!”

EARLY WORKERS.

AT VESTAS.

IN the olden time, a small and nursery-rhymed Tommy or Johnny—accounts have become confused—made himself “an object” for life, or was burnt into an unrecognisable cinder, because he would play at lighting straws. Small Tommies and Johnnies since that poetic period, and possibly before it, may not play with matches. The pastime is very properly under the strictest prohibition; and it is well that it should remain so. But small Tommies and Johnnies, of the feminine gender, may work at matches to-day, and may work at matches as fast as their small fingers and small powers will let them, to get no scolding for the working, but commendation, and, in addition, the small fees attached.

Well, but must this remain so? Must all these children, of whom these papers tell, work as they do? Yes; as things are at present constituted. Yes; as wages go; as work ebbs; as illness stops working altogether; as earnings mean meals, and the absence of earning means starvation; as widowhood and orphanage cast the burden on weak places; as children seem to be produced the most plenteously, where there is the barest little to give them food and shelter. The answer can come nothing else than yes, and must be rung out yes over and over again indefinitely. There is much pity in it. There is deep pity in it. For all Early Working is done for dear life, it must be recollected. The State would not suffer its young children to be put into harness for any other reason. It is Early Work, or it is hunger, with death in the trail of it, with no alternative. The State in this is simply once more what, by an accurate and often-used figure of speech, it has been made out to be—a colossal parent. Taken so, it would rule that its little ones should skip, and hop, and jump; should weave daisy-chains; ride rocking-horses; at the quietest, read story-books, and daub gamboge and vermilion upon their slate-hued pictures. But the State, taken again as a colossal parent, has no colossal funds to meet the expense of this; has no colossal power to ward off misdirection and misadventure; is crippled, hampered, bewildered, with the big family perpetually being born to it; has a vivid look around, that shows how every member cannot be fed, and lapped, and dandled, and sung to; and is forced to issue the decree that out some of the big family may go. A group is there, so the State sees, for

example, that numbers seven; that cannot live, unless the seven mouths of it get filling; that cannot contrive for the seven mouths of it to get filling, because, at the sparest, there is only food enough for six. Shall the seventh die, then, or all the seven three-parts starve, to court disease, that way, as only dying delayed? No. Let some of the little ones be permitted to earn, between them, what will provide that seventh portion; when death will be driven out, and the rest must be received. It is known, all this, of course; it may be unnecessary to have put it, but it is only abbreviated putting (as the best excuse for it); and after it, is it not easy to perceive how a nation can never be anything else but a paterfamilias built on larger lines, and how the provider for six children and the provider for sixty million children are met by difficulties that run precisely parallel? At the bare end lies the fact that there is a tragedy, of a more or less base or noble sort, behind every little Early Worker living; be he or she a worker at vestas, or at aught else. The small actors and actresses may be quite unconscious of this, may have young faces that furnish no hint or clue to it; for, on this world that is a stage, does every character know the precise purport of the part he is playing? or have an exact perception of why he is on the boards at all? In spite of that, if the circumstances could be known, it would be found that “father” cannot earn, or “father” will not earn, or “father” spends too much or earns too little, or is dead and has his earning over; or the circumstances would be found to be that some one or another of these things is true of “mother;” and therein lies the tragedy, and the scene has begun. To carry out the stage simile, there is a stage-manager at this point; who has authority, and who wields it. The State it is again; and the State orders that performances are not to commence till such an hour, are, perforce, to close at such another; that exits shall be at R, at L, or of omnes, at a signal; that certain “situations” may stand, but that others must be absolutely excised; all with strictly arranged and rehearsed regularity. And does it seem too much, this careful, almost fussy, watching, in respect of a ring of children, notable only inasmuch as they are Early Workers? Upon the surface, this possibly may be so. Let there be a look underneath, however, and it will be seen, since abuses have such power of growing, that each law and by-

law is essential, and must be stoutly upheld.

Now, a "vesta," in the talk of this fourth quarter of this nineteenth century, is that new little refined match, that is of soft cotton in threads, stiffened with a waxen sousing, and tipped with a neat chocolate-coloured and phosphorescent head. The little thing is never more than an inch and a half in the best full length of it; for the vigour of its own fire burns itself out before it has gone down a third of this stature; it could have no more re-lighting without the touch of the flame it was itself designed to give, and the remainder may just be flung away. If it were a span long, its fire-power would be no greater; if it were a span long, too, its sturdiness would be gone, and with its sturdiness its use; hence the limitation of the material given to it, and the firm adherence that limitation has. Taken in hand by the Early Worker of this sketch, it is exactly as has been described. There it is, a vesta, made. It has been handed out of the vast department in the vaster factory, its birthplace, that has planned the cotton of it and cut it; and handed out of the department that has waxened it; and of the third department, that has spread its chosen end with latent fire; and now the little half-timer (girl) who is next upon the roll, is waiting, in a new and still vast department, and is called to take it through her especial operation. As she comes, she looks a very mite, in that gigantic whitewashed hall or work-shed; in the midst of its capacious entrances, its lofty roof, its many windows, its bricked floor, its open side of ventilating wire-work, leading out on to a waste of mounds and grass-patches, lit up with a pleasant sun. She is Bohemian, of course, pure (or Arabian, if that term be preferred; the implication being, some amount of wildness, and some want of washing); she is ruddy and ragged, with red hair, that is rough and long, and streaming down her back; with a rusty or russet frock, barely reaching to her knees; with boots and stockings more rusty still; with a face that is pretty, for all that, and that has a good warm colour on it, and hazel eyes of a quick bright look. Her age is ten or eleven, perhaps, as is the age of the most of her little fellow-workers, apparently, as they file up, and settle to their work; and she asks for no instant or moment of prelude, but has her hands quickly going, directly the order to do so has left her leader's lips. And such as she

is doing then, she will be doing an hour hence, a day hence, a week, a month. Her little trade has no variety. She is a "filler;" she is to fill vesta-boxes with vesta matches; and for the duties of a filler, there is but one interpretation and one method. The child picks up a box with her left hand, sweeps up a run of vestas with her right hand, and pops them in. Let that be presented to the mind again, and again. The child picks up a box with her left hand, sweeps up a run of vestas with her right hand, and pops them in. That is it. That is all. Nothing but the round of repetition would give the sense of it; nothing but the simplest words would show the spare and most simple action. It is true, some of the boxes are of one sort and some of another. To meet this, some require a long sweep of vestas, and some a short sweep, and some several sweeps in succession; since some boxes are the little japanned ingenuities, sold at a penny each, vestas and all, that are prepared on purpose for the waistcoat pocket; and some are larger, and oval, and of wood; and some are smart with pretty colour and decoration; and some are quite tin packing-cases (comparatively speaking), constructed, it would seem, on the principle of providing the purchaser with match-power for a full centenarian life. But there the operation remains—the empty box, some sweeping, the full box; the empty box, some sweeping, the full box; as many times over as the half-time allowed from the Board-school gives the opportunity for, and as many times over as must become weariness and monotony indeed. To lighten the sense of this, comes the cheerfulness of the work-shed, the wholesome air of it, the life that there is in its fine space. To lighten the sense of it, too, comes the knowledge that the children are paid for what they do "piece-work," which gives them the advantage and disadvantage of their energy, their loitering, or their lack of skill; comes the running talk of their little active and feminine tongues (permitted, since their own is the loss, if indulgence brings too much idleness, and since their empty trays are the best tell-tales and their best reminders); comes the knowledge and the dead certainty, just as in the case of some other Early Workers, that there is more healthful moral influence within the work-shed than there can possibly be outside of it, and that, if fever and other physical evils are lying in wait for the children in their homes, they are little likely to fall a prey to them, from

what they breathe and imbibe whilst they are occupied here. Besides, there is a special reason why brightness and gaiety should seem to permeate a shed devoted to the fillers of vesta-boxes, and articles of a similar kind. Let the Early Worker be ever so careful, and let the "hands" who "feed" the Early Worker be ever so careful, as the vestas are put into the neat boxes, as the swift hand-sweeping is done to bring this about, some few vestas must fall to the ground, some few vestas must get trodden upon, the more nimbly, the more effectually; and "crack" is the smart explosion that follows the sharp tread, giving the perpetual air of a festive supper-party, where Christmas bon-bons have been procured in abundance, and are for ever being merrily pulled. It is "crack" here, as the children have their flitting about to do; "crack" as they are wanted at this place; "crack," as they have an errand at that; "crack," as their little light feet go; a double "crack," intermingled with the talk; a triple "crack," immediately at the side; a running streak of "crack," bringing memories of rifle-practice, of Guy Fawkes, of other firework displays and celebrations, but bringing no stop to work or discipline, since the whole thing is known to be inevitable, has been arranged for, and just begins with the "crack" and ends there, and is nothing more. Early Workers cannot find it a deterring accompaniment to Early Work, though, can they, when they first enter an orderly filling-shed, and look round with strange eyes to get their initiation? and as they can enjoy all this amount of gratuitous popping, too, and they have their school-fees paid for for them, and they can earn (according to their achievement) from two shillings and ninepence to five shillings and sixpence a week, their lot has been softened as much as present circumstances can let it be, and (as far as Early Work goes) does not call for serious lamentation.

But it must be told now how it is that an Early Worker at vestas is able to take a vesta-box in the left hand, and to give one sweep of vestas with the right hand that shall let the box be filled. It is done by means of a clever framework of little tiny ledges, contrived on purpose to obviate all the clumsiness and slowness to the filler, of picking up and sorting and selection. This framework is of wood, about two feet square, a very fine and small Venetian blind; upon each miniature ledge, or lath, of it, is laid a row of vestas, heads

outward, quite level and straight; these ledges move a little, as the little hand touches to give the collecting sweep, which frees the vestas, letting them be dislodged as easily as the hand goes; and when they are once gathered this way, heads all up, the transfer to the box is effected in a moment. From habit, too, an Early Worker knows precisely what length of the row of vestas will fill her box; she just sweeps her hand along that much and no more, sweeping it oftener than once, if the vestas are to lie in layers, and she meets with no difficulty, and no arduous task, and no unpleasantness, anywhere. Difficulties, indeed, or, rather, tediousness, has been overcome before the department of the little filler has been reached, and quite out of the sight and sound of her. It occurred, it is evident, when the vestas were first laid in upon the tiny ledges. But, even here, organisation can lessen troublesomeness, and organisation does by more than half; for the vestas, when put in, are not phosphorised, no selection is requisite consequently between end and end, and, when the laying has been done, it has served the double purpose of letting the filler follow with all the ease that has been described, and of letting the phosphorisation be effected, with one brush along the surface, or in one dip down into the fluid, whichever may be the method found best to be pursued. And there is impressiveness in this, because of the good adaptation of it; to which further impressiveness comes when equally good adaptation is found in the form of the tables, or counters, at which the Early Workers stand. Some of these are run up along the sides of the shed, or hall, with the walls to form the background to them; the rest are placed in rows in the centre, are sixty or eighty feet in length, and double-sided; but all of them have their front edge shaped battlement-fashion, whereby a child is enabled to stand in each indentation or embrasure, in possession of a little work-shop, so to speak, of her own. In this she has her Venetian-blind-work of laid vestas poised up in front of her (looking a neat pigeon-holing of the dainty little articles; a sort of fairy assemblage of uniform treasures in a doll's museum), she finds the place for her tray of filled boxes, requiring no effort to be reached, but closing her in conveniently, on her left hand. And the Early Worker at vestas has not to shut down the lids of her boxes, ever. This, which would lengthen her labour by imposing upon her another set

of actions, is done by an overlooker, or young forewoman, one of whom is at the end of each battlemented table, and up to whom all traysful of filled boxes are passed, that they may receive close inspection. If boxes were presented for this, when shut up, it is clear there would be very little use in the presentation; for fillers are only half-timers; in the wake of which it follows that they are only quarter-taught, quarter-civilised, quarter-impressed or printed upon, poor little souls; and under their young management and fingering, vestas might get anywhere rather than into vesta-boxes, with the result that vesta-purchasers, when they opened their box-lids, might open their own eyes at the same time, astonished.

As much as this having been stated, it will have been remarked that, between Early Workers at vestas and those unhappy work-folk and working children who toil on at making wooden match-boxes—starving, poor souls, as surely as they toil—there must be a very distinct difference. There is. The young half-timers, whose little fingers move so nimbly among waxen vestas to the sound of a constant small fusillade, or feu-de-joie, pass to their half-day labour through wide gates, guarded by a porter's lodge, as sightly and as well ordered as if they entered upon a country proprietor's rich estate; they see before them stately buildings, picturesque, of fine proportions, excellently adapted to use; they cross an approach that is gravelled, grassed, stone-bordered, scrupulously kept. Passing under an archway flanked by spacious counting-houses, easy, smooth, brushed; that must appear to the small people, in the quick glance they get, like a veritable palace; the Early Workers at vestas tread then upon brick instead of gravel, to stand the greater wear and tear; they walk by sheds of whirring machinery, filled with men and women feeding them, and lively with the men's and women's tongues; they are met by women carrying bundles of smoothly-shaven wood, split to the thinness and the polish of paper; and they see bales and tin-lined cases of other goods, and strong men lifting them, and waggons loading to carry them away. All is wealth, growth, taste to deck it, and a certain power, in the very creativeness of adaptability. With the poor creatures who paste paper on to wood, to make the square boxes that hold the common kitchen-match, the picture has varied

however, is not to be touched on this occasion. The trade is distinct; the training is distinct; as distinct as the circumstances and the pay. It is enough to mention here that, in the poor streets lying far east, where factories are frequent, and under the shadow of which factory-hands must find their homes, women and children are to be noticed carrying back bundles of these boxes; made with a return journey in prospect, when they will be carrying back materials with which boxes are to be made again. Threepence a gross is the pay they get for these; though each box has many pieces of paper and wood to make it, bringing up the total number of pieces that require handling and neat adjusting to much more than the one hundred and forty-four. The work is done at home, too, in confined space, in dirt, in wretchedness and squalor; and sighs come, and sadness, at the thought of it. Far better is it to be able to turn from this to the consoling fact that these poor toilers, equally with the Early Workers at vestas (and all Early Workers and Late Workers, living in their eastern district, and breathing their eastern air), enjoy one supreme advantage. This is their beautiful Victoria-park; planted right down in the midst of their poor homes. It is a fine sweep of many acres; it is thick with a thousand trees; it is lit up with the gleam of the water of several ornamental lakes; it gives the knowledge of the glory of unintercepted sky. There, down its noble avenues, along its well-rolled gravelled paths, the young Early Workers can go to their vesta-filling, the sadder match-box makers can carry to and fro their frail merchandise; alike, both sets of them, in unrestraint, in privilege, in the invigoration to spirit and to health. Put it that they live where the park does not come in as a part of their daily route, they can yet pass into the broad enclosure of it when work is over, when work is wanting, when it is Sunday, or holiday, and there is only part-work to be done. Once within, the whole landscape is their own; the whole beautiful breadth and colour. They are free to see, to breathe, to walk swift on, brightened, to stand taking in the lesson, to sit down and rest. And their habits have been thoroughly consulted in the arrangement of this splendid apportionment of recreation-ground; their needs have been seen to; their pleasures have been watched; these have been brought here to

wearied, feeling lost, and resourceless, and indifferent, without the things to which they have been used. For instance, it has been observed that some overpowering (albeit unknown) interest is found in the perpetual taking of cheap glass portraits; so photographers are allowed to rent booths, or huts, in Victoria Park, and "sitters" may go in, and come out again, copied in miniature, and set round with copper binding, as many times as they like, or as their wages can afford. Then, it has been observed that much diversion, otherwise stimulus, otherwise nutrition, comes from the absorption of penny ices; accordingly, the façades of the odd little refreshment shades, studded at every turn, are embellished with notifications that these inexpensive, if unsatisfying, luxuries, can be at once obtained. Again, smoking is known to give solace and occupation, and may be permitted, where solace is scarce, and occupation difficult to be found; a nice limit, just and proper. Known is it, also, that forethought does not exist, much, in some minds, and that fore-purveying cannot be done, much, by short purses; it is set forth, therefore, on the same façades to the refreshment-sheds, that good stocks are kept of cigars and tobacco, genuine and foreign. It is singular enough, this, in contrast with the arrangements in the parks of the richer part of the metropolis. By these it is decided that an occasional gate-house, displaying no enticements whatever, can furnish the unexciting biscuit and gingerbread for which appetite may come, or the curds and whey so eminently genial and satisfactory. By these arrangements, likewise, it is ordained that violet and orange blowing-balls, outside the pale, and stacks of penny chairs within, are to be the most alluring articles for outlay. But, to account for this, a strong point must be noticed. Factory-folks at vestas, at match-boxes, at all else, speaking of them in the mass, "make a day of it" when they can "make" anything beyond a mere passage through their park at all; factory-folks, therefore, still speaking of them in the mass, require provender for the day they make, and require the airier and rarer condiments and assistances (to them a treat) that distinguish "made" days from others less recreative in the calendar. This is because factory-folks cannot take picnics and organise them, as would be done by folks of a better class. They are so much in the necessity of living from hand to mouth;

they have (on proper Darwinian principles) a strong power developed in them of living from hand to mouth; and, instead of thinking they may possibly want curious crimson cakes, three or four a penny, and smashed tub-loads of Tafilat dates, at so much an ounce, and, as this is so, of providently becoming the owners of curious crimson cakes and Tafilat dates beforehand, in anticipation, it is both less mental labour to them, and less physical exertion, to buy these or similar delicacies upon the spot; and, by the wise consideration before alluded to, these things (with a certain reservation) are kindly allowed to be there, in the park, upon the spot, so that the buying can be done. And there is another point. At the East-end there is but one park; at the West they form a nearly continuous group, or belt. One park is for one thing, one for another, a third for a third, a fourth for something else still—broad distinctions, pretty generally kept, although they originated at first, curious as they are, from intuition may be, certainly from no commissioners' law. As the result from which it comes that the one enclosure of the East has to be the whole of the West enclosures combined. It is the flat, plain field of Regent's-park for its congregation of cricketers; forty acres of it being in constant use this way, and these forty acres having had once as many as a hundred and twenty-eight wickets pitched in them in one day. It is the long south strip of Hyde-park, by the Serpentine, for its eager bathers, who mustered, one sunny Sunday morning, over twelve thousand; who leap in to the number of one thousand daily; and who are allowed four hours for their enjoyment, beginning every morning at four o'clock. It is Primrose-hill, for some parts of its (allowed) raggedness, and for its gymnasium; every inch of which is used for the little Arabs to roll upon in ecstasies of delight, or for them to climb up, leap up, jump at, hang to, cling to, as their merriment and their powers lead. It is the Zoological-gardens, for its odd Robinson Crusoe-like umbrella-huts to sit in; for its rustic refreshment-sheds that might well lead on to the bear-pit; for its ever vigorous cackle of duck and drake. It is St. James's-park, for its flat waters and small islands, and overhanging evergreens and skimming boats; it is Kew, for its peep of a pagoda; it is the Horticultural-gardens, for its ornamental red-brick arcade, with bizarre terra-cotta

columns; it is Regent's-park again, for the flat black wooden palings that enclose it, for the broad drives that intersect it, for the large orchestra to protect the band. It is itself though, it must be said, for several characteristic features. It has a magnificent and costly drinking fountain, rich with sculpture, the gift of that excellent lady, the Baroness Burdett Coutts, ever ready with thoughtful help for the inhabitants of the East-end; its paths are kept within their proper confines, not by iron hoops, or merely by their own neat planning, but by dwarf hedges of quickset and privet, only a foot high; trade is allowed in it (in summer), that is prosperous and fair-like, in large high safe swings; and notices are fixed up near the gates, "Do not let the children walk upon the seats." It is itself, too, for lovely clusters of rhododendrons, azaleas, ilex, pine, hawthorn, laburnums, yew, massed together in harmony that no nobleman's estate could surpass; it is itself for its rockeries, crept over by ivy, periwinkle, saxifrage, campanula, sedum; it is itself for its spiked yuccas, its monkey-plants, its red-leaved dragon-trees, its wide and beautiful avenues of elms and limes, as well as for its small garden-loads of drying linen close up to its pales. Spring-flowers are there—tulips, crocuses, narcissus; annuals are planted out in the season; curiosities are represented, like the maiden-hair tree (introduced from China in 1754), like the *Ailanthus glandulosus*, the Tree of Heaven. Altogether, it is a pity there are not botanical lectures instituted in the Park—on the model of Dean Stanley's, to working-men, in Westminster Abbey—to be delivered out there on the ground; the professor with his moving audience, leading them from tree to tree. Match-box makers could be shown the growth of the wood they toil over; veneerers could see the gray catalpa, the red cherry-tree, the pale sophora they apply so daintily to their work; dyers could be made acquainted with the barks from which they get their dyes; turners, with the box, hornbeam, Chili pine, juniper, and a long list of others they are so busy with at their lathes. It would fatigue, as well as seem a fable, if there were enumerated here a tenth part of the shrubs, and plants, and trees that are in Victoria-park (equally with the West-end parks) for the Early Workers at vestas and at other things to see: cedar, syringa, cypress, spurge, lavender, spruce, birch, oak, maple, ling, Pampa grass, Kentucky coffee, spires, willow, sycamore,

indigo, locust tree, sweet bay, Siberian pea, are but an indication of them. It was said, a few years ago, in pity, when the match-makers came over to the West, to urge Parliament not to tax their wares, that they were such strangers to the fine and unused quarters they had absolutely to ask their way. It is quite possible that if West-end people went to Victoria-park, West-end people might not be thorough masters of where they were, or thorough masters of all that has been put there to ponder over either. For all of which, Early Workers at vestas and the like may get up to this fair knowledge; and may get up to the full enjoyment of it, when education has been so long the fashion that it has grown to be properly adjusted.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER II. OUR HOME.

WE were to return to London on the morrow. It was very hard to quit the beautiful sea—to end our brief honeymoon, with its delicious idleness, its exquisite sunshine, its intensity of happiness; but the little purse held very little. We dared not be wasteful of our scanty funds. London is always viewed as a land of promise by those who are absent from it. It seemed to signify in our case a further supply of money—employment at least, and the means of earning subsistence. I was urgent that we should return; it was our most prudent course. I felt that we must face straightway the difficulties of our future life; it availed not to shirk the encounter. The longer it was deferred, the less heart we should have for it. Already, perhaps, the thrilling tenderness, the dreamy sweetness of our honeymoon had unfitted us somewhat for conflict with the stern, grim, work-a-day world.

It was our last night by the sea. We stood at the pier-head watching the waves as they seemed to sport with the moonlight; now rising to win crests of silver from the broad rich rays poured down in a flood upon the surface of the waters, and now burying themselves in the curving shadows that streaked and furrowed the lustrous expanse. The sky was luminously clear; the stars shone palely beside the brilliant moon; it was almost as light as

day, and the shadows thrown upon the white flagstones of the pier were curiously definite and sharp-edged. The Calais packet was moored alongside the pier, puffing forth alternate curling clouds of white steam and black smoke. There was a curious combination of noises. The waters lapped and gurgled; the wooden gangways jarred and grated against the granite stairs; the engines groaned, and roared, and panted; the cordage creaked; the flag flapped and rustled at the mast-head.

I had been leaning upon Paul's arm, looking down upon the steamer below. I turned suddenly and found that a tall man, wearing a fur cap and a long coat buttoned to the neck, stood on the other side of my husband, and was whispering something into his ear, while pretending to receive a light from his cigarette. We knew no one in Dover; we had formed no acquaintance, had spoken to no living soul, save only the servants of the hotel. In my surprise I was about to exclaim, when I was restrained by the pressure of Paul's hand. Another moment, and the man in the cloak had departed. We turned in an opposite direction, and were standing presently at the pier-head again.

"Who was that, Paul?"

"Hush! Speak softly. You did not recognise him?"

"No. Have I ever seen him before?"

"Yes. But once before. You do not remember? You are sure? He was one of the witnesses of our marriage."

"Ah, you told me his name—M. Bouchardon?"

"Hush! Bouchardon—that is his name. Still you did not know him?"

"No. His cap hid his face in part. And he looks different altogether. Stay, he wore a large moustache."

"Yes. His moustache has gone—deeply regretted." He laughed a little as he said this. "Poor Alcide was so proud of his moustache, and with reason; it was a fine moustache—it was a real ornament to his face, and it was a screen to his mouth, which is not beautiful. But the sacrifice was necessary. Alcide represents an English commercial traveller—he is journeying to Paris, to Lyons, to Marseilles, on the part of a Birmingham house."

"He is in business, then?"

For the moment I really thought that he was speaking seriously.

"Yes, he has fire-arms to sell, and he has instructions to buy clocks."

"French clocks?"

"Yes. French clocks—so that we in

England may always know what time it is in Paris."

"Ah! I understand now. He also is a conspirator."

"Hush, Doris! For Heaven's sake, do not speak so loud."

Quite unconsciously I had raised my voice.

We had turned, and were walking down the pier. As we came near the position of the steambot, I perceived M. Bouchardon pacing to and fro, smoking a cigar. We walked past him, brushing the skirts of his long coat; but no token of recognition was now interchanged. It seemed as though he and my husband were complete strangers to each other. And I noted that M. Bouchardon really looked very like an Englishman. He had assumed spectacles, his hair was brushed into points at the corners of his eyes, and he wore short triangular whiskers.

Half an hour afterwards, and from the windows of the hotel we could see the packet steaming out of the harbour, plunging into the moonlit waves beyond. The little vessel looked as though it were cut out of black paper, when seen in profile against the bright background of silver sea.

"Poor Bouchardon," murmured Paul compassionately.

"He is in danger?"

"Possibly." Then he added with a laugh, "And he suffers much from sea-sickness. Still he crosses the Channel, as you see. Really Alcide is something of a martyr."

"He was obliged to go."

"Well, yes; he was sent for."

"He will return?"

"That is more than I can say. His return depends upon so many things."

"This conspiracy," I said querulously; "when will it end—and how?"

"It will end," he answered gravely, "with the fall of the French monarchy or with the death of the conspirators. But even if we perish, the cause will live—for it is a just cause, and justice is eternal. In the end, right will prevail. We need have no fear on that score. There will be suffering, no doubt; every revolution has its victims. You know the proverb—one cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs! Well, it is always a question, who are to be the broken eggs, and who are to enjoy the omelette. Time will tell us that."

I said no more about the conspiracy just then. In truth, I wearied of it, and

it pained me. It was something that came between us, like an iron curtain sundering me from Paul. I had been very indifferent about it in the first instance—it was so natural that an exile should be hostile to the country he had been compelled to quit—but now it had become a thing of moment to me, the exile having become my husband. I began to dread and to detest it.

On the following morning we left Dover for London.

We secured inexpensive lodgings—two rooms on the second-floor—in the New-road, near Euston-square. And now the weather changed; the summer seemed to vanish suddenly; it became cold and dark, wet, and very, very dreary.

The prospect from our windows was far from cheering. We surveyed the dull New-road with its interminable procession of rattling cabs, and lumbering carts, and crawling omnibuses, its stunted shops, and shabby little gardens, wherein nothing seemed to grow but ragged clumps of dusty evergreens, affording shelter to numberless gaunt-looking London cats. Below us was the yard of a stone-mason or statuary, who dealt in funereal urns and emblems, tombstones and churchyard monuments, with a sprinkling of fountains and figures, shepherds and shepherdesses, gods and goddesses, of the tea-garden sort. The monotonous grinding sound of the sawing of stones for ever oppressed our ears. If I looked out I always saw two men, like clock-work figures, their movements were repeated so regularly, and so unvaryingly, sitting in crouched attitudes, and, from the wooden sentry-boxes they occupied, pushing to and fro the large square framework, the knife or saw of which cut through the great stone blocks before them. Other workmen were employed with mallet and chisel, chipping and shaping the stones, carving inscriptions upon them, or polishing their surfaces. The whole scene is curiously impressed upon my mind. I remember it even to its most trivial incident and ingredient. I close my eyes, and it rises before me distinct in every particular; until I seem to hear again the sounds of sawing, and chipping, and grinding, and the voices of the men at work upon the gravestones. I so often sat at the window looking into the mason's yard. I sat there hour after hour in that wretched rainy weather, waiting and watching for I knew not what—timorous and dejected, I scarce knew why.

And yet I had some reason to be sad.

It seemed clear that we were to be very, very poor; that I was to look for no better home than I now occupied—the cheap and rather soiled lodgings in the New-road. It was difficult to think of it really as a home. I had known, of course, all along that we needs must be poor. But certainly I had thought of a more picturesque poverty than ours seemed ever likely to become. It was with a heart-sinking which I could not control I mused sometimes over the more unattractive side of our method of life. Yet I tried hard to cheer Paul, to conceal from him my inclination towards despondency. But our means were now very limited; our prospects far from hopeful.

Paul had gone out, notwithstanding the dull cold weather, in search of employment. I sat alone at the window rolling up cigarettes for him. He had taught me how to make them, and had complimented me upon my skill. But, indeed, there was no difficulty in the matter, and Paul was not critical. He was content to smoke even my most shapeless and bungling first attempts.

I had written to Basil from Dover. I wrote to him again on our arrival in London. Somehow, I could not write to Nick.

I cannot admit that my affection for my brothers had diminished; but certainly it seemed shadowed, cast into the background, by the greatness of my love for my husband. For a time, indeed, I will confess that I had almost forgotten them. But my mind had been so occupied by my marriage. Thought of Paul had ousted all thought of others—had numbed my memory. It had retired as a wave retires, to return with greater force. I now felt very anxious to see Basil. I knew I could rely upon his sympathy—upon his indulgent consideration. Of Nick I was somewhat apprehensive; I persuaded myself that he would show himself unusually obtuse—would require explanations and excuses, would be hard and interrogative, and, altogether, aggravating. Any very cordial understanding between Nick and Paul seemed to me unlikely.

Presently Paul returned, tired, and wet, and disappointed. I hastened to him with his slippers and a change of clothes.

"You have not seen Mr. Plumer?" I knew that he had been to see his patron, as he called him, the Hon. Pierce Plumer.

"No. He has left London. I had forgotten. It is the time of year when people, who are fashionable and rich, leave London

for some weeks. Mr. Plumer was sure to be away. He is at Baden, it seems. Happy man! He has money for the tables, although they say here in London that he is much embarrassed; that he has incurred heavy losses on the turf. Let us hope that he may win at Baden; that he may win money enough to appear creditably as my patron once again."

"You are not angry, Paul?"

"No; not angry, dearest. But I cannot help feeling rather bitter. It is only the old story. There is so much injustice in the world. Property is unfairly divided. Why are we poor? Why are these others so rich? I ask but to be allowed to live—it is not so much to ask; and, that I may live, I ask for payment for my labour. For, Heaven knows, I am willing to labour; but these are cruel times. The labourer is not now held worthy of his hire. He may work and starve; he cannot work and live. For none will pay him the wages he has earned."

"You are not going out again, Paul?"

"I must, dearest. I have to write a Paris letter for Mr. Grisdale. I must go down to Soho and study the journals, and pick up news, if I can. Good-bye, dearest. Meantime, a cigarette. I will come back soon, very soon."

In his absence there arrived a large box addressed to "Madame Riel." As yet I scarcely knew myself by that name. The sound, the sight of it, sent the colour to my cheeks in a most unaccountable way.

The box contained everything I had left in Powis-place—clothes, books, drawings, all my belongings indeed, including "the engaged ring," and other little articles of jewellery that had been given to me from time to time by Mr. Leveridge. These were placed together in a separate parcel, accompanied by a note that seemed tremulously written—I knew it to be Mr. Leveridge's hand. I had purposely left these behind me, feeling indeed that I had forfeited all honest title to them. The note ran: "My dear Child,—You must keep these things. I cannot. They are really yours; the gifts of a faithful old friend who unwittingly caused you much pain, but who yet hopes that you will think kindly and generously of him, for indeed his heart is full of tenderness for you. Forgive me, Doris. What I dreamt of could not be. I see that now. I only am to blame. I do so hope, my child, that you will be happy.

If you ever need help, such help as I can give you shall be yours always—do not scruple to ask it of me. Be assured that I am always your friend—your faithful and devoted friend—RICHARD LEVERIDGE."

A postscript followed. "I do not ask to see you. I feel that my presence might pain you, might even be odious to you. Yet I will trust that is not so. For I cannot but look forward to our meeting again. Indeed, Doris, I must see you before I die; and I am an old man; I never felt how old until now. You will try and think yourself my daughter, and will let me see you—at no very distant date. Meanwhile, Doris, God bless you; and may you be happy—very happy. R. L."

There was no word about my husband.

I had scarcely finished reading this letter, when the door opened abruptly, and someone entered. It was dusk, and for the moment I could scarcely see who it was.

"Doris!" cried a voice I knew at once.

"Basil!"

I flew to his arms. How glad I was to see him! A moment before, I could not have believed that his coming would so rejoice my heart. It seemed as though I had not seen him for years. So much had happened since we had parted.

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No. 446. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. I. DEEPWEALD.

CHAPTER II. "NO."

BLUE eyes, even though not quite blue, are very charming things; and it would be pleasant to linger with the Reverend Reginald Gaveston by the side of Bessy Swann—pleasant, because it would be undeniably dull. Dulness is better than excitement in hot weather. Nor, indeed, even by following the hazel eyes, if such they were, is it possible altogether to escape from dulness in Deepweald. It was, and is, essentially a dull place; that must be understood at once, and distinctly remembered. Even so tame and common an event, as a concert of opera-singers out of season, was there an excitement.

Celia March walked, not so ungracefully as she sat, along the close and sultry lane where the very bricks seemed to perspire, crossed the deserted Fore-street, and then turned—always walking as quickly as if it were mid-winter—into an ancient paved court, with projecting storeys to its houses, and a blackened ecclesiastical gateway at one end. This led her into the gravelled close, whence uprose the pride, heart, and glory of Deepweald—its great gray cathedral, now rosy with the sunset. Round it wheeled a congregation of rooks, cawing their vespers before settling down to sleep among the turrets of another cathedral hard by—the elms. Nothing would please me better than to pause before this first sight of Deepweald Cathedral from the gate in College-yard, and examine one by one its venerable

beauties, unprofaned as yet by a suggestion of restoration; for this was no Gothic matron flaunting in the fashion of eighteen. But Celia did not pause. Her hazel eyes had seen all that before; and would have grown even larger than they were, if possible, had she been told that the great church was more noteworthy than the light and the air.

She crossed the close, entered the south porch under the row of the twelve Apostles whom some follower of Cromwell had beheaded after the siege, passed up the nave, and came to a stand at last by the choir-screen under the organ. No service was going on, but the organ was nevertheless filling the church with its music—loud, strong music, with defiance and triumph in it, as if a giant were at work, and doing his best, for the benefit of one fat verger who was not listening. Nor did Celia listen—people who have lived all their lives by the seashore do not listen to the sea. This also was part of her atmosphere.

At last, after half-an-hour's playing, the giant ceased. The door of the loft opened and there appeared—if not a dwarf, yet one who might be called so by others than recruiting-sergeants for the Life Guards. He was barely over five feet in height, though otherwise stoutly and broadly made. It was not that he looked stunted; it was as if a strong and massively-made man had been compressed in every direction, to the advantage of vigour, and with but little loss of proportion. A much worse point about him than want of height was that his children, if he had any who took after him, had a very ugly father; and through his whole appearance there ran a prophetic likeness of Celia in this undersized man of uncertain middle age,

with his square, sallow face and its harsh, angular jawbones. His mouth, like hers, was large, though neither sweet nor mobile; his nose and chin, like hers, were well pronounced, and something more. His thin hair was part coal-black, part iron-gray—it must once have been like hers; his forehead was like hers in lowness, breadth, and fulness at the temples—unlike only in being rough and deeply furrowed between the brows—her brows, only exaggerated into shagginess. He had not her eyes, however; his were gray, deep-set, dull, and small. It was a rugged and inharmonious face, utterly fixed in gravity, well-nigh repulsive, but full of narrow power—the face of a man who sees but one point before him, drives on to it, and probably gets there; but who, if getting there be impossible, drives on all the same. It was not hard to understand, at second sight, how under the hands belonging to such a face a machine should have been inspired with a soul; but it was impossible to guess how a master of this sort had come to be buried alive in Deepweald. Unless indeed in his sombre, sallow, masterful face the spirit of the old cathedral was incarnate—he looked not only middle-aged but mediæval.

He nodded to Celia without a smile or a word, nor did she say a word to him. Not that she walked beside him in awe, though so quietly; her air of shyness had left her altogether, and her face looked softer by far than at Mrs. Swann's. Crossing the close under the elms, with the rooks cawing overhead, the perfect peace in all the air that old churches breathe must have fallen even upon her dull life like a pleasant dream, without the hope, and therefore without the fear, of its being one whereto waking must come sooner or later, but surely some day.

The organist's official residence was a red-brick house exactly opposite the cathedral tower, which was seen from its front windows through and above the elms. Outwardly, the house was pleasant-looking enough, in the style that makes us fancy every now and then that Queen Anne is not dead, whatever the newspapers may say. But the inside only too plainly betrayed that Celia March was no better as a housekeeper than as a seamstress. The very passage warned all who disliked dust and darkness not to enter farther. It was a large house, with many rooms; but the ground-floor parlour proved, by its signs of constant occupation

for all purposes, that a two or three roomed cottage would have amply sufficed for these two. The prevalent atmosphere was of tobacco, with an undertone of breakfast and dinner. Mrs. Swann's drawing-room had been a far pleasanter corner for a hot evening. The whole centre of the room, however, was taken up, not by the suggested dinner-table but by a grand piano, for whose sake all other space had been left to shift for itself anyhow and anywhere. Not far from it, in the least ill-lighted spot, was a desk-table that seemed to have been written to pieces. But the room in general was given over to an Augean litter of books and music, both bound and unbound, white and yellow, whole and torn, printed and written. These covered the chairs, were piled up in the corners ceiling high, lay under the piano; even in the fender and over the floor, so as to make the pattern of the carpet only dimly imaginable. The rest of the furniture consisted of a long pipe with a china bowl, a tobacco-jar of red lava, an antique lamp, a small-sword, an ink-bottle, some stumps of quill pens, a cruet-stand, and an engraved portrait of Palestrina. Mr. March threw some music-books out of a very large arm-chair upon the floor, pulled off his boots and tossed them under the piano, and sat down—still without a word. Celia filled the china bowl from the lava jar, gave it to her father, and sat in the window with a book in her hand upside down. In fact, she was doing what she very seldom did—she was thinking.

Her father, the organist of Deepweald Cathedral, made the larger part of his income, such as it was, by teaching music to those who afterwards developed into Miss Haywards and Miss Swanns. Nor can it be said with any justice that John March's pupils, the ladies of Deepweald, played or sang one whit better than the ladies of any other country town. Wonderfully inconsistent with his look and manner, and with his Titanic style of organ-playing, was his indulgence as a teacher. The worse his pupils performed, the less he used to scold them, and he was never known to complain of missed lessons or negligent practice. But one serious rebuke of his is on record; and that was, "Never let me hear you play like that again. Play as ill as you like; but very nearly well is enough to madden Job."

So he satisfied everybody; his pupils, because he never asked them for time or

tune, and their parents, because he never asked them for money, but let them pay him much, or little, or nothing, just as and when they pleased. It was lucky for him that he had no rival, and that Deepweald was on the whole an honest town. But Celia's experiences of her father's system were of a very different kind.

Without playmates, or even acquaintances, she had been left to tumble up as she best could; as soon as she was old enough to compare her destiny with that of other children, she could not help feeling that it was positive dislike, rather than negative indifference, that made her father neglect her so completely. But one day it happened that, as she was amusing herself with mimicking on an old spinet the false notes and hobbling scales of Miss Bessy Swann, her father's worst and therefore favourite pupil, she felt her hands tightly grasped from behind her, and herself trembling at the words, "To know what is wrong is to feel what is right. To-morrow you will begin."

And from that to-morrow began what was not life, but slavery. She learned the first seven letters of the alphabet and never guessed, till long afterwards, that it does not end with G. She could count bars before she could add two to two. She was up and at work before the sun, and only the impossibility of keeping her eyes open longer put an end to days that are hideous to think of, seeing that they were a child's. Her reason was left to take care of itself, but her memory was unmercifully strained. Her baby fingers used to come out of joint with stretching, and with forcing down purposely stiffened keys; but her father set the joints again and made her "play" on. He contrived, with strings, weights, and pulleys, what would well have passed in the Tower of London for an instrument of torture, so that she might not be idle when his happier pupils occupied the piano. He appeared to be insanely bent upon making his only child a slave, a rebel, or an idiot, or else a music-hater for all her days.

They say that canaries and nightingales sing the louder and sweeter for cages and cruelty. If that be true, Celia must have had a bird's soul. The closer she was caged, the more cruelly she was tortured, the more loudly and sweetly her spirit seemed to sing, till the child's voice became the girl's, and she could sing not only with her heart but with her tongue. And that made things all the worse for her—in the

culture of the great gift Heaven had given her, her father seemed to think it sacrilege to lose an hour.

"If it is genius, it will live through all," said he. "If it is only talent, it had better die. We must work on, and see."

Not only was music a reality to her, but the only reality. Nor did she regard it as in any wise sublime. She had never read or heard a word of the transcendental—say, rubbish, for the sake of not being contemptuous—that people in general try to make others think they feel about music; it was just as common a thing to her as the presence of the cathedral. Everything was bound up with it and of it; the close and the river, the scent of stocks and mignonette in the cathedral garden, the cawing of the rooks, the great gray tower itself, the east window and the elms—all the varied harmonies that rain, snow, and sunshine drew from the dead organ-pipes of her native town. Of programmes, and the names of the people that figure in them, she was more profoundly ignorant than Miss Hayward of Indian history. She could not, of course, help being aware that something, which was not music, was being ground on barrel-organs, vamped by German bands, and strummed or warbled by her father's pupils; but music, she grew up to believe, was a lost art, and had died with Cimarosa. She hardly knew the name of any later composer, and had never heard a voice in song but her own; for of course she knew that what her father's pupils did was not singing.

No wonder that she had grown up plain and awkward, and different, even in complexion and feature, from the round rosy faces that belonged to the general family likeness of Deepweald. And no wonder, also, that her heart gave a bound when she heard that here, even in Deepweald itself, was to be heard, in eight short days, the greatest singer that the whole world contained; which to her meant something infinitely higher than the mayor, or the dean, or the bishop himself, or even the judges of assize. She had never heard a woman sing, and now she herself, with her own ears, was to hear the greatest in all the world. No wonder she held her book upside down.

But she kept her father in view; and, when he had removed his pipe from his lips exactly seven times, she said:

"May I ask you something?"

It was inevitable that the odd sort of

intercourse between these two should result in many oddities of detail—one of which was that she never called her father "Father" or even "Papa," as the other Deepweald girls called theirs.

"Well?" It was the first word he had spoken; and it came from an inflexible voice, harsh but yet clear, and of startling depth and volume.

"I was at the Swanns' Dorcas to-day. They want me to go to the concert with them. May I?"

"They haven't been daring to ask you to sing for them?"

"Me?"

"They're capable of it—they used to try to get me for their fooleries when I first came down. Yes—you may go if you like; it's right you should see for once what people call music now; and what volumes of cant, and conceit, and idiosyncrasy can be crammed into one word—amateur. You'll never want to go again."

"But this is not a concert for the schools. It is to hear the greatest singer in all the world."

"Indeed? I should hardly think the greatest singer in all the world is likely to come out of the churchyard to throw pearls before Deepweald. Who says he is coming?"

"Mr. Gaveston. And it is she."

"Oh, if the Reverend Reginald Gaveston says so! Who is she? Not that I'm likely to be much the wiser for being told. I don't trouble myself about parentheses—things and people that just fill up the gap between what has been and what is to be. However, since it's not a school affair, I have changed my mind. You must not go."

"Not go—not to hear—why?"

"Bring me my score."

He moved to the writing-table. It had lately become part of his system to make her rest two hours a day, and to let her attend the Dorcas meetings, where music was against the rules, by way of social recreation. He also rested on Sundays, at odd moments of the day, and for many hours of the night; and his recreation invariably took the form of working hard, every spare instant, at a long composition that ever seemed to grow farther from completion. What else it was she knew not; but "Bring me my score" had been, for the last twelve years, a regular household form. To-day, however, slave though she was to this tyrant of tyrants, she could not help lingering as she brought

him that well-known pile of music-paper, all scrawled, blotted, and smeared as if intended to be incomprehensible.

"But," she said, hesitatingly, "if you have never heard her—perhaps—"

"Celia!"

There was no perceptible change in his voice; and yet it made the girl feel that she had been guilty of her first act of rebellion. Gossip was wrong when it charged him with beating her; he had no need of any rods but his voice and his frown.

"I only meant," she said quickly, "who is Mademoiselle Clari?"

"Who?"

She looked up in amazement as she laid the manuscript on the table. A first surprise was added to her experience. Never before in all her life had she heard a change in her father's deep and measured tones; and now there was a change, startling and incomprehensible.

"Who, do you say," he repeated, more calmly but far more sternly, "is coming to sing in Deepweald?"

"Mademoiselle Clari."

He rose up; and, forgetting even his score, began to walk quickly up and down among the litter of the room. To see this small and strange-looking man kicking to right and left the books and sheets of paper that came in his way at every step, as he paced up and down like an enraged bear, may have been a comic sight in itself; and yet it could have made nobody smile. Even what was most grotesque about John March bore an air of grim dignity—through all his eccentricities and mysteries it was plain, well-nigh pathetically plain, that the man himself was as simple and as real as a man can be.

"You shall not hear her—not till you can defy her! Listen to me, Celia. You are sixteen years old; and it is part of my plan that at sixteen you should no longer be a child. You have just asked me why—I will answer you. Music is dead, and it is I who must restore it, and you. I must, because no one else will; you, because none else can. And there is only one way. A perfect work must be written, so perfect as to be beyond the reach of any but the most perfect singer, and to serve as the test and standard of perfect singing for ever. And it must be sung with such absolute perfection that the whole world shall kneel down before triumphant art, and never tolerate again the wares of hucksters and charlatans—

the claptrap of the music-sellers and the impostures and buffooneries of that arch music-shop, the opera. The money-changers must be scourged from the temple. The call came to me when I was hardly older than you. It took me ten years to fit myself for such a work by study; ten more to settle its form and subject. I have worked at it for twelve; it will be finished when it is finished, and not a day before. But all would be thrown away without her who is to make it live for the world. I—I once thought I had found her; but I was wrong. But I worked on; Heaven does not inspire the end without giving the means. You are to be the means, Celia. I have kept you pure. I have devoted you to the glory of art in the world. Here, in Deepweald, you have never heard a note that was false of music that was not true, except to hate it as a sin. You have had no distractions; you have been brought up by the mother of Genius, who is Solitude. You have been taught as Porpora himself would have taught you. And now—you wish to hear Clari—Mademoiselle Clari!

Poor Celia! She had music in her heart, but she could not understand one single word.

"She is the enemy, Celia! It is against her, and such as she, that we have to do battle. She is the arch-type of those who leap at once from the shop to the stage, and carry their wretched souls with them. She sings for diamonds, and gives the trash they want to the fools who will give diamonds for trash, written by charlatans and sung by the paid agents of charlatans. Yes; the Reverend Reginald is right; she is the best, the very best singer, in all the—world!"

Celia was more bewildered than ever; the fierce sneer that accompanied the word "world" was thrown away. But something like the phantom of imagination had nevertheless been set working in her. She had heard, in church, of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and, as she knew of no morals apart from music, she must assume that all the three were centred in Mademoiselle Clari. And that meant—fascination.

The peal of St. Anselm's rang on its six bells, as if they were syllables, "Ma-de-moi-selle Cla-ri." The clock on the chimney-piece ticked "Ma-de-moi-selle Cla-ri." The rooks in the elms cawed with persistent energy, "Cla-ri, Cla-ri." The whole air grew vocal with that

mystical name. And all Deepweald would soon hear, not only the name, but the most beautiful song in all the world—Celia's own father had owned the beauty, even while he preached against the sin. And the most longing ears in all Deepweald were the only ears forbidden to hear. What could her father mean? What sin against art could there possibly be in hearing the greatest singer in the world? Of course he was always right and always wise, and she never recognised tyranny because she had never felt freedom. But—once more for the first time in her life—she dimly guessed that the cathedral close was not the world.

The organ at evening service pealed out "Clari." The forbidden name had magnetised the air. She caught herself wondering whether the dean, the mayor, the bluecoat boys, and the fat verger were also tormented by Mademoiselle Clari, or whether the organ thus spoke to her only.

She rose even earlier than usual next morning, that she might read Clari's name on the posters that leaned against the railings of the Shire Hall. There they all were, in scarlet letters—Barbagianni, Corbacchione, Ranuzza, Katzkorff—CLARI in letters doubly large. She touched the board with her finger-tips, and ran home before the Fore-street had thought of waking. So far she had done no harm; but all through to-day her heart was with Thursday, and with the siren whom it was a sin to hear.

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER AND MERCER.

IN FOUR PARTS. PART III. AT COLOGNE.

THE sudden revolution in Caxton's life brought about by Margaret of York would almost incline to the belief, did not the record of a painstaking life contradict it, that he belongs to the category of those who have had greatness thrust upon them. Having acquired the confidence of the duchess by the skill evinced in managing her own commercial operations and those of Lord Rivers, he appears to have been driven by those eminent persons into the work of translation, and from translation into printing and authorship. From the prologues and epilogues written by him, our knowledge of his life is almost entirely built, for save these and the records of his apprenticeship, livery, and governorship, and the entry of costs for his funeral at St. Margaret's church,

there is little known of the man William Caxton. Happily these writings of his reveal him very clearly as an honest, straightforward, God-fearing man, if somewhat of a courtier. Above all, a man with a conscience in his work, striving earnestly to do his best, and speak the truth according to his lights. The prologue to the Recuyell of the Histories of Troye leaves little doubt that he first undertook the task of translation, as an amusement for his leisure hours while Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers beyond Sea. He announces his motive in commencing the work, in a fashion not uncommon in his day. "When I remember that every man is bounden by the commandment and counsel of the wise to eschew sloth and idleness, which is the mother and nourisher of vices, and ought to put myself to virtuous occupation and business. Then I, having no great charge of occupation, following the said counsel, took a French book and read therein many strange and marvellous histories, wherein I had great pleasure and delight as well for the novelty of the same as for the fair language of French, which was in prose so well and compendiously set and written, which methought I understood the sentence and substance of every matter; and forasmuch as this book was new and lately made, and drawn into French, and never had seen it in our English tongue, I thought it myself should be a good business to translate it into our English, to the end that it might be had as well in the realm of England as in other lands, and also for to pass therewith the time; and thus concluded in myself to begin this work. And forthwith took pen and ink, and began to run boldly forth as blind Bayard in this present work, which is named the Recuyell of the Trojan histories. And afterward when I remembered myself of my simpleness and unfitness that I had in both languages, that is to wit in French and in English, for in France was I never, and was born and learned mine English in Kent, in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place in England, and have continued for the space of thirty years for the most part in the countries of Brabant, Flanders, Holland, and Zealand; and thus when all these things came to fore me, after I had made and written five or six quires I fell in despair of this work and proposed no more to have continued therein, and laid the quires apart, and for ten years after

laboured no more in this work. And was fully in will to have left it, till on a time it fortuned that the right high, excellent, and right virtuous princess, my right redoubted lady, my lady Margaret, by the grace of God, sister unto the King of England and of France, my sovereign lord; Duchess of Burgundy, of Lotryk, of Brabant, &c., sent for me to speak with her good grace of divers matters" [doubtless concerning woollens], "among which I let her highness have knowledge of the aforesaid beginning of this work, which anon commended me to shew the said five or six quires to her grace; and when she had seen them anon she found fault with my English, which she commanded me to amend, and moreover commanded me straightly to continue and make an end of the residue then not translated, whose dreadful commandment I durst in nowise disobey, because I am a servant unto her said grace, and receive of her yearly fee."

This all tends to prove that the work commenced and abandoned, as an amusement, by Master Caxton, was afterwards continued by him, not entirely to his own delight and satisfaction. According to his reckoning it was commenced in the month of March, 1468 (really 1469, the Flemish year then beginning at Easter) and finished in the holy city of Cologne in September, 1471. The manuscript was presented to the Duchess of Burgundy by Caxton, who was delighted with his reception. "She hath well accepted it and largely rewarded me, wherefore I beseech Almighty God to reward her with everlasting bliss after this life." Probably Caxton thought his dread lady far too great a person to need any prayers for her temporal welfare.

This work of Caxton is of surpassing interest, as it was the briek demand for it which led him to turn his attention to the art of printing. The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye is undoubtedly the first book printed in the English language, and it was during its progress through the press that Caxton, as he himself informs us in his epilogue to the third book, learnt the new art. Perhaps few more remarkable instances of late development than that of Caxton can be found. We see this active, energetic man, after thirty years of commercial life—adorned, we may be sure, by much study in leisure hours—deliberately adopting a learned profession just as his sight is beginning to

fail. He was, however, by no means so old as the faulty chronology of books of reference would make him. Assuming the date of his apprenticeship, as recorded in the wardens'-book of the Mercers' Company to be correct, he would, in 1468, when he began to translate the *Recueil*, be at most forty-eight years of age, and at the printing thereof not more than fifty-two. Yet time had told heavily upon him, for he exclaims with a touch of weariness: "Thus end I this book, which I have translated after mine author as nigh as God hath given me cunning, to whom be given the laud and praising. And, forasmuch as in the writing of the same my pen is worn, mine hand weary and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with overmuch looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labour as it hath been, and that age creepeth on me daily and enfeebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them, as hastily as I might, this said book. Therefore, I have practised and learned, at my great charge and expense, to ordain this said book in print, after the manner and form as ye may here see, and is not written with pen and ink as other books are, to the end that every man may have them at once, for all the books of this story named the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, thus imprinted as ye here see, were begun in one day and also finished in one day."

This strange book is a compilation of the various stories current in the time of its author, Raoul Le Fevre, or authors, Le Fevre and Fillastre—successive secretaries to Philip of Burgundy—concerning the Trojan war, casually intermingled with foreign matter. A portion of it was translated into English metre by Lydgate, and either his version, or, as is more probable, Caxton's, supplied Shakespeare with the incidents of *Troilus and Cressida*. Only sixteen existing copies are enumerated by Mr. Blades. One of these is peculiarly interesting, from having been the property of the queen of Edward the Fourth, sister to Earl Rivers, the patron of Caxton's press at Westminster. This appears from a manuscript inscription on the paper lining of the original vellum covering, which has been carefully bound up at the end of the volume. The writing, of the fifteenth century, is as follows: "This boke is mine, Quene Elizabeth, late wiffe unto the moste noble King Edwarde the

forthe, off whos bothe sooles y beseeche almyghty Gods! Take to his onfnygth mercy above. Amen. Per me thoma Shukbarghe juniorem"—the counter signature of the clerk. This book was sold at the Roxburghe sale to the Duke of Devonshire, for a thousand and sixty pounds ten shillings. The statement of Caxton himself, in the epilogue to the second book, has inclined many excellent bibliographical writers to the opinion that this volume was printed at Cologne, by Zel, who would thus be made Caxton's instructor in printing, but the great English authority on Caxton considers that he has made out a complete case in favour of Colard Mansion, the famous printer of Bruges. It may, however, be urged in favour of M. Bernard and other foreign critics, that the statements of Caxton decide the question. In the epilogue to the printed volume of the *Recuyell*, Caxton explicitly states that his work was "begun in Bruges, continued in Ghent, and finished in Cologne in the time of the troublous world, and of the great divisions being and reigning as well in the realms of England and France as in all other places universally through the world, that is to wit, the year one thousand four hundred and seventy-one," or sixty-eleven as he sometimes prefers to call it. He also alludes to his having "good leisure, being in Cologne." This, with the passage in the epilogue to the third book, already quoted, would appear to settle both questions, as to the place at which the famous *Recuyell* was printed. But one story is good only till another is told, and the question, who was Caxton's teacher, has been vigorously, not to say fiercely, debated.

Foreign writers incline to the "Cologne theory," supported as it is by the words of Caxton himself, by the absence of all mention of Bruges as a centre of printing in the *Polyconyon*, and by the direct testimony of Caxton's successor. In the proem to Wynkyn de Worde's undated edition of *Bartholomeus de Proprietatibus rerum*, he gives the following:

And also of your charyte call to remembraunce
The soule of William Caxton first prynter of this boke

In laten tonge at Coleyn hyself to avanee

That every well-disposyd man may thereon loken.
Mr. Blades has nevertheless brought forward a mass of evidence of the severest and most technical kind in favour of Colard Mansion. Of the life of this celebrated man very little is known. It seems that he was both scribe and printer, for

in 1450 a sum of fifty-four livres was paid him for a MS. entitled *Romuleon*, purchased for the library of the Duke of Burgundy. At one time he boasted powerful patrons, but in later life sank into poverty. In 1471 he was dean of the guild of St. John the Evangelist, after which he forsook writing for printing.

His name again appears on the books of his guild in 1483, but disappears after the following year—disastrous for unlucky Colard Mansion. He appears to have been in straitened circumstances for some years, as in 1480 he could not execute the commission of Monseigneur de Gazebeke for an illuminated copy of *Valerius Maximus*, in two volumes, without several advances of money. His receipts are still preserved, as is a notice of his residence in one of the poorest streets in Bruges. His printing-room was over the church porch of St. Donatus, and cost him six livres parisian per annum. His landlords, the Chapter of St. Donatus, looked after him sharply enough. Shortly after he finished in this room his beautiful edition of *Ovid's Metamorphoses*—a folio full of woodcuts: a magnificent work which proved his ruin—he fled from Bruges, to the terror of the Chapter, whose anxiety concerning their rent is very amusing. But Colard Mansion's clerical landlords were equal to the occasion. Finding that one John Gossin, bookbinder, was anxious for the empty apartment, they took care to exact from him, as the only condition of tenure, that he should pay all the arrears due by Colard Mansion, in addition to the annual rent of six livres parisian well and duly paid.

For the better understanding of the reasons which incline Mr. Blades to assign the honour of instructing Caxton to Colard Mansion, of Bruges, rather than to Ulrich Zel, of Cologne, it may be well to glance at the conditions by which the early printers were guided in the choice of their type. The aim of the printers was to imitate manuscript as closely as possible, and, as many of them were scribes before being printers, it follows that they made punches and cast type in imitation of their beautiful fifteenth century handwriting. This peculiarity explains the origin of the now exploded fable of Fust selling his Bibles at Paris as manuscripts, his impeachment before the parliament of that city as a sorcerer, and the consequent necessity he was under of saving his life

by revealing his typographical secret. Nothing could be more natural than that the printer should imitate, as closely as possible, all the peculiarities of the handwriting of the scribes then in fashion, even to the adoption of combinations and contractions. Thus the Psalters and Bibles which appeared in Germany among the first productions of the press were printed in the characters used by the scribes for ecclesiastical service-books, while more general literature was printed in the common "bastard" Roman. Both of these have long been known in this country as black-letter or Gothic character. They may be described roughly as akin respectively to the Old English and German text taught at schools. It will be well to keep the distinction between the angular ecclesiastical type—used by the Mayence trio in the famous *Mazarine Bible*—and the "bastard" type well before us, as many of the arguments against the "Cologne theory" are based upon niceties of this kind. This "bastard" type was introduced by a famous Burgundian school of scribes. The name of Jean Mielot, sometime author, translator, and secretary to Philip, Duke of Burgundy, is little known, although he was the translator of at least twenty-three different works. Philip also employed among his army of scribes Guy d'Angers, David Aubert, de Heeden, Droin Ducret, de Dijon, and others. They brought into use that peculiar style of writing termed "grosse bâtarde," which, at a later date, Colard Mansion took as a pattern for his types. When Sweynheim and Pannartz—luckless emigrants—left Germany to take up their abode at the famous monastery of Subiaco, near Rome, they cut the punches of their new types in imitation of the Roman letters indigenous to the country, as Aldus strove to imitate the current hand fashionable in his day. Colard Mansion was also a celebrated calligrapher, and the resemblance between his printed books and the best written manuscripts of his time is very marked. The same character of writing was also in use in England, and Caxton's types bear a clear resemblance to the handwriting in the *Mercers' books*. Regard being had to the necessity for printing in a character "readily understood" of the people, the severe criticism of Dibdin appears somewhat ridiculous. The learned bibliographer complains of Caxton for not using Roman type, forgetting that those who read the productions

of the Westminster press were accustomed to the "bastard" alphabet. One other peculiarity of early printers deserves notice, and is valuable as affording an infallible index of priority of production. At first the trick of "spacing out" was unknown, and the lines were therefore of unequal length, as in manuscripts, wherein the writer, being unable to forecast the space between the words, leaves perforce a ragged edge at the right hand of a page. For a while this exact imitation of a manuscript was accepted as perfect, but the eye of the printer soon became sufficiently educated to demand the more perfect exactitude attained by "short spacing" or "spacing out." By amateurs of typography, this fact must be ever borne in mind, as—of the productions of the same printer—those specimens must be earliest in date which have lines of varying length. All these minute particulars are important, as early specimens of typography are frequently without date or place, and, from the absence of title-page, afford no guide to their authorship save the internal evidence just referred to.

Mr. Blades has divided the types used by Caxton into six periods, or several founts, and refers the first of these—that used in the Recuyell, for instance—to Belgian origin; and combats vigorously the notion that any of Caxton's early productions could have been printed at Cologne. It requires no specially educated eye to detect the similarity of Caxton's first type and the "grosse bâtarde" of Colard Mansion. And this being established, Mr. Blades proceeds: "In no respect can any typographical connection between the known productions of Zel's press and these Flemish-looking books be traced. Ulric Zel is never known to have used bâtarde cut types, nor was his paper of the same manufacture as that found in the books under discussion. He printed, from an early period, two pages at a time; whereas the Recuyell was printed page by page, as were the works of Mansion, who even made a separate working of his woodcuts. Caxton, even when using the quarto size, cut his paper into half-sheets, and then, as with folios, printed in single pages. This accounts for the entire rejection by Mansion, and the sparing use by Caxton, of the quarto size for their publications, as it necessitated twice as much press-work as the larger size. But the strongest evidence is found in the fact that Zel—after 1467—always

spaced out the lines of his books to an even length, and would have taught anyone learning the art of him to do the same; while this improvement was not adopted by either Mansion or Caxton for many years.

The conclusion drawn from this elaborate argument is, that Zel's customs were learnt in the Mayence school; while the printer of the books in Caxton's No. 1 type was instructed in the Dutch school, of which Mansion was probably a pupil, and which from its comparative rudeness may perhaps have had an independent origin among the workmen of Coster himself; and that had Caxton studied under Zel, he would hardly have reverted to the primitive customs of typography.

Against this powerful position it can only be advanced that Caxton unquestionably finished his work (the translation at least) at Cologne, and that, as a man of business, he would hardly have chosen the imperfect instead of the perfect, save—and this proviso is important—for the greater convenience of having his work done under his own eye at Bruges.

Abroad, either at Bruges or elsewhere, was published the famous book which for a long period enjoyed the reputation of being the first volume printed in England. The Game and Playe of the Chesse is alluded to in Sir Walter Scott's *Antiquary*, in a passage which is curious, as including not one single statement founded on fact: "Davy Wilson, commonly called Snuffy Davy, bought the Game of Chess, 1474, the first book ever printed in England, from a stall in Holland, for about two groschen, or twopence of our money. He sold it to Osborne for twenty pounds, and as many books as came to twenty pounds more. Osborne resold this inimitable windfall to Dr. Askew, for sixty guineas. At Dr. Askew's sale, this inimitable treasure blazed forth in its true value, and was purchased by royalty itself, for one hundred and seventy pounds."

The Game and Playe of the Chesse is a sad disappointment to lovers of the royal game. Instead of being a dissertation on the openings, gambits, and endings practised in the Middle Ages, it is a "morality," an antique and intensely dull attempt to moralise on the various conditions of human life, according to the several stations of mankind, as expressed by the unequal value and functions of the pieces set on the chess board. Instead of

a treatise like those of Del Rio and Ruy Lopez, it is a dreary piece of monkey—a species of composition now utterly unreadable. Before 1285, Algidius Colonna, General of the Augustins and Archbishop of Bourges, had composed his famous work, *De Regimine principum*, on which the *Liber de ludo Scachorum* was subsequently based by Jacopus de Cessolio. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, two distinct French versions were made. The earlier was probably that by Jean Faron, who translated it literally from the Latin. Shortly afterwards appeared the favourite and standard work of Jehan de Vignay, who took great liberties with the text, and added many stories and fables. Caxton appears to have availed himself of both translations, for it seems that he knew not Latin. The work is dedicated to a person famous in English history as perverted by Shakespeare as—

False, feasting, perjured Clarence,

but who, while yet unsuspecting the ultimate malmsey butt, figures as the "right noble, right excellent, and virtuous prince, George Duke of Clarence, Earl of Warwick and of Salisbury, Great Chamberlain of England, and Lieutenant of Ireland."

Later productions of the Caxton press—as is evidenced by the lines being in part spaced out—are two works in the original French: the *Recueil*, already discussed, and *Les Fais et Prouesses du noble et vaillant chevalier Jason*. The author of this, too, was Raoul Le Fevre. Various opinions are held as to the printer by whom, the time when, and the place where this work was printed. It has been attributed to Ulric Zel; but the only partial spacing is against this theory, as the character of the type inclines to the belief that the printer was either Colard Mansion or Caxton, or both, for it is quite possible that they worked together for awhile in a species of partnership. The life of Jason was also, according to typographical evidence, one of the early translations of Caxton.

At a moment of Caxtonic exaltation like the present, it is well to warn enthusiastic readers against the early volumes of the Bruges press. The "bastard" type is not difficult to decipher; the English style and spelling are quaint, curious, and interesting; but the matter! Alas! the matter! Sundry human institutions, of a quasi-literary character, have puzzled and continue to puzzle the writer of this sketch—the more especially as the Athenians once

made a notable example of an "old man who went about asking people conundrums," as an American writer amusingly puts it. The polished citizens—of Athens, I mean, not the United States—got tired of Socrates at last, brewed a choice dish of hemlock, prepared a funeral and—and the corpse was ready; altogether an excellent precedent, strangely overlooked by subsequent heedless mankind. My first marvel is the bard, be he Cymric or Gaelic. For my sins I know enough of Welsh so-called poetry to guess at the rest. A few months ago, as I stood on a wild winter's eve in the midst of Salisbury-plain, and saw the sun set palely in a wintry sky, behind the great dark circle of mysterious Stonehenge, I bethought me of the human victims offered up, and marvelled greatly that the ancient Britons did not, after hearing the song of the bards, rise in their rage and slay those venerable impostors there and then, on that stone of sacrifice on which the sun rises on the longest day of the year. My second marvel is, that the improvisatore of Naples—dull and prosy knave—is not flung into the bay by a justly-enraged populace. My third, that the Arab story-teller—dreariest-dog of all—is not set upon by his hearers, bastinadoed within an inch of his life, and set upon an ass with his face towards the tail of that patient and sagacious animal.

For these reasons I am inclined to attribute much of the violence of the Middle Ages to the species of literature produced during that interesting period. An attempt to peruse allegories such as the *Game and Playe of the Chesse*, and volumes of mediæval romance grafted upon a classical stock, such as *The Recuyell*, and *Les Fais du Jason*, goes far to explain the horror of books of all kinds, which might have been observed, until within a very few years, among many worthy people whose instincts were doubtless inherited from their ancestors. The contempt of the "knights and gentlemen who knew not Latin"—nay, had but a colloquial knowledge of the English and French tongues—for the clerk becomes quite conceivable, when one is brought face to face with a mediæval "morality," or, worse still, a romance. With fiendish ingenuity, the compiler or "drawer out of the Latin" into French, of the grand old Greek stories, contrived to overwhelm them with the leaden pall of his own dulness. Worse than this, he turned the

heathen heroes into Christian knights, mixed and confounded legends one with another, introduced anecdotes and episodes of his own, of such length and irrelevance that it is no wonder that the nobles and gentlemen to whom this farrago was read aloud—unable to bear it any longer—leaped up and quarrelled, went out and hewed each other in pieces with sword and battleaxe, out of sheer desperation and weariness of life. Perhaps the very best romance of the Middle Ages is the Roman de Melusine; but even in that the author tells his story three times over; once, it must be confessed, with marvellous purity and tenderness. But the writer of the Middle Ages was nothing if not lengthy, and the troubadours themselves must have been an awful infliction. Let anyone try to imagine the entire Lay of the Last Minstrel, at a sitting, with a harp accompaniment! His feelings will explain those of the German gentleman who (Uhland says for another reason), lashed into fury by the length of a minstrel's song, suddenly smote him that he died. It is needless to mention that no glimmer of wit, or humour, or fun of any kind, illumined a genuine old-world romance. Fun was left to the Court fool, whose frequent whippings explain the estimation in which his jokes were held by the great. Worst of all, the writer was incessantly wandering from his story into episodes having no connection with the main plot. This vicious habit of introducing episodes affords an excellent illustration of the tenacity of evil. A good thing—be it a religion, a school of literature or of art—is exceedingly difficult to keep pure; the tendency of mankind being to overlay it with ridiculous superstition, absurd affectation, or redundant ornament. But evil dies very hard. Cervantes himself, who wrote his immortal work to kill the absurd romances of chivalry—and succeeded—is perpetually maddening the reader by leaving the don and his squire by the wayside, while he tells a silly sentimental story.

Le Sage, too—a wit of the very first water—forces those who would enjoy the adventures of Gil Blas, and the wild night-ride of Don Cleofas, to perform a species of literary steeplechase—to escape the innumerable episodes by wily turns and desperate bounds. But even these cases, bad as they are, when compared with the literature of the Caxtonic period, appear able.

SONG.

A PHANTASY.

I SAW, in sleep, a sullen Sphinx that stood
Amidst gray sands in a waste desert place,
Gazing far forth with stony-fashioned face,
And frozen eyes which saw no coming good.
Around that pulseless portent, rood on rood,
The waste stretched wearily; no green thing grew
Within its glance, no gracious dole of dew
Dropt from pale evening's eyes. The phantom
brood

Of passionless fears which are the ghosts of fears,
Too hollow for joy's flight to move to tears
Or doom awake to terror, knew the place,
And gathered there like shadows round wan night,
Crouching around that creature whose still face
Mocked at desire and drave frail hope to flight.
Anon from forth a cloud there flew a bird,
Which lit upon that stony brow and sang.
So strange, so sweet a song I have not heard
As this which through that desert region rang,
Mytic, unspeakable. Those phantoms then
Stirred and were thrilled. Like shadows of the
night,

Which round the palsied souls of prostrate men
Keep watch in spectral stillness, fill the light
Of happy morning laughs them into flight,—
So fled those phantoms when that wondrous song
First brake the spell of silence which so long
Held empire there. And at the kiss of sound,
Tender as love's on lips of innocence,
The chill air seemed to quicken with a sense
Of nascent life, and from that barren ground
Flowers sprang forth in smiling troops, as though
Each musical note did give some blossom birth,
And living leafage shook, a sound of mirth
Like clapping hands of frolic fays. The flow
Of that strange song did dominate the place,
And quickened all save that set stony face
Which gazed unmoved and gladdened not, nor
took

One touch of grace from those rare sounds which
shook

My heart with conflict most unutterable
Of joy and fearful yearning. Then there fell
Silence again; yet silence sweeter far
Than the dread voicelessness whose vacant sway
Prelude in my breast that passionate war;
A tender silence as of lips that pray
At eve above a sleeping child; and lo!
Upon that stony brow whose changeless snow
No sunny seemed to touch with passing glow,
The bird lay dead. I looked to see them fade,
Those happy flowers, and all that leafy shade
Shrink back to sand-heaps on the cold gray waste,
What time those phantom fears with ghostly haste
Flocked to their ancient vigil. But behold!
From forth a cloud of violet and gold—
Veiling what hidden height?—a sound was heard,
Low yet exultant, of seraphic might,
As though the soul of that mysterious bird
Shook one proud parting psalm in its flight
To some supernal songland. At the sound
A hundred happy echoes woke around
That stony portent, filling the glad air
With an all-conquering music. Everywhere
The leafage shook with song, the flowers rained
dew

From hearts that opened as the melody rang
And thrilled them through. With every drop up-
sprang

Some young green thing, until that desert place
Was glad as Eden. Still that sullen face
Stared sternly forth. No soul its secret knew.
Yet its sole sway was broken, for that song
Spoke of an hour, far-seen, awaited long
When those fixed eyes should flood with the strong
light

Of conquering dawn, and those set stony lips
Be moved to music such as shall eclipse

The jubilant strain which climbs the brightening sky
When Memnon greets the morning. Hope's clear
eye
Gazing in that calm face no longer failed,
So sweet the music rang, so thick the flowers
trailed!

A BRILLIANT BEING.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"I'll introduce you to the nicest woman in London; she has an 'At home' to-night, and she gives me carte-blanche to bring any of my friends," Pendleton says to me, after five minutes' intellectual intercourse in the dining-room of that most æsthetic and immaterial of clubs, the "Young Mutton Chops."

"Hadn't you better find out whether or not I'm divorced, detrimental, or disinclined first?" I suggest, for Pendleton and I have been parted for several years, and he knows nothing of my ways and means.

"You may be either, or all three," he replies, with determination; "Mrs. Carruthers won't care. If you're divorced, she'll swear it's your wife's fault. If you're detrimental, she'll swear it's Fate's fault; and if you're disinclined to go to her house, she'll overcome that disinclination with a power and promptitude that will compel you to proclaim her as I do, the cleverest and most charming woman in London."

"What is she?" I ask, with dawning curiosity; "to quote the Wizard of the North, is she

"Widowed wife or wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, or betrayed?"

"The whole lot together, I should say," Pendleton replies calmly, and I am shaken to my centre, for though not beautiful I am young and innocent. "Anyway I am sure of this, that she's a woman of genius, and a most adorable creature; you shall hear her sing! By Jove! if she doesn't fetch you with her singing, you're not the fellow I take you to be; she might make a fortune on the concert boards or on the operatic stage if she liked, but the woman's heart is anchored in her home and in her work."

"Crewels?" I interrupt timidly. "Work, I said, not frivolity," Pendleton replies sternly; "haven't you read any of her books? they're fought for, sir, at Mudie's, in a way that would turn any other woman's head; she writes under her maiden name of Constance Terriss; are you disposed to cavil at that?"

I bow my head in meek deprecation of having any such intention. Already I am more than indisposed to cavil at anything

concerning her. For I love peace, and Pendleton positively bristles as he speaks of Mrs. Carruthers.

Pendleton is one of those men who are at best a contradiction still to the end of one's acquaintanceship with them. He delivers himself of the most roseate-hued and gushing sentiments, in the saddest-coloured voice and manner imaginable. I like Pendleton! He reminds me of that knight of courtesy, Sir Gawaine. Every feminine goose he mentions becomes, by his process of mentioning her, a swan.

"Are you disposed to cavil at that?" he repeats. "Are you inclined to add yourself to the number of the pack of hounds who are trying to hunt her down for having had the pluck to break those chains of slavery which were forged about her in her childhood, by a man who was base enough to marry her before she knew what love or her own mind was?"

Pendleton pauses and scowls a note of interrogation at me, and, completely humbled, I stammer out my readiness to lay myself a votive offering on Mrs. Carruthers's shrine without delay. There is discretion in my doing this. Pendleton is a man of sufficiently good property to justify him in gratifying the dictates of his heart and inclination in marrying. Evidently his heart and inclination tend towards Mrs. Carruthers, who is probably a widow well-inclined to be a wife again. Congratulating myself on the keenness of perception which has enabled me to see the way in which the cat is jumping in the case of my friend, I separate from him with the promise to rejoin him in the evening, and be conveyed under his wing to Mrs. Carruthers's "At home."

London and I have been strangers for five years. My old haunts know me not, and in return for their forgetfulness I find no pleasure in them. The girls I flirted with in days gone by have forgotten my name since their respective marriages, and I have forgotten the address of the woman who loved me. The men with whom I used to run at Lillie-bridge and row on the river, smile at the recollection of those idle days now, as they give me an absent-hearted hand, and an invitation to dine with them "some day." Altogether I find that the hours of the first day of my sojourn in London hang fire terribly, and I am in the mood to be grateful for the smallest of mercies, when I enter Mrs. Carruthers's drawing-room in the wake of my friend Pendleton.

The room is small, pretty, comfortably cool, and admirably lighted. About twenty men and half as many women are disposed about it in knots of three and four, talking, the majority of them, loudly and volubly. But, above all other tones, one voice rises with a clanging clearness that catches my ear and regard at once. I look in the direction from whence it proceeds, and I see a fine, fair, tall woman smiling vigorously at Pendleton, and demonstrating to him across the breadth of the room that he is to stand at attention, as she is about to sing. He comes to an obedient halt, I fall into position by his side, and in another moment Mrs. Carruthers bursts into song.

Unquestionably she sings with unusual dramatic powers and effect for an amateur. Unquestionably Pendleton is justified in almost purring with satisfaction, as he does while he listens to her. The song belongs to the highly suggestive order. The words are warm, and the air is sultry. As Mrs. Carruthers rings out the refrain, "I love thee so dear, that I only can leave thee!" Pendleton is like a reed shaken by the wind. He totters in his rather tight patent boots, and murmurs to me:

"Her voice is as fresh as a lark's in that trill, isn't it?"

"I never happened to hear a lark try that trill," I say, striving to be critical, not to say cynical, and feeling that my powers of being either are failing me rapidly as I gaze upon a large expanse of black velvet, over which a magnificently massive pair of white arms are arranged. I agree with Pendleton without a moment's hesitation, when he says to me:

"You don't often see anything like that out of marble, do you, old fellow?"

"Very rarely indeed," I say hastily and timidly, for our hostess has finished her song by this time, and is evidently waiting to receive our plaudits.

"That woman is all heart and soul," Pendleton goes on enthusiastically, after he has introduced me to her, and she has accorded me a most genial welcome as "Charlie Pendleton's friend."

"Lucky fellow! she calls you by your christian-name," I say, enviously, and Pendleton chuckles with ill-restrained elation and conceit, as he replies:

"Yes, she's good enough to put me on the pedestal of her intimate friendship, and I believe that I only do myself justice when I say that I appreciate the honour; one doesn't often meet with a woman

whose genius is so versatile as hers. There are half-a-dozen women here to-night who write, for instance, but she's up to their mark in that branch, and beyond them in everything else. You've heard her sing? Well, she acts and writes as well as she sings; and with it all she's as frank and unaffected as if she didn't charm every man, and eclipse every woman, who came near her."

"A woman of genius! essentially human," I suggest admiringly.

"Don't quote Owen Meredith about Constance Terriss," Pendleton says with severity; "by Jove! in his most inspired moments he never conceived anything half so grand as she is!" and Pendleton, as he speaks, is so irresistibly attracted towards his theme, that I am left stranded alone in a corner with full leisure to look at and mark her well. She is—but room for Mrs. Carruthers! a description of her demands a fresh paragraph.

She is the "whitest" woman without being insipid, and without resembling unbaked bread, that I have ever beheld. Her skin is magnificent! "You wouldn't think she was forty, would you?" a little lady who notices my earnest regard of our hostess says bravely, and I feel ready to go out and do doughty deeds at the instant against anyone who dares to associate so brilliant a creature with aught so prosaic as middle age! I gaze at her again, rather more intently than before, and I see that her complexion is as fine and delicately-coloured as that of an infant. She has light fluffy hair, dressed in a way that would have been trying to an ordinary woman, but that is extraordinarily becoming to her. She has small, scintillating, grayish-blue eyes, that do not seem to belong to such a gorgeously large and fine physique as hers. The eyes are not merely observant, they are suspiciously watchful. They wander from the face of the one she is addressing, and take passing notes as to the feelings that are flickering through other people's minds on to their faces. They look vague, and stray even when she is speaking in apparently the most earnest and heartfelt manner. Yet soon I discover her to be the frankest woman I have ever met! It is impossible to account for this that so strongly resembles deceitfulness in her expression. Accordingly, not being able to account for it, I forthwith forget it. Presently she disarms my powers of observation by sweeping me away to a remote corner of the small, pretty room, and beginning to be con-

fidential with me. Her frankness is a staggering thing to my inexperience. Before I have been an hour in her society she has informed me rather fully of a good many of the late Captain Carruthers's follies in general, and faults towards herself in particular. She has taught me to understand that the talents she possesses as writer, reader, vocalist, and histrionic are respectively of the very highest order. I learn that under auspicious circumstances of appreciation and cultivation, she would have been a second George Sand, Adelaide Kemble, Grisi, and Ristori. She informs me that Swedenborg was an extremely clever man, the only leader of thought worth following, the guide of the fine "coming race," and the solitary instance in literature of complete congeniality of sentiment with herself. She liberally adds that "the bonds of Christianity were only intended to rail in those inferior minds who were incapable of understanding the more subtle mysteries of German philosophy," and winds up by saying that she "expects her little girl to be a triumphant refutation of the theory, that religious culture and careful guardianship are requisite for the production of a good woman."

If my hair were not cut in the orthodox military crop, it would stand on end as I listen to these views. I long for an introduction to this cursorily-mentioned little girl. The daughter of such a mother must be the reverse of commonplace, to say the least of it. I am a young man, and my head reels with gratified vanity as she gives me to understand that her "frank unguarded nature leads her to rebuff every new acquaintance in whom she does not feel deeply interested." I feel inclined to purr like Pendleton, for she has not rebuffed me. I begin to preen myself on the fact that her quick intuition and matchless discernment have discovered that there is more in me than in the majority—more in me indeed than anyone else has ever had sufficient enterprise and research to find out! I pity Pendleton for that delusion he nourishes as to his position on a pedestal in her estimation, and think that she has perhaps erred a little in good-naturedly feeding my friend's absurd vanity. I shall give Pendleton a word of friendly caution by-and-by.

There is an immense amount of force about her I gather, as in bright incisive sentences and loud accents she gives me a rapid résumé of her career. She appears

to hold a variety of arts in the hollow of her hand, to practise them all with proficiency, and to command almost unprecedented success in their exercise. Her publishers tell her that letters from the highest European literary authorities assure them that, if she did but give herself time, the genius of George Eliot would dwindle into insignificance before her. Her singing-master constantly mentions, with tears in his eyes, that he cannot have the presumption to go on teaching one from whom Patti herself might learn! For the rest, she informs me that she is "an actress born," that she can't help doing the right business, and giving the right reading in every part she plays, and that she has in consequence to run the gauntlet of a great deal of amateurish ill-feeling and jealousy.

"You will find, when you know me better, that most women hate me, Mr. Power," she says, quite cheerfully; "they're afraid to confess it openly, but they show it in a thousand little undefinable ways and meannesses, and ill-conceived and worse-executed slights. Even those who are here to-night accepting my hospitality are betraying it in their hearts. They come because they will try to meet men, and men will come here, but they one and all detract from me as far as they find it possible to do so. I can't help outshining them, and they can't forgive me for doing it."

"Utterly ignoble of them," I say warmly, and she smiles a seraphic acknowledgment of my partisanship, and says:

"I'll introduce you to my daughter; we're constantly taken for sisters—there she is!"

She points out a nice-faced, usual-looking girl of about twenty. "The combination of George Sand, Adelaide Kemble, Grisi, and Ristori has turned out an extremely nice average girl for a daughter," I think as I watch the young lady, who is chaining the attention of a group of listeners very successfully.

"She's a very entertaining child," her mother says, following the direction of my eyes. "Most girls of her age are gauche as soon as they find themselves the only speakers in a circle of listeners; but Elinor avoids that pitfall, as you'll already have perceived. I suppose she has learnt the art of conversation from me, for she has been my constant companion ever since I began to think for myself."

I suppose I looked amazed or amused, incredulous or appalled, for she resumes with a running accompaniment of laughter:

"My dear sir, I suppose you think that I am historically inaccurate in making the dates of my 'beginning to think,' and of her becoming my companion,' contemporaneous? Not at all; I only began 'to think' after I married and found out that I had made a mistake in doing so. Then, luckily, I had Elinor, and made her my companion."

"And a very charming one you find her, I am sure," I say feebly. Not that I do not thoroughly mean what I am saying, but that I feel convinced that the lady whom I address fancies that all the charm of the companionship has emanated from herself.

"Yes," she says affably, "Elinor is what I have made her; if mothers are such fools that they can't mould girls after their own pattern, they deserve to have the burden of stupid unmarriedable girls laid upon them. Not that I want Elinor to marry now or ever. I'd infinitely prefer keeping her to myself to giving her to a second edition of her father, for example; besides, she's much too clever a girl ever to marry a man who would insist on being her master, and she's much too clever a girl to be satisfied with a nonentity, and it isn't easy to find the happy medium."

"Have you never found it?" I ask encouragingly; for if Mrs. Carruthers feels herself justified in talking in this strain, I, as a young man eager for experience, feel myself to be perfectly justified in leading her on to continue it.

"Yes, once, when it was too late," she says, with an affected half-checked sigh, and a singularly bright and untruthful smile. Oddly enough, though the affectation and untruthfulness strike me, they don't shock me as they would have done a few hours ago. The spell of Mrs. Carruthers is upon me; she is a law to herself! Nevertheless, though I own that the glamour is upon me, to the extent of making me accept her dicta unquestioningly, I tell myself that if Elinor is what her mother has made her, then Elinor must be about the last person in England I should like to have for my wife. I think this as I get away from the vivacious matron's side at last; and foregoing my original intention of seeking Elinor, I go meditatively to my club.

Mrs. Carruthers favours me with another side view of her character, in a few days, and succeeds in doing away with my first impression of her in a singularly conclusive way, for a time. Opportunities for the public display of her talents as actress or reciter not offering themselves at this juncture, she spends a large portion

of her time in the privacy of her own home, to a participation in the intellectual pleasures of which she freely admits me. Her "little girl," I observe, often listens to her mamma's narrations, with an expression of admiring, affectionate incredulity, that would lead a sceptic to suppose that Mrs. Carruthers is a romancist of a fine order in private life. But the time is not ripe yet for me to be sceptical in the slightest degree about aught concerning Mrs. Carruthers. In the parlance of myself and the few men on whom I have conferred the inestimable boon of an introduction to her, she is "the frankest woman out," and we all applaud her to the echo whenever she makes a brilliant statement, even though it may savour more of the ideal than the real.

Poor Pendleton, I remark, about this time begins to estimate himself rather more modestly and correctly than he did of yore. He allows it to dawn upon him that Constance Terriss is merely tolerating him. (We all call her "Constance Terriss" behind her back, and assail our consciences by declaring that we only do it because she is a public character; I go so far as to say I should as soon think of speaking of "Mr." Shakespeare, as of her by her married name.) "She's a splendid creature," Pendleton says gloomily, looking up at his goddess from a distance; "but she's just the least bit in the world selfish, Power, old boy; I don't say to you, 'Beware! trust her not, she's fooling thee,' but I'll just mention that she used to recite to me by the hour, and if I ask her to do it now, she says she can only 'get the steam up when she has an audience!' I've done more for her on the Press than any of you fellows will ever do, and now she'll hardly look at me when you're in the room, and makes a point of always having neuralgia when I call on her alone. She's selfish, that's what Constance Terriss is; and when a man has served her ends, and gratified her cursed vanity, she'll drop him without even a decent show of hesitation. I don't want to caution you, but take care!"

"I'll tell her you're nettled at her seeming neglect," I say carelessly, for I feel very sure of my own ground with the candid and clever cause of Pendleton's discomfiture. Poor little fellow! I am really sorry that self-conceit should have led him to this bitter end. Nevertheless, it is a wholesome lesson to Pendleton, and that it has been given him is doubtless for his ultimate good. I don't like that allusion of his to having served the current queen

of my soul on the Press. It does not become the mouse to remind the lion of any little assistance rendered, in the matter of nibbling any ignominious cords that may have fettered the noble animal at any time. That the friendship of Constance Terriss repays a man fully for the staunchest service he can render her, is my firm conviction. And I ought to be able to form a correct estimate concerning her, for I am seeing a great deal of her in the most delightful possible atmosphere of social unrestraint just now.

We—Mrs. Carruthers and I—have fallen into the habit of interchanging thought, sentiment, and experience to a considerable extent. That is to say, I imagine an "interchange" is going on. Pendleton (who is bitter) says that the obligation is a one-sided one, and that I am simply the receptacle for the loose thoughts for which my brilliant and versatile friend desires to find a store-house. He says that the mere fact of her expressing a view makes her remember that she holds it! Accordingly she expresses a vast number of uncommonly staggering views, and I metaphorically sit at her feet and worship her, and wish that heaven had made me such a woman, and repine at not being brave or rash enough to try to win her.

"I long for retirement, for rest in which to carry out some of the ideas with which my brain is teeming, Mr. Power," she says to me sometimes, with an expression of ineffable weariness that is really creditable, from the artistic point of view, to a woman who isn't in the least weary of anything. "You probably mistake me to the degree of thinking that I find pleasure in this vortex, balm in the fulsome flattery that is offered me, satisfaction in knowing that I am envied, and therefore hated by other women, who invariably find themselves neglected when I am by; but in this you misjudge me, I assure you that you do."

As I have never seen her in the "vortex," nor heard the "fulsome flattery," nor detected the dark vein of hatred which runs through the jealous minds of other women concerning her, I can conscientiously aver that I have never for a moment suspected her of finding pleasure in any one of these things. But this disavowal does not satisfy the keen perceptive genius of Mrs. Carruthers for an instant.

"Ah yes, you say so, but I know too well what you and all those who are only superficially acquainted with me think," she says, with a sad smile and an incredulous shake of the head. "Because it has

been my duty to my child to struggle in public for the means of supporting her, people are cruel enough to suppose that I like the notoriety and adulation that falls to my lot, whereas, in reality, I am weary of it all. All I want is quiet, and to see my Elinor happy."

"She's a charming girl, and is sure to marry well," I say timidly. It is the only form of encouragement as to the future which occurs to me to offer to her at the moment, but I feel that it is painfully commonplace in the case of such a superior woman.

"Marry!" she repeats with superb contempt, "do you think that I look forward to her fulfilling a domestic destiny, which might in any way resemble mine, with anything like satisfaction or hope? No, no, Mr. Power, dismiss that notion from your mind at once. Elinor can support herself already. I gave her a magnificent musical education, and she turns her knowledge and proficiency to account, and gives lessons. I have brought her up to be quite independent of marriage as a means of living. She, like me, is justified in being a little extravagant in her tastes; she pays for them herself."

"Poor girl!" I say, compassionately; "it's rather rough on her that she should go through the drudgery of teaching music." The truth is, it is a considerable let-down to me to hear that the devoted mother, who is always flaunting the sacrifices she is perpetually making for her child before my eyes, should allow that child to take the responsibility of her own maintenance upon herself at such an early age. For the first time it strikes me as a hard and incongruous fact that the girl should always be dressed in the plainest and poorest materials, while the mother is invariably arrayed in garments of price. It must be conceded to Mrs. Carruthers that she is justified in her course as far as results go. Mrs. Carruthers seen by the morning light, untouched by the painter's art, is not altogether so pleasing an object as the dainty dame who sweeps down to dinner in sheeny silk, or the even grander lady who rolls off in black velvet and a little brougham occasionally to read and recite to a select coterie. But the glamour is on me to such a degree still, that I look upon the haggard, hard-faced woman, with whom I sometimes breakfast, as an unreality, while I take for truth the delicately-complexioned, beaming, brilliant woman who shows herself to us at night.

ROYAL ASCOT.

AWAY in the far north—in the Macbeth country, the country which brooks not that its magnates should run horses, even in France, on Sundays—there is a famous boulder-stone. Not the sculptured stone of Sweyn, nor the stone whereon witches were burnt, in the good old merry times; but a stone quite as significant as these—the tombstone, as it were, of civil war in England—beneath which rested quietly enough the relics of the Jacobites, till the very name of that faction became confused with those very different folk, the Jacobins; and finally vanished from human ken altogether. This boulder-stone is huge of size—a notable landmark on Drummoissie Moor, now much cultivated and enclosed, having become changed, even as the field of Waterloo has become changed. Where grew, a century ago, heather and bracken, are now smiling cornfields. Hardly yet does corn grow up to the edge of the great stone of unsavoury renown in countries beyond Tweed. This is Cumberland's Boulder-stone; the rock on which William Augustus—sometime Duke of Cumberland and Generalissimo of the Forces—ate his breakfast, on the morning of the 16th of April, 1746. Here also, later in the day; the duel between tartan and scarlet, claymore and cannon, being over; the victorious duke is said—only said, be it noted—to have written, on a certain playing-card—the nine of diamonds, hence called the curse of Scotland—the order to give no quarter. The existence of this order is by no means proved, and it is more likely that the idea of giving quarter to bare-legged caterans occurred to neither general nor soldier, than that any precise order to slay and spare not was spoken—not to say written out—on a playing-card for paper and the great boulder-stone for a writing-desk. There is nothing truculent in the aspect of so-called "Butcher" Cumberland. He never grew old enough to be savagely cruel. In the portraits of him in his youth, he appears as a large-eyed boy of cherubic aspect. As time rolled on, he accumulated adipose tissue, particularly about the jaw!—after the manner of his race—and his looks became heavier and more stolid; but when he won the battle of Culloden, at the age of twenty-five, there was nothing savage in his outward appearance. The engraving before me represents a pleasant, cheerful young man, already showing signs of

incipient obesity, with three-cornered hat cocked jauntily over his eye, with rich lace cravat round his throat, his vast full bottomed coat sweeping down to the top of his huge jack-boots. This martial figure grasping the bâton of command, is mounted on a piebald horse, prancing in fashion suggestive of the circus. Again, I see him in a medallion—still plump, rosy, and good-humoured. Beneath him the artist has represented a ragged Highlander, prostrate among his own inhospitable mountains, his claymore shattered, his buckle—inaccurately shaped by the way—broken—Under this design is the legend—

Thus to expire be still the rebel's fate,
While endless honours on brave William wait.

He well deserved the epithet of "Brave William." The sword of Culloden has been fleshed at Dettingen and Fontenoy. By the side of his peppery little father he was gloriously wounded, and despite his youth, appears to have been a better commander by far than the veterans Cop and Hawley. The former of these has been easily thrashed at Preston Pans, and the latter roughly handled at Falkirk. Cumberland, however, took every advantage of the blunders of his wretched adversary, the young Pretender, who had not even courage to charge at Elcho's bidding, at the head of his troops. He never, or very rarely, interfered in politics, his ambition being purely military. Shortly before Culloden, he had managed to escape an unpleasant match—"the bolus, the Princess of Denmark," a Walpole ungallantly styles the lady "The duke, you hear, is named generalissimo, with Count Koningseg, Lord Dunmore, and Ligonier under him. Poo boy! he is most Brunswickly happy with his drums and trumpets. Do but think this sugar-plum was to tempt him to swallow that bolus!" At the moment Walpole wrote this, he, like the duke's father and his ministers, was evidently blind to the capacity of the young prince. Lord Granville himself, too giddy to sound Cumberland, treated him arrogantly in the matter. Hereat the duke, accustomed by the Queen and his governor, Mr. Poyntz to venerate the wisdom of Sir Robert Walpole—then on his death-bed—sent Mr. Poyntz, the day but one before Sir Robert expired, to consult him how to avoid the match. Sir Robert advised his Royal Highness to stipulate for an ample settlement. The duke took the sage counsel and heard no more of his intended bride. The victory of Culloden was greatly

appreciated by the Southron, and for a while the soldier prince was the most popular man in England. Twenty-five thousand pounds a year were settled on him for life, besides the fifteen accruing to him at the king's death; but the trial and execution of the rebel lords brought about a revulsion of feeling. The London inns were crowded with rebel prisoners, and people made parties of pleasure to hear their trial; the Scotch, meanwhile, testifying loudly everywhere against the duke, for his severities in the Highlands. It would seem, also, that he had some influence in turning the king's mind from mercy towards Lord Kilmarnock. Popular feeling at last exploded in the jest which has labelled him for evermore. It was proposed, in the city of London, to present him with the freedom of some company, when one of the aldermen said aloud, "Then let it be of the Butchers." Fortune also frowned upon him in the field. Two years after Culloden, he was beaten by Marshal Saxe, near Lawfeld, and ten years later lost the battle of Hastenbeck, to the Marshal d'Estrées; a not very brilliant close to the career splendidly inaugurated at Dettingen. The English ministers appear to have feared his capacity. The ambition of Lord Hardwicke, the childish passion for power of the Duke of Newcastle, and the jealousy of Mr. Pelham, combined, on the death of the Prince of Wales, to exclude the Duke of Cumberland from the Regency nominated in case of a minority, and when his two political friends, Lord Holland and Lord Sandwich, deserted him, and even his father threw him over on the convention of Kloster-Zeven, the unlucky prince devoted himself exclusively to landscape-gardening, to encouraging the manufacture of china at Chelsea, and to horse-racing, and left his mark on each. Virginia Water—one of the prettiest artificial lakes in the world—was constructed under his eye. He bred the celebrated racehorse Eclipse; and last, but not least, he founded Ascot Races.

In "Butcher" Cumberland's time, and for many years after, Ascot races were far from approaching their present splendour. Ascot in fact was long styled a "country meeting," as distinguished from the solemn celebrations at the metropolis of the turf. Even those would hardly bear comparison with a third-rate meeting of the present day. One or two races, or matches, preceded dinner and abundant port-wine or punch, then came another race or two, then cock-fighting, supper, dice, cards, and

more drinking. Still Ascot went on until the Escape affair disgusted Prince Regent Florizel with the turf, and then royal eyes looked kindly on the little "country" race-course.

At that moment the star of Goodwood had not yet arisen, and Ascot became the spot towards which the "best people" gravitated in leafy June. Unlike Epsom, proudly avers the contemporary chronicler, "the scene lies too far from London for the pollution of sheer cockneyism; it is near enough for a gallant display of the rank and fashion and beauty of the metropolis." Beautiful in natural features it can hardly be called. There is a sandiness, a barrenness about Ascot-heath, which, especially under certain circumstances, produces a feeling of depression, but its approaches are eminently lovely and suggestive of innumerable pleasant reminiscences of Shakespeare, Denham, and Pope—of Falstaff and the buck-basket, of Mistress Anne Page and Master Slender. All these attractions had Ascot in the day of George the Fourth of that name, but it was said that the gay visitors cared much less for them than for that "one great interest which these present races enjoy, beyond all other public amusements whatsoever—it is at these races that the king appears amongst his people, and takes a common interest with them in their sports." Judging by a picture before me, and from other evidence needless to recapitulate, I doubt the extreme popularity of the first gentleman in Europe in the year of grace 1826. But whether to see the king, or the horses, or each other, people came to Ascot eagerly enough in the ante-railway days. By six o'clock everybody within five counties round was awake, and getting breakfast as fast as possible. By nine Park-street was lined with embowered waggons filled with glowing lasses, ancient and buxom dames, with fathers and husbands, brothers and sweethearts to match, and drawn by sleek, plump-haunched, flower-bedecked horses, driven by sun-burnt youths, each with a nosegay in his Sunday vest. The whole country side was en route for the race-course. Meanwhile from Windsor and from London came the noble army of fashion, tight-waisted, curly-brimmed, leg-of-mutton-sleeved fashion, pale from early rising and a long drive in the hot morning. Male fashion came in vehicles, the very names of some of which have lost all significance, buggies and curricles to wit, and gigs vast of wheel and rakish of air. Female fashion came in post-chaises and

stage-coaches, in open landau and glittering barouche. The heath itself was alive with bustle. "The alloy of rabble," adds a contemporary writer, "is a mere nothing," and then continues in a fine burst of metre :

The king came on the course in a carriage and four,
He alighted with firmness of step from the coach,
To the joy of the thousands who hailed his approach.
With a dignified bow and a wave of the hand,
He approached to the stairs and ascended the stand.
He appeared in good health, and in short quite the
thing,
And the multitude shouted "Long, long live the king!"
He was dressed in a plain blue surtout with a star,
And looked better, 'twas noticed, than last year by far.

Hardly so beautiful, so genteel, and so intensely loyal is the narrative of a gentleman from Suffolk, also an eye-witness. "The crowd was intense, like the heat; splendid, genteel, grotesque; many in masquerade, but all in good-humour—dandies of men; dandies of women; lords in white trousers and black whiskers; ladies with small faces, but very large hats; Oxford scholars with tandems and randoms; some on stage-coaches, transmogrified into drags—fifteen on the top, and six thin ones within; a two-foot horn; an ice-house, two cases of champagne, sixteen of cigars; all neckcloths, but white; all hats, but black; small talk with oaths, and broad talk with great ones, cooled with ice, and made red-hot with brandy and smoke; all four-in-handers; all trying to tool 'em; none able to drive, but all able to go with the tongue. An Oxford slap-bang loaded in London; Windsor blues freighted at Reading; Reading coaches chockfull at Dorking; a Mile-end coach-waggon; German coaches, Hanoverian cars, Petersburgh sledges and phaetonees; St. James's cabs; Bull and Mouth barouches, waggoned by Exeter coachmen. No place, no amusement, no holiday-making is so enchanting to the softer sex. Gentle and simple, grave and gay, all are on tiptoe of joy, and out jumps nature from both ends—eyes and feet. Lords' ladies tastefully costumed with roses and lilacs untainted, or rather unspiced by Bond-street; farmers' daughters and farmers' wives sparkling in silks, rosy in cheek, tinted by soft breezes and bottled ale."

A sacrilegious scribe this of the Georgian period, writing under the signature of Patroclus in the Sporting Magazine of fifty years ago. He evidently saw more of the crowd than the poet cited above. He was not so absorbed in the contemplation of royalty, as to ignore the glee-singers and stilt-dancers, the boxers and the gipsies, the thimblerriggers and the pickpockets. He got home safely after

all—sprightly old Patroclus—finished his dinner and his bottle, and wound up by "chanting"—gentlemen of a sporting turn did not sing fifty years ago, they "chanted"—that famous song, which begins by demanding a bumper of Burgundy for the singer, "for those who prefer it, champagne," and concludes with "a health to the king, God bless him!"

Ascot in modern times has changed its character completely. Far from being a select meeting protected from the incursion of the million by its distance from London, it is now, outside the precinct of the royal, stewards', and grand stands, very like any other race-course. Yet there is a difference, for at Ascot, as at Newmarket, there is a resident population, a select constituency bestowed in the prettily-embowered cottages which line the New Mile. The owners of many of these snug habitations elect to live the year through at Ascot—save in the race week—when they get a handsome yearly rent for five days' occupation. Those curious personages, noble, gentle, and otherwise, whose scheme of existence is perpetual motion from one race-course to another, are content to pay an enormous price for their accommodation on the spot they pitch their tent upon for the time being. There are jovial times—tempered only by the in-and-out running of horses—in these pretty dwellings during the Ascot week: great consumption of the good things of this life, and much talk of those other "good things" of the turf not quite so easy to compass. The season is in itself a charm. Cold winds and drifting rain not unfrequently turn the Epsom celebration into a week of tribulation to lungs and pocket, but a "wet Ascot" is looked upon as a positive injury from two points of view. First, horses, like the seventh bullet in Der Freisohütz, are apt to go askew in heavy ground; secondly, the stupendous artillery of band-boxes remains undischarged; ravishing toilettes, too pretty and prononcées to appear in the park, instead of bursting into flower, lie concealed in their calices of cardboard, and the feminine heart waxes almost as sore as the masculine organ when "a screw is loose" with the favourite. The birds are there, but their beautiful plumage, span new, and mostly unpaid for, may not be donned merely to be dragged in the mud. It is pitiful, wondrous pitiful, for between Ascot and Goodwood fashion may change, and it is reasonably certain that whether it change or not the lawn under Trundle-hill in hot

July will need other raiment than that proper to Ascot-heath in summer's first youth. If the cardboard calices open not at once, when are they to develop their hidden treasure? source of much agony of mind to the constructive genius of New Burlington-street. It has fallen to the lot of the present writer at least twice during a misspent life, to look ruefully at royal Ascot, to button fiercely round him that garment which the admirable author of Tom and Jerry designates an "upper Benjamin," to smoke ferociously his biggest cigars, to suffer unholy cravings for hot brandy and water, and, sorrow's crown of sorrows, to back the second horse for every race. A wet Ascot is good neither for men nor women, for horses nor the backers thereof, for prophets nor for newspaper columns. One type of humanity alone rejoices, and he only in chilly fashion. The valiant bookmaker eats his sandwich, deftly constructed of a beefsteak of about a pound in weight and a couple of slices of toast, with rare relish; the frequent performance of the operation known as "skinning the lamb" having given a zest to his frugal meal.

But when the sun shines, as it did on the memorable day when Ely and General Peel ran their famous dead heat for the Gold Cup, called during a period of Russian friendship the Emperor's Vase, our modern Ascot is fully as blithe as that described by the scribe of the Georgian era. The hotter the day the more enjoyable is the breeze, which is never absent from the Berkshire heath. Since the revival of coaching, the resuscitation of the spanking tits which at one time appeared as dead as Boadicea's chariot pair, the heath has put on some semblance of its old aspect. Great Gainsborough hats, and cutaway coats of the genuine Regency pattern, suggest many points of resemblance with the old race-course, but the influx of the general public is so great that the once distinctive feature of aristocratic Ascot is gone. Yet the royal stand presents as pretty a sight as can be seen on a summer day. Every colour and combination of colour may be seen on the greensward—dark prune velvet; gray satin, with additions of luminous steely material, giving the wearer the air of a female crusader; ruddy hues, looking over hot at midday; bottle-greens and mysterious olive tints, awkwardly contrasting with the grass; and blazing yellows, staring back boldly at the sun himself. Lady Haileybury is there, you

may be sure, dressed in the latest fashion, carefully studying her card, and giving her pet commissioner her commands to put her on a "pony" at a certain price. A valiant dame this, in whom years have not quenched the love of excitement. There are younger ladies too, who risk, on the sly, a "tenner," or perhaps a trifle more if they "know something;" and others whose object in life appears to be to look as pretty and as well-dressed as possible. Lady Rattlepole is to the fore as usual. When is that intrepid but juvenile matron not before the public eye? That little squabble with her fast-going lord and master has happily been patched up, and her ladyship sails magnificent in all the beauty that nature, and pearl powder, rouge, and an eelskin dress can confer. Not perhaps a model for imitation, but as a thing of beauty, unlikely to prove a joy for ever, absolutely incomparable. In the grand stand, far, too far removed—as the public who pay their money persistently growl—from the winning-post, is a brilliant but heterogeneous crowd. They have come to see the races and each other, and to be seen. So far as the finish of the races is concerned they might as well be at Slough. The large spaces occupied by the royal and stewards' stands effectually thrust back into the distance the thousands whose guineas and half-guineas really support the royal meeting. But they have compensation for this grievance in the prospect of the royal cortège, as it is called; Master of the Buckhounds, yeomen prickers, and Royal Highnesses, Serenities and Transparencies in open carriages; almost as brilliant a spectacle as that afforded by the wearer of the blue surtout and single star. Shouts of welcome are raised, royal and serene personages bow graciously, and, the thrilling moment past, there is time to look round at the dwellers in the grand stand—an epitome of England. In the best places are those peers and pillars of the State who have not been honoured with invitations to the royal stand, and side by side with them, open-handed wine merchants, wealthy ironmasters—not quite so wealthy as a year or two since—great cotton lords, also not so rich as heretofore; members of parliament, of the bench, and of the bar; fashionable artists and dentists, sculptors and surgeons; country gentlemen with an unmistakable five-to-two look in their great blue eyes, spotted cravats, and horsey continuations; and a great army of London tradesfolk, dressed

in their best, with their wives and daughters with them—papa's "goings on" during the Epsom week being condoned by a family visit to Ascot. Mr. Curlington, the eminent hairdresser, is beautiful to look upon, but uneasiness betrays itself in his countenance. He has heard of a "good thing" for the great race, and is burning to "get his fiver on at the best price," but cannot escape from the "missis and the girls" to make his modest venture. The "missis" is gorgeously attired, and quite oblivious of the fact that an eelskin dress displays her Juno-like outline just a little too distinctly. She is supremely happy, and is never wearied of pointing out to her daughters—who have never been contaminated by contact with the shop—the noble clients of that profitable establishment whom she perceives among the company assembled; but she keeps an eye on "Dolfy," whom she secretly believes to lose a large fortune in betting every year. "Dolfy" knows that the eye of the "missis" is on him. He feels that washy gray orb piercing through his elegant dust-coat and the smart cutaway into the recesses of the pocket, where lurks a tiny gilt-edged betting-book, and mentally wishes his amiable and—as to the younger branches—accomplished family at Jericho. The numbers go up, and still there is no hope of indulging his mania for speculation, when suddenly Captain Screwby turns up. The captain is an affable man, and owes a long score at Curlington's; but, as the head of that family represents to his wife, "belongs to such a slap-up lot," that it would be suicidal to ask him for it; and besides, he brings so many clients—fresh and green and young—this Caspar of Pall-mall. Moreover, he has a friend round the corner who arranges little financial matters for Curlington's hard-up customers, and in the question of commission is liberality itself. Mrs. Curlington does not altogether like him. She misdoubts his urbanity, and marks the traces of late hours and strong waters in his bloodshot eye and luminous nose. Curlington is immensely relieved by his arrival, gives him "the office to get on" for him, while the eye of the missis is gazing on a passing lordling, and is a happy man—at least, till the race is run and the numbers up, when he reflects, like a few more Ascot revellers, that he had better have kept his money in his pocket. The loss of a fleeting fiver, however, does not spoil Curlington's appetite, and he falls

upon chicken and lobster like a famished wolf. He is right; for, somehow, lobster always tastes particularly well at Ascot. Whether its colour, as suggesting the livery of royalty, gives it additional zest, I know not; but it never has the same flavour anywhere else.

Outside the grand stand, still farther down the New Mile, are thousands of spectators enjoying the heat and throng, the dust and din of racing-time. There is vast eating and drinking, and the professors of the time-honoured three-card trick are dodging the police, and making hay while the sun shines. Just before the lastrace there is a move towards the railway station—the three-card men making again to the fore—the drags move off, and the merry company begins to melt away. Not, however, the happy dwellers on the line of the New Mile. These retire to their quiet cottages, and, mingling the perfume of their cabanas with that of the rose and honeysuckle, talk over the weights and chances of the next day.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER III. THE POVERTY OF THE LAND.

"DORIS, you are happy? You are quite sure that you are happy?"

"Quite sure, Basil."

"Yet you are looking pale, I think, and anxious, although your eyes are very bright. I have thought of you so often. I have longed to see you again, my sister. I was so glad to hear from you."

"And Nick, he is well?"

"He is very well. He is busy, as you know, at the other end of London, or——"

"He would have come with you? No; he is too much offended with me. He has never written to me, he has not even sent me a message."

"Well, you know Nick has his prejudices, but they are prejudices of an honest sort. He is not really unkind. He will come and see you presently, you may be sure of that."

"But he must behave properly to my husband. He must talk no more nonsense on that subject, and you, Basil——"

"My dear, I will do whatever you would have me do."

"You will make friends with Paul?"

"Yes; and I shall not forget that he is

your husband, Doris. I spoke of him once rather harshly, perhaps; you remember? But of course you do. Well, I was wrong, very likely; but I said what I thought at the time. I am sorry if I did M. Riel any injustice. I will confess as much to him if you wish."

"No, Basil, it is not necessary."

"But you put me off my guard, you assured me you did not love M. Riel."

"I too, Basil, said what I thought at the time. I did not love Paul then; at least, I did not know that I loved him. It is hard sometimes to know one's own mind, one's own heart."

"It was like a secret mine," he said, laughing; "the powder was there, only no one knew it, until the match was applied and the explosion ensued. It was, indeed, an explosion!"

"However, there was no one hurt."

"I am not quite sure of that." Was he thinking of Mr. Leveridge?

"I suppose, when we act suddenly, we are always thought to act imprudently. Yet seeing how happy I am I cannot think that I was so very imprudent. You all thought me mad, no doubt. Indeed, at times I thought myself mad. But, Basil, I could not go on living in Powis-place. And as Mr. Leveridge's wife I should have been simply miserable."

"Possibly. I do not think it would have been a happy marriage."

"You yourself told me that, in my place, you would rather starve than marry Mr. Leveridge."

"Yes, I remember I said that."

"Well, we are, and are likely to be, very poor, Paul and I. All the same, I hope there is to be no question of starving. But whatever happens, Basil, I shall not regret that I escaped from marriage with Mr. Leveridge—that I became the wife of my dear Paul. I could wish, perhaps, that I had laid myself less open to comment, that I had not seemed to act so abruptly, that I had been able to spare you and some others the uneasiness you no doubt felt on my behalf; otherwise I am not sorry in the least. As I wrote to you from Dover, what I have done I would, under like circumstances, do again. You quite understand that, Basil?"

"I quite understand that, Doris. But don't let us discuss the past, let us rather occupy ourselves with the present and the future. Bygone should be by-gones. We will try and make the best of——" he hesitated for a moment, and then added, "of things."

"You were going to say, 'of a bad business.'"

"Never mind what I was going to say. If I can help you in any way you must let me know, although my power to help anyone is very limited. I have not been able to help myself in any appreciable degree."

"You must be good friends with my husband, Basil. Indeed, we must all be good friends together. That is the first thing. You must tell Nick not to be foolish and give himself airs. He must come and see me, and shake hands with Paul. Then we will consider what is next to be done. We are doomed to be poor, that is very certain. It is hard; but I do not so much mind on my own account, though I should like to feel, if only for a time, what it is to have more money than one knows what to do with. But I fear that the thought of our poverty distresses Paul; and now tell me, Basil, what I am to do. Mr. Leveridge has sent me this box; it contains everything I left behind me in Powis-place, including his presents to me, some of them being, as you know, of considerable value. Ought I to keep these things? Will it be right for me to keep them?"

He hesitated for a moment. "I think it will be right for you to do what Mr. Leveridge wishes in the matter. It is clear that he would have you keep these things. There has always seemed something odious to me in the return of presents. What is the discarded or the disappointed lover to do with the old gifts, the little trinkets and tokens that have come back to him? He can but throw them into the fire. They were precious once because of the love they represented, which attended and consecrated them; as it were; but when that is at an end, the gilding is indeed stripped from them, they are reduced to worthlessness and dross. Away with them; turn your back upon them and forget them; bury them in the grave of the love that is dead."

"But the trinkets Mr. Leveridge gave me are not worthless, Basil; they are of real value."

"Not in his eyes now. I can understand his feeling in the matter. He gave you these gifts, this beautiful ring and the other things, absolutely, as he gave his love. He would on no account have them back again. They are yours to do what you list with."

"Even to parting with them?"

"Yes. If you think it well to part with them."

"I mean, that I may sell them?"

"Yes, if you have the heart to sell them. But it is hardly for me to answer these questions, Doris. I was trying to think

of myself in Mr. Leveridge's position, to imagine what my feelings and opinions would be in that case. But upon this, as upon other subjects, you have now one by your side who has a far better title to advise you than I can pretend to, Doris. Henceforward you must seek counsel of him only."

"Paul? But I cannot speak to Paul upon such a matter. And you don't quite understand me, Basil. I am apt, perhaps, to look forward to trouble rather than to happiness. That is my mood almost always, and I can't help it. Somehow there is no sky so bright and clear that I cannot discover a cloud upon it somewhere; though it be only a speck, it bodes to me change, and gloom, and coming misfortune. If I think of selling Mr. Leveridge's presents to me it is not because I design any affront to him, or think lightly of his kindness, but because I fear lest a time may come when we shall be very poor indeed, so poor, I mean, that we needs must sell such small valuables as we may possess so as to buy bread."

"That is a gloomy thought, indeed, Doris. But you should try and withstand such fears. Nothing is gained by yielding to depression."

"I know, I know. I am thinking of the worst that can happen to us, of the worst coming to the worst, as people say, though I scarcely know what the phrase means. But the worst shall not come until I have fought might and main to ward off and hinder its coming. I mean to help Paul in every way I can. I will not be a burthen to him. I should hate myself if I were to be for ever sitting at home idle while he worked. I mean to earn money, Basil. How? Well, I am not without plans, if I do not speak of them now. I may fail, of course. But if I fail, it shall not be for lack of courage, or inclination, or effort."

Presently Paul returned. He interchanged polite salutations with Basil. There was no effusiveness on either side, but I noted that each seemed anxious to like and conciliate the other; while yet each wore a certain air of restraint, as though influenced more or less by opinions or prejudices entertained in the past. They had not known much of each other, and had doubtless cared little about each other; there had been no sort of reason, indeed, why they should care about each other. They had been simply employed upon the same newspaper.

Perhaps Paul was more at his ease than was Basil. Perhaps Basil was more eager to be cordial of manner than was Paul. They

talked of Mr. Griddale's newspaper, and of the articles they contributed to it.

"There is little news stirring at present," said Paul. "Only the ball has been set rolling; it gathers as it goes. There is more and more disaffection in France the king is hated—he is even despised. At present the fire smoulders, but it is alive—it will burst out into furious flame by-and-by. Let the king and his ministers look to themselves. The cry is now for reform; in a little while the demand will be for revolution. The party of obstruction is giving way; the faint-hearted are gaining courage; the lukewarm show increase of ardour. The nation is about to move along the path of progress; let those take care who are standing in the way. It will not do to loiter or to saunter when the people is advancing. And what is England to do? Will it set us an example, or will it be content to imitate? Is it to be as at Fontenoy? Are the French to fire first?"

There was a certain vividness in Paul's speech, when his topic was political. I liked to listen to him, because of the bright ringing music of his voice; I liked to note too, the kindling expression of his face, the sparkling of his dark gray eyes. In the opinions he expressed, I was less interested. He found in Basil, however, an attentive auditor, although Basil never seemed to me thoroughly enthusiastic. I never could be sure that he was wholly sympathetic with my husband's revolutionary sentiments.

Presently they were speaking of the disturbances and the sufferings taking place in Ireland. I was surprised and grieved to find that Paul accounted these as rather hopeful symptoms, as promising means towards the end he had in view. "Ireland and Scotland have always been the friends of France," he said. "They have been oppressed by England, and have turned to France for sympathy, and obtained it. Scotland, engrossed in commercial pursuits, has forgotten its traditional friendship for us, but Ireland remains true. The republican leaven of Ireland may leaven in time the whole United Kingdom—united, as captives are bound, with chains."

Gradually I found my attention drifting away from these subjects. I could not think of them as Paul thought, and so I tried to dismiss them from my mind; for I did not like to be in opposition to his opinions. I would have agreed with him if I could; failing that, I sought to put far from me the cause of disagreement. "Women don't understand politics," I said to myself

again and again, as I had heard other wives say. I did not, all the same, believe the statement to be true. I was inclined, indeed, to think it both false and foolish. And yet, no doubt, there was something of prudence about it. The dissenting wife, avoiding debate, leaves politics to her lord, and busies herself about the fashions.

But at any rate, I had something to think about of more importance than the fashions. My housekeeping cares troubled me a good deal. Paul had constituted me his Chancellor of the Exchequer. Unfortunately, there was no exchequer, or a very small one, which grew gradually less every day.

Paul was singularly careless about money—seemed almost indifferent to it. Certainly he had felt the want of it; he confessed, indeed, that he had undergone some suffering on that account. Yet he was without careful, or frugal, or provident thoughts. He never heeded the future; it was enough for him if he had money for the present—for the day, the hour, the moment. Having money, he spent it; yet it was a sort of surprise to him to find his pockets empty. Thereupon his first effort was, not to refill his pocket, but to do without the money. It was only after a deliberative process that he arrived at the conclusion that money must be obtained, and that he must exert himself to obtain it.

Mr. Grisdale paid his contributors as much as he could afford to pay them. But Paul received from him only some five and twenty shillings a week—rarely more. It was really our only certain and regular income. No one seemed to need further copies of the pictures in the National Gallery. Paul seemed unwilling to make copies on the chance of their finding purchasers. As he said, it was not easy to anticipate the tastes of his patrons.

I was as economical as possible, but there was no reducing our expenditure below a certain point, which was always above the level of our income. I was very anxious to hide from Paul the embarrassed state of our finances. Fortunately, he asked few questions on the subject.

The box sent from Powis-place contained several of my water-colour drawings. I persuaded Paul to work upon these so as to increase their value, keeping him well supplied with cigarettes the while. He smoked and laughed as he worked. It was with difficulty I could induce him to let me sell the drawings; but he consented

at last. I found a purchaser in one of the Burlington-arcade shops devoted to the sale of drawings, drawing materials, and fancy articles of various kinds. The price I secured was not considerable; but I was well pleased. It was the first money I had ever earned in my life, and I was very proud of it. Moreover, we had pressing need of it. I was enabled to discharge some outstanding debts, and a balance was left sufficient to buy a little present for Paul on his birthday. He was delighted with the gloves, the cigar-case, and the new silk scarf I gave him.

But the market for my drawings, even after they had been improved by Paul, was very limited. I felt that I must earn more money. I tried to write little essays, sketches, and stories for the magazines. I sent my contributions to the editors of various publications. The manuscripts came back to me—or did not come back to me. No publication, nor reward of a pecuniary kind, resulted. I was not to obtain money in that way. No one was more conscious and convinced of my failure than I was. I had no literary ability. Should I try to teach? Could I obtain a situation as a daily governess? But even if I found pupils, had I patience sufficient for their teacher? I feared I had not. I applied to Basil for the address of Mr. Toomer Hooton.

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SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. I. DEEPWEALD.

CHAPTER III. PARADISE AND THE PERI.

How does a needle feel under the force of a magnet through a thin but impenetrable barrier? Very much, probably, like Celia March on Thursday afternoon. She was drawn by Mademoiselle Clari with magnetic force; but between them stood her father's "No." She had not one thought of the remotest possibility of disobedience, but a burning restlessness drove her to approach the magnet as near as the barrier allowed. So it happened that at two o'clock she was walking—by one of those accidents which are not accidental—along the Fore-street past the Shire Hall. She passed the building twice; and then, remembering that it was against the whole Deepweald code of propriety for a young lady to promenade the Fore-street alone after marketing hours, turned into a draper's shop at the corner of College-yard—another accident of the same sort, which gave her an excellent post for seeing the audience arrive. Here she stood, a Peri at the gate, to watch the happier souls pass into their sinful beatitude. Nay, she felt even more forlorn than the Peri; her longing surpassed even what Bessy Swann would have felt, had she been forbidden to go to a dance at the Deanery.

"Of course you are going to hear the singing, Miss March?" asked the girl at the counter. "I wish I could go too—Lady Quorne and Mrs. Harding are to be

there, so it must be something particular. What can I serve you with to-day?"

Celia was ashamed to say she was not going, and sympathised intensely with what she took for granted must be the fellow feelings of her sister-sufferer.

"No—yes—I want a pair of gloves, please," she said; which was true. For she had come out without gloves, and her hands, thanks to her father's system of manual training, were not beautiful enough to dispense with them.

"Primrose, of course, like Lady Quorne? She always wears primrose; and I've sold three dozen pair this very morning. Ah, if there isn't her very carriage! and she's in it her own self—think of that, now!"

The young lady threw down her stock of gloves on the counter and hurried to the shop-door. "But whose carriage is that?" she said, yet more excitedly. "Why, it's—no, it isn't—yes—no—yes—if it isn't the Marchioness! Well, you are in luck's way, Miss March. You'll be in the very same room with the Marchioness and can look at her all the time. Well, I do envy you—fancy that, now!"

Celia looked, and saw a large close carriage drawn by two large gray horses; and—for she was unable to help learning something at the Dorcas meetings—was by no means unimpressed by the fact that the glory of Mademoiselle Clari had drawn all the way to Deepweald a stout, middle-aged, and highly respectable lady of retired habits, who was not seen in the town once in three years. The quiet, sleepy old city seemed to have grown metropolitan for the hour; and what must this Mademoiselle Clari be, who had roused it up even more effectually than the high sheriff's trumpeters at assize time?

She took the gloves, paid for them, and went into the street again—not down the yard, as she ought to have done. Not only was she still drawn towards the Shire Hall, but she was ashamed, in sight of the glove-girl, to go in any other direction. The shy dread of being thought singular is no evidence of moral cowardice at her age. A little crowd formed a lane across the pavement, to watch the great people as they left their carriages. Celia could not, of course, stand among the crowd, so she followed some strangers, for there were not a few county people in Deepweald to-day, up the steps and into the vestibule.

Miss Madox passed her with a nod, which made her so ashamed of her meaningless presence in the vestibule and of the incongruity of her dress with the most brilliant toilette-show ever seen in Deepweald, that she shrank into a dark corner behind the temporary ticket-office, there to wait for the way home to be clear again. Most of the company passed straight on; scarcely any had put off ticket-buying till the last moment. At last, however, the vestibule was empty, and she had nothing to do but walk out boldly from her corner, and go straight home, without fear of being seen by the most prying eyes in all the town.

"Give me a ticket, please," she suddenly heard spoken from just in front of the official pigeon-hole.

Well might she start to hear it—the voice was her own! The young man at the pigeon-hole did not faint on the spot at this outrageous piece of reckless and audacious rebellion. He was a stranger to the city; so he just looked at her dress, and said:

"Shilling?"

"Yes," she panted out. She could not turn back now; the deed was done. The man gave her the ticket; she felt for her money, and found that the purchase of her primrose gloves had left her exactly the sum of fivepence halfpenny.

She had been guilty of the hitherto unimaginable sin of disobedience, and had been guilty in vain. She had sinned, and had not even grasped the passing delight of the sin. Nobody who has ever been in the like case will wonder at her next proceeding. She was but a child, and it was too hard. She suddenly felt a round ball in her throat, and burst into tears.

"Allo! Vat is all dis?" said a sharp voice behind her. "Vy veep you, eh? Vat have you here?"

She glanced up, though wishing that the pavement would swallow up herself, her sin, and her shame, and saw before her a fat, clean-shaven foreigner in a furred cloak and eccentric hat, with many-ringed red hands, coarsely humorous lips, and a pair of amazingly quick and ill-tempered gray eyes. With those he was staring at her hard, and each stare felt like a flash of lightning.

"Aha! Siete Italiana?" he asked her. "No? Then how dare you have two big eyes like that and a skin like to café au lait? Vy veep you, eh?" he said again, with a short impatient stamp. "Is it that you are a post or a fish, Mademoiselle?"

"The young lady couldn't pay for her ticket, sir," said the young man at the pigeon-hole.

"I—I wanted to hear Mademoiselle Clari, sir," stammered Celia as well as she could. "And—I suppose I was vexed—that's all."

"Aha? Excellent! You cry to hear la Clari! Zat shall go ze round of paper—zat shall be in ze Times, zat a young lady cry because she cannot hear la Clari! Yes, so sure as I am Prosper! Mademoiselle, I zank you zat you cry so well. It is an avertissement—vat you call a pouff! Oh yes, you shall hear la Clari; you pay by your veeps, your dears. She will love to hear she have made you cry. Come—you shall follow me."

"No—sir—please!" she was beginning; longing, honestly at last, to run away, and yet unable to move.

"But I say you shall!" he said, angrily. "I am master here. La Clari herself dares not say no to Prosper. If you shall not come, I shall make you veep again—you comprehend? Vipe up your veep, and—hark, zey begin! Come."

As he spoke, her ears just caught the far-off echo of a violin; she followed—what else was a timid girl to do? Her guide almost thrust her into a seat at the back of the gallery, out of sight; for her appearance was by no means such as to ornament the room. She was too much distressed at first to realise what was going on; but presently a rattle of the ferrules of parasols on the floor woke an echo in her. She ventured to look between the two heads immediately in front, and saw, standing at the edge of the platform, one whom she knew at once, without being told, to be Mademoiselle Clari.

CHAPTER IV. CLARI SINGS.

BUT it was more than the Mademoiselle Clari of her invisible dreams—the Clari whom the bells had chimed, the organ pealed, the clock ticked, and the rooks cawed. She saw—and it is with Celia's eyes, be it remembered, not our own, that we also see—a real queen, with the features of a real goddess made of cream and crimson roses, as young as she was lovely, and with golden hair, like a saint's glory in the east window of the cathedral. Her large eyes, indeed, being of dark brown, matched neither her hair nor her complexion, apart from the sanction of fashion; but this was only a piquant discord, that seemed to give character. Her costume, Celia felt, was equally effective—a tragic robe of black velvet and very old lace, set with sparkling lights, that might be diamonds if they were not stars. Immediately in front of her, below the platform, sat the Marchioness of Horchester and the Countess of Quorne; but, great ladies they really were, semi-regal as they were in Deepweald, Celia thought them but very poor specimens of earthly grandeur beside the royalty that streamed from Mademoiselle Clari; a proud smile, thought Celia, but as sweet as it was proud. In the beauty of the sight, she forgot to expect the song.

But the song came, and straightway Celia's soul was carried away into a new world. The composer of this, we may be sure, had cared nothing for the old and extinct mæstri, whom John March ranked among the prophets and apostles. This was music such as the living world loves, and Celia was thrown at once into passionate sympathy with all the world. She only felt that it was beautiful—and it was beautiful. She was carried into a universe far from Deepweald Cathedral and her father's organ. Her judgment went adrift from its moorings and drove to sea, full sail. She knew, thanks to her father, what singing means; but had Mademoiselle Clari sung even as badly as her father's pupils, it would have been all the same. It was the music itself, and the divine soprano voice—these were a revelation.

It was all over, so it seemed, before it had fairly begun; long before Celia had time to be conscious that she was enjoying what she heard. She did not seek to know the name of the song. Seraphs' songs have no names. The song was Mademoiselle Clari, and Mademoiselle Clari was the song. Celia's heart throbb'd painfully with ex-

citement, and her eyes filled with tears of joy. No wonder that marchionesses and countesses came to pass an hour in heaven when it condescended to visit Deepweald.

The end of the song was lost in a burst of premature applause. Even this added to Celia's excitement, for she had never heard music in public before, and took the natural pleasure that people find in making a noise for an irresistible and spontaneous impulse of enthusiastic admiration. Not that she could have shown her admiration in that way, but none the less her heart was in the hands of her fellow-townpeople. The homely citizens of Deepweald seemed transformed into worshippers at a solemn function, where the high priestess was Mademoiselle Clari. Celia's eyes, as well as they could pierce through a mist that half-blinded them, hung still upon the platform where the heroine of song stood bowing with a gracious smile, in which she seemed to read, "Yes; this is a miracle to you, but it is my native air—I am at home."

The rest of the concert floated by like a dream. The spirit of the prima donna inspired it all. Whenever and while she sang, all was glory; when she was silent, her echo remained. Barely five minutes seemed to have passed when the bulk of the audience rose, more eager to go away than it had been to come. Celia alone lingered till the very last note, that she might live out the whole of the dream—instinctively trying, as practised dreamers do in sleep, to put off the evil moment of waking. But at last, hardly knowing what had been happening to her, she found herself in the crowded vestibule again. The weather was still at broiling point, but the air from the street struck her as chill and damp, and not at all like the familiar air of Deepweald. Indeed it would have been in no wise strange to her if she had found that the whole city, during the concert, had flown away, and if she had emerged straight from the temple of music into fairyland.

"Ah, Miss March," said Miss Bessy Swann, as the stream from the stalls met the stream from the gallery at the bottom of the stairs; "I was certain you would be here, somewhere. Where is Mr. March? I suppose this is a good concert, isn't it? All the county was here, I declare!"

"And her diamonds!" said her mother. "That Clari's, I mean; I've seen Lady Quorne's, and they're nothing to them. I

wonder if they're all real. Do you know if they're real, Mr. Gaveston?"

"I remember reading in some paper," said the curate, "that the Emperor of Russia, or somebody, gave her a diamond brooch that cost ten thousand pounds."

"Ten thousand pounds—fancy! How beautifully she must sing, to be sure! And she's a handsome woman, too. I wonder if she's got a husband, and if he's fond of her."

"Fond of a wife that brings him in ten thousand pound a song?" said Mr. Swann, who had come to meet his wife and daughter. "He's a fool if he ain't, that's all I can say. Thank you, Gaveston, for looking after my women folk. But I can't swallow that ten thousand pound, somehow. Why, it's twice the bishop's whole income. Ten thousand farthings, more likely—you mustn't believe in all the aughts you see in the papers. However, I'm glad you've enjoyed yourselves, and aren't quite stewed away this hot weather. You look uncommonly warm, Miss Celia. However, there's no accounting for tastes. As I always say, give me a fife-and-drum band out in the open."

"It is not proper," said Miss Hayward, who was suffering from a seat too far away from the Swann party, and was therefore not inclined to praise without discrimination, "it is decidedly improper for ladies to accept presents from gentlemen to whom they are not engaged; and if the engagement is broken off, they ought to return them on both sides. I never heard that the Emperor of Russia was ever engaged to an opera-singer, Mr. Gaveston. But of course he may have been, and then of course I have nothing to say. I daresay her diamonds are real, but it doesn't follow her complexion's the same. Those singers know how to make themselves up, I daresay; and I, for one, never saw that straw-coloured hair go with those gravy-coloured sort of eyes before."

"I have it!" said the curate, suddenly. "I knew Clari's face put me in mind of somebody's, but I couldn't think who. It was her eyes. They are just like yours, Miss March—they might be the same."

Miss Hayward smiled grimly, and even Bessy Swann did not look displeased. It was not disagreeable to hear another girl's eyes likened to eyes which had just been likened to gravy. That was very different from suggesting that they were hazel.

Celia had heard all this after-concert chatter with her ears, but understood it so

little as not even to feel its cold water. Her head was one whirl of new-found song, or rather of what was both new and nameless if the cold, calm music she studied at home was named song. The very cathedral tower, and the familiar caw of the rooks as they sailed home after their day's foray, looked and sounded unreal. She seemed to notice them consciously for the first time. She felt even past repentance.

"If he had really known all," she thought of her father, "he would have been there."

But she trembled, nevertheless, as she entered the brick house in the close, at the thought of the coming question, "Celia, where have you been?" Happily, or unhappily, she had a respite; her father was not taking advantage of a long afternoon to himself to add a demi-semiquaver to his score, but was occupied with a pupil whose parents, unluckily for him, objected to public entertainments on something they called principle. Celia heard the smothered, wavering voice of the only young lady in all Deepweald who was not taking a half-holiday; and oh, how contemptible it sounded! Surely such creatures should be forbidden to learn, she thought, not remembering that the chirp of that poor amateur, the sparrow, is as much music at heart as the song of the nightingale. She could not spend the few minutes left of her reprieve at her own piano. She could only sit down at the window and wait, knowing that nothing would prevent her father's reading at one glance all her guilt in her eyes. Never, with all his severity, had she been afraid to meet him before. Hitherto, his law had been one with her will. But, to-day, there was fear far beyond that of a disobedient child. She feared she was not sorry for her sin. As Thekla thought "I have lived and loved," so Celia found reckless consolation in "I have heard Mademoiselle Clari." Great delights must needs be followed by great punishments. Let them come. Meanwhile, she tried to set to the music of fancy what Mademoiselle Clari must be feeling. How great, surely, must be her ecstasy at having kindled an artistic passion in the people of Deepweald! How humbly proud must she be for having been chosen as the greatest earthly instrument of such an art as hers! What unbroken joy must be her life, who carried with her on earth the very glory whereof heaven itself is said to be made—the glory

of song! What perfect harmony her soul must be!

"Celia," said the organist very gravely.

She started, trembled, and felt her cheeks on fire.

"Celia," he said again, "speak as softly as you can."

She saw a troubled look upon his usually emotionless face that did not seem to concern her own fears. Nevertheless, it must concern them, for conscience told her so.

"Yes," she said. "Why do you want me to speak softly?"

"Was that your usual voice? Or was it louder?"

"It was my usual voice."

"Do you never speak differently to me?"

"Never."

"Celia! You are relieving me from a horrible fear! I could hardly catch a word of the sermon last Sunday. And Miss Green, who had just gone, sang as if she were under a feather-bed. In fact—I mean that a musician had better die than grow deaf, Celia."

The fire of guilty fear in her face died out in a moment; Mademoiselle Clari herself was as clean forgotten as if she had never sung. Her days had been far too barren of life to hint at the thought of death, far less of any greater change in their absolute monotony. For the instant, she could no more realise what her father meant, than a little child when it first hears people talk about dying; and yet she felt herself turn pale, though rather at the first shadow of unknown change than at the thought of its form. His tone was enough for that; but how could she even imagine her father deprived of the sense which was his very being? The faintest thought of change in him had never entered her head since she was born; it was too immense, as well as too strange, to find its way in without much more than a moment's struggle.

"No," she said eagerly, rather answering some terrible and formless presentiment than her father's words. "Nobody can ever listen to Canon Jones's sermons or Miss Green's songs—I can't; nobody can. I was speaking lower than usual—I was, indeed. The cathedral is full of draughts—"

"No; it is not fancy. You half-relieved me for a moment, but—I have not caught cold. I don't know what such a thing means. Jones may preach dull rubbish, and he does; but he bellows it. And your voice is no real test at all; it is too familiar

to me. I have been trying not to fear this for months past—well, the fear is over; the thing has come. Bring me my score."

She had never known him show emotion but once; and that was when he had broken out into a passion at the name of Clari. He showed none now. But the absolute quietness of such a man, under the thought of such a doom, sank over her like a cloud, in which she began at last to realise what such a doom must mean—and for him! And for his work, that he might never hear!

"Come?" she almost whispered.

"Yes—to-day."

"And only because Miss Green——"

"No. As you say, nobody can hear Miss Green. It is you—you, Celia—that I have not been able to hear! I kept my door ajar, but all the morning I heard your voice as you practised less and less plainly till three hours ago. I made a note of the very moment when I heard you no more. Well, Heaven's will be done. I must only get on all the faster. I shall have lived long enough when I have heard that. Bring me my score."

"Oh!" cried Celia, with a breathless burst of joy, "you were only afraid because you did not hear me?"

"Is not that enough? With all your faults, and they are thousands, you can make yourself heard. Bring——"

"Oh, I am so glad! You heard nothing because—there was nothing to hear!"

"What!" he exclaimed suddenly, "you have lost a day?"

Even then the system could not yield. John March's hearing concerned John March; but Celia's days concerned the work—which was infinitely more.

"No!" she said. "I have not lost a day—I have gained years—I have heard Mademoiselle Clari——"

She stopped, thunderstruck. She had braved a scolding—but what spell was there even in the name of Clari to let loose a storm? The whole face, nay, the whole figure of the organist burst out into a blaze of anger—or rather into that deeper rage of a beaten man which is called despair. She could not recognise even his voice as at last, after a very tempest of silence, he burst out:

"Her! You have heard her!"

No pen can mock the rage and scorn he threw into the words. Could this be a mere artist's passion? But how could Celia tell? How could she think, even?

She could only tremble all over, as if from the effects of an actual blow.

"What—what have I done?" she tried to stammer faintly.

"Fool, to think even Deepweald safe from her! Yes; you have heard—I see your eyes; you have drunk poison. And in one year more—who knows? But it shall not be too late. I will conquer, in spite of her—yes, in spite of you! This is your last day in Deepweald."

"We are going from—where?"

"Not we—you. What use am I? I have done all I can, and failed. You must be saved by stronger hands—if you can. You will not hear—Clari—at Lindenheim. . . . Bring me my score."

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER AND MERCER.

IN FOUR PARTS. PART IV. AT WESTMINSTER.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1476 or the beginning of 1477, we find industrious Caxton in "vertuous ocupacion and besynesse," not in Westminster Abbey, as has been frequently represented, but in the almonry opposite the gatehouses. Caxton himself is in some measure responsible for this confusion. In his imprints he uses indifferently, "Emprynted by me, William Caxton, at Westmynstre in thab-bay," or simply, "At Westmystre;" but Wynkyn de Worde sets the question at rest by his numerous imprints, "Emprynted at Westmyster in Caxton's hous," "Apud Westmonasterium, in domo Caxton," "Prynted in Caxon's hous at Westmynstre;" wherein it may be observed that the ingenious Wynkyn spells his old master's name in three different ways. As a matter of fact the almonry was considered, in Caxton's time, as part of the abbey precinct. This same almonry contained the almshouses built by the Lady Margaret, mother of King Henry the Seventh, and occupied a piece of ground between Tothill-street and Victoria-street, at the base of the triangle, one side of which is now covered by the Westminster Palace Hotel. Here he established himself in the house called the Red-pale or "reed-pale—red being "reed" in Caxtonian orthography. The reigning abbot at the time of Caxton's arrival was John Esteney, who was elected in 1474, and remained Abbot of Westminster till 1498. There is no evidence to show that Caxton received any kind of patronage or countenance from the abbot. He is only once mentioned as having, either personally or by deputy,

requested the accomplished translator to reduce some old English "evidences" into the language of his day. The great ecclesiastics were no patrons of Caxton, and it is by no means improbable that if he had attempted to print a translation of the Bible he would, like his German brethren, have brought a spiritual censorship upon himself.

Over-zealous antiquaries have striven to fix upon the exact house in which the first English printer dwelt. For many years an old building was pointed out as Caxton's house, but other zealous antiquaries—to wit, Mr. Nichols and Mr. Knight—proved that it could not be older than the time of Charles the Second. Nevertheless, faith was not dead in 1846, when the house, as if weary and disgusted with sham notoriety, fell down. Portions of the beams were made into walking-sticks and snuff-boxes, and presented to various patrons of literature as genuine relics of the famous printer. It was from the Red-pale that Caxton issued his celebrated book advertisement—the first "broadside"—although only five and three-quarter inches by three—printed in this country. Foreign printers were in the habit of advertising in this way, so that Caxton merely "adapted" their plan to his own wants. The advertisement runs as follows:

If it please any man spiritual or temporel to bye any pyes of two and thre comemoracions of salisbury use enprynted after the forme of this preset lettre whiche ben wel and truly correct / late hym come to westmonester in to the almonre / ye at the reed pale and he shal haue them good chepe :

Supplicio stet oedula.

The "pye" was a collection of rules to show the priest how to deal—under every possible variation in Easter—with the concurrence of more than one office on the same day. The pye of two commemorations was confined to the rules for Easter and Whitsuntide, and the pye of three commemorations included the rules for Trinity.

From the house in the almonry Caxton certainly issued all his important works, saving the Recuyell, the first edition of the Playe and Game of the Chesse, both printed abroad, and the History of Jason—which may have been printed either at Bruges or Westminster. For some time after setting up his press he was busied with the work of his patron, Earl Rivers, the *Dioces* and *Sayings of the Philosophers*. This, as the first English book undoubtedly printed in England, is highly prized by collectors.

It is, like most of the works of Caxton,

not drawn from the antique fount direct, but is a translation of a French work—a fact which confirms the writer in his low estimate of the English culture of that day. The toil of translation and compilation from the dead languages was performed by Frenchmen, and their books, which possessed some little merit as actual work, were simply translated whole by the English. Caxton, by his residence in Bruges, had become familiar with the strange works founded by French writers on classical story, and confined himself to translating these, and adding prologues from his own pen. No one can read these original utterances without regretting that their author produced nothing of his own but them, and the final chapter, which he deemed it advisable to add to Higden's Polycronycon. When in the vein he could speak to the purpose, and in vigorous English too.

The *Dictes* was first produced in Latin—as a beautifully-illuminated MS. in the British Museum testifies. It was then translated into French by that noble person “Messire guilleme de Tignour, the chevalier,” who included the chapter of Socrates on Women. Then came one Master Stevyn Scrope, who translated, not from the Latin compilation, but from the French of “wyllyam tyngnovyle Knyght late provost of ye Cite of parys.” This translation is again interesting, as it was performed a quarter of a century before that of Lord Rivers, and for no less a person than the famous Sir John Fastolf, a brilliant soldier, distinguished in the French and Irish wars, a practised statesman, and a Knight of the Garter, the builder of Caistor Castle, and the real or pretended testamentary benefactor of the Paston family, who, for some time at least, took little by the legacy. Now Fastolf was a man of immense wealth, and, as a collector of books, enjoyed an almost European reputation. He must therefore be taken as a highly favourable specimen of his class. Yet the vellum MS. in the Harleian collection sets forth that the book done out of Latin into French for King Charles the Sixth is “now late translatyd out of the frensh tung into englysh to John Fostalf Knyght for his contemplacon and solas by stevyn scrope squyer sonne in law to the seide Fostalle. Deo gracias.” From this it is easy to gather two facts—one, that King Charles knew little Latin; the other, that so great a man as Fastolf—who must have possessed a colloquial knowledge of French

—could not read that language to his comfort and “solace.” Lord Rivers—whose manuscript is extant—the “copy” of or from Caxton's first printed edition—obviously worked from “Stevyn Scrope” as well as “Tyngnovyle.” It appears that Lord Rivers met with the French version on a pilgrimage to Compostella. While aboard ship, Lewis de Bretaylles, a Gascon knight attached to the Court of Edward the Fourth, showed the earl a copy in French of *Les diis Moraux des Philosophes*, which highly delighted him. On his return to England in the same year, the king appointed him one of the governors of the Prince of Wales, whereupon he commenced a translation of the work into English, which, notwithstanding the assistance of Scrope's version, occupied him till 1477. Rivers had evidently some confidence in Caxton's literary ability, as he requested him to “oversee” or edit his version; the result of which process was the addition of the chapter “towching wymmen,” and an original epilogue—one of Caxton's best. This is the volume reproduced in facsimile by Mr. Elliot Stock, from the fine copy in the British Museum.

Patronised at first by victorious Edward, by malmsey-butt Clarence, by the wife of Charles the Rash, and by Margaret of Somerset, Caxton numbered among his protectors the most accomplished prince of the house of York. “The Book of thordre of Chyvalry” is a noteworthy translation of a French work into the rough and vulgar “Englyshe,” and is appropriately dedicated to “my redoubted natural and dradde soverayne lord Kyng Richard Kyng of England and of Fraunce to thende that he commaunde this book to be had and redde unto other yong lordes knyghtes and gentylmen within this royaume that the noble ordre of chyvalrye be hereafter better used and honoured than hit hath ben in late dayes passid. And herein he shalle do a noble and vertuous dede and I shalle pray almyghty God for his long lyf and prosperus welfare and that he may have victory of al his enemys and after this short and transitory lyf to have everlasting lyf in heven whereas in Joye and blysse without ende Amen.” In this dedication Caxton correctly alludes to Richard as one among other “young” lords and knights, for he was killed in his thirty-fourth year—the printer's prayer being unheard. Bosworth Field, however,

made little difference to Caxton, then growing old. As Edward the Fourth paid him a sum of money for certain services performed, and he printed Tully and Godefroy under that monarch's protection, so was he personally desired by King Henry the Seventh to translate and print *Faits of Arms*, and Eneydos was specially presented to Arthur, Prince of Wales. Many other works were produced by Caxton during his fourteen or fifteen years of life at Westminster—notably the *Mirror of the World*; Reynard the Fox; Chancer's *Canterbury Tales*; Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; the *Book of Courtesy*; the *Golden Legend*; the *Histories of King Arthur*, from the text of Sir Thomas Malory; the *Catons*, compilations of moral precepts; the *Book of Fame*; the *Fables of Æsop*; *Blanchardin and Eglantine*; the *Four Sons of Aymon*; the *Christening of God's Children*; the *Art and Craft to know well to die*; and a crowd of minor pamphlets and translations, some with numerous woodcuts of very rough execution, contrasting strangely with the elegance of the typography.

From records written by Caxton's own hand, it is not difficult to picture forth to ourselves the aspect of the Red-pale some three hundred and eighty-seven years ago. The master printer, now grown old, is "sittyng in his studye" among "dyverse pammflettis and bookys."

He is sorely exercised this fine summer morning, and his spirit is oppressed by the difficulty of his task. He has taken in hand a little book in French, lately translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France, "which booke is named Eneydos made in latyn by that noble poete and grete clerke Vyrgyle." Caxton reads this—apparently to him—new version of the "Tale of Troy divine" with infinite pleasure, on account of the fair and honest terms in French, the like whereof he has never seen before, nor none so pleasant and well ordered. It seems to him that here is a work, requisite for noblemen to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories. He reflects that hundreds of years ago that same Eneid was learned daily in Italy, and that it was made by "Vyrgyle" in metre. This book, he concludes, must be translated into English, and taking pen and ink begins work at once; but on looking over the first leaf or two to correct them, he suddenly stops, and throws down his pen in doubt and fear. The fair and strange

terms in Eneydos will, he opines, bring the critics upon him; for, strange as it may seem, Caxton has critics who trouble him sorely. Among his patrons are sturdy sticklers for plain, homely English, not latinised or gallicised, and he doubts that his work should please these gentlemen who of late blamed him, saying that in his translations he had over-curious terms which could not be understood by the common people, and desired him to use old and homely terms in his translations. Fain would Master Caxton satisfy every man, and to that end took an old book and read therein, finding certainly the English so rude and broad that he could not well understand it. Moreover, the Lord Abbot of Westminster has lately shown him certain evidences, written in old English, to reduce it to the English now used. And this old English being written in such wise that it was more like Dutch than English, he can neither reduce it nor bring it to be understood.

Master Caxton cannot make up his mind, and no wonder, for his situation is peculiar. Language, like all living things, changes, and the tongue spoken in the days of Gower and Chancer has undergone mutation in the course of nearly a hundred illiterate years. The language now used varies far from that used and spoken when he was born. What, then, should a man write in these days? enquires the scribe—for certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language. For in these days every man that is in any reputation in his country will utter his communication in such manners and terms that few shall understand him.

The difficulty is increased by the multitude of critics; for some honest and great clerks have recently been with Master Caxton and desired him to write the most curious terms he could find. Thus between plain, rude, and curious language he stands abashed and dismayed. Pacing up and down his narrow study, he arrives at a decision. "In my judgment the common terms that be daily used are easier to be understood than the old and ancient English, and forasmuch as this book is not for a rude uplandish man to labour therein, nor read it, but only for a clerk and a noble gentleman that feels and understands deeds of arms, in love, and in noble chivalry;" wherefore, he concludes to translate the Eneydos into a language midway between both, not over-rude nor curious, "but in

such terms as shall be understood, by God's grace, according to my copy. And if any man halt in the reading of it, and find such terms that he cannot understand, let him go read and learn Vyrghill, or the Epistles of Ovid, and he shall understand easily."

Doubtless, good Master Caxton; the difficulty is enough to try the temper of a scribe overmuch vexed with the counsel of "grete clerkes" and worshipful patrons. It troubles thee far more than the worthy man who is to succeed thee in the Reed-pale, enjoy thy plant, and inherit thy reputation. Careless scribes make a sad mixture of Caxton, variously described as Causton, Caxon, Caxston, and so forth; but this was a natural feature of a time when men spelt as they listed. It is not, however, quite so easy to understand why Wynkyn de Worde could not make up his mind how to write his own name—a matter concerning which, as Henry Fielding insinuated, the proprietor may not always be the best judge. Apparently, he tried and tried again to see how it would look best, as the following selection from the list supplied by Mr. Blades will testify:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Wynken de Worde. | Vrynkyn de worde. |
| Wynden de Worde. | VVinquin de VVorde. |
| Wynkyn de Worde. | Wynandum de Worde. |
| Wynkyn Theworde. | winandum de worde. |
| Wymkyn the Worde. | Vumandum de vuorde. |
| Wynkyn de Word. | |

The morning work in the study over, Master Caxton has time to see how his trusty servants, Wynkyn de Worde and Pynson, are speeding with the practical part of the business. For the protégé of Lord Rivers carries on all the operations connected with the book-making, save and except only the making of paper, at his house in the almonry. The paper—for vellum, popular at Mayence, is but little employed at the Westminster press—is rough on the surface with long hairs embedded in it, but of a good strong fibrous texture and a clear mellow natural whiteness. Rough as it is, this paper is a foreign product—beyond English ingenuity—Sir John Spelman not yet having brought the art and mystery of paper-making hither. Master Caxton's paper is drawn from various foreign mills, as the watermarks testify, and is sent to him by an old friend, who buys for him at the great mart of Bruges, whither the paper-makers of Burgundy send their produce. It arrives in a mixed condition; various qualities packed hastily together. There lies the favourite paper with the watermark of the bull's head, under which lies a ream,

marked with the arms of John the Fearless, son of Philip the Bold. Next lie small parcels marked with the letter P, the initial of Philip the Good, and the Y for Ysabel, the third wife, and the unicorn—the symbol of power, adopted by the said Philip, who chose two unicorns as the supporters to his coat-of-arms. As Caxton looks carefully over his goods he finds other makes of paper watermarked with the arms of France, the arms of Champagne—used by the Burgundian paper-makers; on account of the royal descent of their dukes and their rule over Champagne—the hand and the single fleur-de-lys—the peculiar badge of the House of Burgundy—the Pope in his chair holding the keys, and the keys of St. Peter themselves.

All these papers are uneven in thickness and quality, and will require much sorting and arrangement before they can be used—but much as they vary in weight they are all costly. From the paper-closet the master printer next gives an eye to the type-founding department—verily an art and mystery, and most jealously guarded. His punches for stamping the matrices, in which the soft metal types are cast, are imported from abroad—the cutting of them requiring no little artistic skill, as the reputation of the printer depends upon the beauty of his type—a fact well understood in Germany and Italy, where the best artists are employed regardless of cost. Since Caxton's establishment at Westminster, he has employed several types varying slightly from the free and writing-like character of the great primer employed in the Recnyell of the Histories of Troye. There is, for instance, the direct imitation of Colard Mansion's "gros-bâtard," used for the first edition of the Canterbury Tales; and the magnificent angular type used in the Psalterium and for headings, the small letters of which are an exact copy of those cast by the early German founders, Fust and Schaeffer, and equally well executed, the capitals being a modification of the French "secretary," as presented in Colard Mansion's "gros-bâtard." There is also the neat little type used in the Pilgrimage of the Soul and the Polycronycon, the quaint angular type with its Lombard capitals of the Speculum Vitæ Christi, and the more elegant type to be presently employed in the Eneydos, when Master Caxton has gotten the English thereof to the complexion required by his critics and himself. He will also this bright morning look in on the ink-

maker in his grimy den, concocting a very sloppy mixture, and at the compositors, but recently armed with the setting-rule; at the pressmen with their clumsy apparatus; at the wood-engravers, hacking roughly away; at the bookbinders, looking aghast at the heap of work thrown upon them by the new-fangled way of doing things.

The morning's work over, Master Caxton walks quietly out of the Red-pale and the almshouse, and hies him to the Wool-staple hard by the palace gates, where he finds certain of his old friends—valiant mercers, who have also lived beyond sea, fellow-members of the Fraternity or Guild of our Blessed Lady of the Assumption, and deeply interested in the stapling and storing of wool. As the sun rises high over old St. Paul's and the abbey of St. Peter, the gossips of the Wool-staple cease discussing the awkward posture of affairs in the North and the difficulties in Brittany, and wend their way towards that famous hostelry the Grayhound, to refresh their wearied souls withal. Here they are entertained with right good English fare—"turbuts, brought by special boat for these worshipful mercers, capons, chekyns, gese, conyes, and pigeons, oysters and sea-prawns, with plenty of good ale and wine," the latter costing as much as six pounds per tun. They make very merry, these jovial mercers, and wax so noisy, that before that point of hilarity at which they smash the crockery—after their pleasant custom—quiet Master Caxton slips off to the Red-pale, and after a nap settles once more to work at his "paunflettis and bookys."

Once more we must follow Master Caxton—not to the abbey, but the humbler parish church of St. Margaret close by. In the year 1491 he had undertaken the translation of the "most virtuous history of the devout and right renowned lives of holy fathers living in the desert;" but his own life lasted not till the completion of his pious work. He was buried in the churchyard—where it is not known—the only certain record of his death being in the account-books of the churchwardens of St. Margaret, which give evidence of a funeral more costly than usual:

Item atte Bureyng of William Caxton for
 iiij torches vjs. viiijd.
 Item for the belle atte same bureyng vjd.

No stone marked his burial-place until the Roxburghe Club erected the simple tablet in the church of St. Margaret.

Since that date, various attempts have been made to found a Caxton Memorial. It has been suggested that a poetical monument, consisting of a fountain and light, to symbolise his art, should be erected in Westminster Abbey, and that a more material iron statue should be dedicated to him. For some unexplained reason, these attempts failed to rouse the sympathy of a public, keenly appreciative otherwise of Caxton's services to his country and mankind. There is one objection to a statue of Caxton which appears difficult to get over. There is no extant portrait of England's first printer. That accepted as his by Lord Orford is based on the small defaced vignette in the manuscript of the *Dietes and Sayings* at Lambeth Palace. King Edward the Fourth is represented on his throne, with the young Prince of Wales—to whom Lord Rivers was tutor—standing by his side; there are two kneeling figures, one of which, Lord Rivers, is presenting to the king a copy of his own translation. The other, assumed by Lord Orford to be Caxton, is the portrait of an ecclesiastic, with evident tonsure, and probably represents Haywarde the scribe, who certainly engrossed the copy, and perhaps executed both the illumination and its accompanying rhythmical dedication. The portrait commonly assigned to Caxton, which first appeared in his life by the Rev. Mr. Lewis, of Margate, is like a large percentage of historical portraits—a picture of somebody else, if of anybody in particular. A portrait of Burchiello, an Italian poet, from a small octavo edition of his work on Tuscan poetry, of the date of 1554—wherein it is introduced merely as an illustration of a Florentine with the "capuchin" and "becca," the turban cap with a streamer—was copied by Faithhorn for Sir Hans Sloane as the portrait of Caxton; one more proof that a demand will generally create a supply. Lewis improved upon his predecessor by adding a thick beard to Burchiello's chin, and otherwise altering his character, and in this form the Italian poet made his appearance upon copper as Caxton. A statue, then, is happily out of the question, and all may enjoy the Caxton Exhibition without dread of that awful possibility. It is to be hoped, however, that English people who have so much money that they are obliged to give it away to Mesopotamians and equally remote foreigners will not heedlessly pass by this present opportunity of doing good,

and of commemorating a citizen for whom the gates of our National Pantheon, if we had such a thing, would assuredly open widely.

A BRILLIANT BEING.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THE shadow that fell so softly at first between Mrs. Carruthers and Pendleton begins to deepen now perceptibly. Poor fellow! I am very sorry for him. Still there is something contemptible to my mind in the futile way in which he struggles to retain her flagging attention and regard. I know her real sentiments, which, with womanly consideration, she conceals from him.

"He's a bumptious little booby," she tells me confidentially; "I have shown him a longer string of kindnesses than I can enumerate in a hurry, but because, forsooth, he has chosen to fall in love with me he considers me 'ungrateful' for not putting up with his tediousness whenever he chooses to bestow it upon me, and Pendleton is tedious, even his best friends must admit that; all selfish people are more or less tedious indeed, for they will talk about themselves; to me there is nothing more insufferable than Charlie's habit of chattering on and on about himself and his own hopes and disappointments; I never get a chance of saying a word about myself, and naturally my own interests are more engrossing to me than Charlie Pendleton's."

"Yes, selfishness is very trying," I say quietly; "supposing you give Pendleton a lesson on the absurdity of it by asking him to spend the evening with you, and showing him that you have about you those who, with powers far superior to his, are contented to abrogate all claims to consideration or a hearing in your presence?"

"I really think you appreciate and understand me," she answers meditatively; "at one time I believed that Charlie did too, but to my bitter regret the scales have fallen from my eyes about him, and I see now that if his own poor little insignificant talents find no field for display he gets impatient and restless, and utterly unable to discern the talents of others; however, if you like to bear the burden of him, I will ask him here, and try to give my attention to what he says about himself."

She gives me a warm smile and a warm

white hand as she says this, and for an instant I feel treacherously disposed to join her in the hue and cry she is raising against Pendleton's human frailty in feeling a slight interest in himself. But I check this disposition, and say instead:

"Pendleton is a very good fellow, always ready to give a friend a hand up either in pleasure or business; I can't forget that he introduced me to you."

"And I can't forget that he repented his act of unwonted generosity as soon as he found that the introduced was estimated more highly than the introducer; jealousy is such a common failing. Do you know that little friend of mine, Mrs. Acton? she's painfully jealous of me, but still, as she helps to make an evening go, I'll ask her with Charlie and a few others; and after that evening I must go to my work again, leaving you to put what impression of me Charlie and Mrs. Acton and other friends may like to give."

"Mrs. Acton always speaks of you in terms of the highest admiration and warmest regard," I say stupidly, for I ought to know, by this time, that Mrs. Acton is merely a peg on which Mrs. Carruthers contrives to hang any views or sentiments respecting herself, which she may desire to have held.

"When you have quite done your work here, I suppose you will go away, Constance?" Mrs. Acton breaks out rather unexpectedly early in the evening "At home," to which we have all been invited for divers charitable purposes by Mrs. Carruthers.

"When I have quite done my work! Ah! when will that be?" Mrs. Carruthers replies, with a pronounced sigh.

"Not while there is a fool left in the world, and he chances to come your way," Mrs. Acton answers.

"And while this world lasts fools will exist in it, my dear Alice," Mrs. Carruthers says, with admirable command of temper.

"I never saw the axiom, 'One fool makes many,' so perfectly illustrated before," Mrs. Acton continues pityingly, looking at me. And I begin to think that my enchantress's little friend has fallen a prey to the green-eyed monster. Mrs. Carruthers endorses this opinion presently by saying:

"Isn't it strange that women can't quietly accept the fact of being excelled? Alice Acton is clever and shrewd enough in a limited way, and is wonderfully diplomatic

as a rule; but even she can't help showing that she feels a little jealous now and then about me! I can't help being more versatile and so more attractive than other women, can I? If I knew anybody as superior to myself as I am to the generality of my own sweet sex, I should accept her superiority and never make an attempt to fight for supremacy with her; but vanity, little low vanity, blinds most women, and they either don't know when they are beaten, or they take you men for such fools that you don't know a hawk from a heron. Now if Mrs. Acton cast me into the shade at every turn, I should take a very different line to hers."

"Mrs. Acton has plenty of tact," I venture to remark.

"Yes, but it's useless her opposing tact to genuine talent," Mrs. Carruthers says. "I have no patience with people who overrate a quality that human beings possess in common with cats. Mrs. Acton can keep her temper under, and can please people who are taken in by her; but directly she comes in contact with anyone more brilliant than herself, she takes refuge in the weak woman's silence! I love Alice Acton dearly, but I can't help seeing that she is rather shallow, and more than rather vain. There are times when I don't hesitate to tell her that I think she is making a fool of herself."

"It always strikes me that Mrs. Acton has just caught the shadow of your vivacity, but fails to give it any substance in consequence of having less dramatic power, and a weaker physique," I say, surrendering Mrs. Acton and her claims to the smallest particle of courteous consideration, on the spot. The truth is, I have put Mrs. Carruthers on such a lofty pedestal; I have roared out her praises so loudly; I have called so pertinaciously on all whom I knew, to come and admire the piece of perfection I believed her to be at the onset, that I am wilfully blind to any sign my idol gives of tottering, out of consideration for my own opinion. If she is not the bright particular star I have insisted upon proclaiming her to be, then have I blundered too egregiously! I rashly determine to give her a fair opportunity of putting out the lights of a great number of the lady friends of my family. Some of these "know her a little" already, and most of them dislike her more than a little already! For she has, as it were, swooped me off in her eagle

flight, from the midst of their safe fold, and they speak of me as "poor young Power" to one another, and avow that I really dare not say that my soul is my own in the presence of Mrs. Carruthers, who, they meanly insinuate, only refrains from entertaining honourable matrimonial intentions towards me, because she is trying to mature some more profitable ones in relation to another in others! They shall "see her as she is," I resolve rashly. So I call them together under the pretence of feasting them under my newly-decorated bachelor roof—in reality that they may see with what superb ease and propriety Constance Terriss fills the throne I am at this juncture always ready to erect for her at any moment, on any spot.

By some special gift of divination, some astute power of reading whatever she desires to read, she discovers that they are all opposed to and intriguing against her! Still she is very magnanimous, for though she refuses to believe me when I tell her that not one of them has hazarded a word against her, she makes a free and ample display of her great and varied talents for their amusement; while I amble about the room, and try to be meek under the exalted feeling I have, that I am the means of their benefiting by the condensed essence of the several talents of George Sand, Adelaide Kemble, Grisi, and Ristori. I try to remember that she is but human, and though of "great parts," that these "parts" may crumble away at the first contact with cold or catarrh. Alas! it never occurs to me that she may crumble away from me, leaving me to perish under the ruins of that temple of appreciation and flattery in which I have enshrined her, and into which I insist upon calling all I know to come and worship.

"All your friends detest me," she whispers to me several times during the evening; "but it's jealousy, my dear Cecil, nothing but jealousy: and I am sure I do nothing to create it. I simply am what nature made me; and I ask you, do I do anything to detract from them, or to distract attention from them? The great majority of them are fools, my dear boy; but they're not such fools as not to see that a woman to whom the powers above have vouchsafed brains, takes the pas of them, in spite of all their showy, well-gilt, weakly inoffensiveness. I can't congratulate you on your galaxy of beauty. Our estimable Alice Acton can hold her own with the best of them. It was

prudent of you to bear her charms in mind when you were issuing your invitations, and to take care that they should not be outshone. See how they hate me, because you stay by me! Go and do your duty, Cecil; go and cajole those wearisome women with a few compliments, suited to their shallow understandings. Yes! they are shallow, Cecil; you know they are, only you're not frank as I am, and so you dare not say it."

"Some of them are dear good women," I say, humbly; and I mention two or three who have been very kind to me, and for no ulterior object, I can swear.

"Dear good women," my charming friend echoes laughingly; "so was your grandmother's washerwoman a dear good woman, I've no doubt; is that any reason why they should let their ill-nature get the better of them, to the extent of showing me, as they do, that they abhor me, because every man in the room wants to talk to me? I don't care for the attention of the million, do I, Elinor?"

"No, mamma, not at all," the obedient girl answers promptly, with an obedient but peculiar smile.

"But I am not going to be sycophant enough to evade it, for the sake of pleasing a number of spiteful old women who want to damage me, because I am not as disagreeable as they are themselves."

"I am sure they don't want to damage you, and I'm equally sure that you're the only person who thinks them disagreeable," I say; striking a feeble blow for these poor traduced friends of mine, who are really innocent of all offence against my tempestuous enslaver. But in spite of all my well-meant endeavours, I fail in organising an harmonious meeting. For though Constance Terriss is liberal in giving herself to the good cause of amusing my guests by the display of her matchless abilities, she is not by any means satisfied with the meed of applause they give her, and so condemns them wholesale, in not too subdued tones, for being bound in the meshes of hopeless mediocrity. Half at least of my friends go away offended with her, and she in turn is offended with all my men friends, for not having joined her in deriding everybody else.

The morning after this, Pendleton takes occasion to tell me that he "hopes I am not going to make a fool of myself!" I do not answer him in words. Words addressed by me to Pendleton on this subject would be weak, for the laws of

civilisation would restrain me from expressing even a moderate amount of the ineffable scorn and disgust I feel for any fellow calling himself a friend, who can condescend to use the idle verbiage of the frivolous world about such a superb woman as Constance Terriss, and such a seriously sweet matter as her possible preference for anyone. Accordingly I do not deign to answer Charlie Pendleton, but in the afternoon I propose to Mrs. Carruthers.

It is very romantic! She does not quite accept me, nor does she by any means refuse me. She tells me that I am "a very foolish boy to want to marry a woman who cannot help being conscious of being far more highly gifted, intellectually, than myself or any other man," and she modestly adds, that my "folly has been shared by every other marriageable member of my sex, whose fate it has been to come across her path." At the same time she gives me to understand that I am richly endowed with many of the qualities she chiefly admires in a man, especially in a lover who proposes transforming himself into a husband. On enquiry I find that these qualities are: first, appreciation of Constance Terriss; second, sympathy with Constance Terriss; third, belief in the supremacy of Constance Terriss; and lastly, complete readiness to abrogate all claim to right of judgment or individuality of any kind, in the presence of Constance Terriss! My other virtues may be rare and many, but she has no care for them. So on the strength of those which she has taught me to develop in relation to herself, Mrs. Carruthers consents to let me contract a sort of engagement with her, which does not quite fetter her, and which leaves me without the ghost of a chance of freedom. "Love, as far as the woman is concerned," she tells me, "to be happy, must be free; directly he is bound, he becomes either odious or ridiculous." To my own surprise, I assent to her proposition; but I do it in a low-spirited manner. Then I go home to tell my triumph to Pendleton, who is not nearly so embittered by the tidings as I have been fearing he would be.

"Perhaps I may be your step-son-in-law, Cecil, old boy," he says with emotion. "Elinor is a jewel of a girl, and will make a jewel of a wife——"

"Have you had the presumption to aspire to Elinor?" I interrupt hotly, actuated, as I suppose, by a feeling of paternal pride and jealousy. Charlie Pendleton is a very nice, amiable young

fellow, but he will never set the Thames on fire. Whereas Elinor, it is revealed to me in a flash, as I think of her for the first time in connection with love, is not "one of" but "the" sweetest, cleverest, and kindest girl that ever dimmed all other stars in the firmament of a man's life. My devotion to Elinor is of course vicarious! Do I not fancy myself engaged to her mother? But at the same time it is such genuine devotion, that all my soul is in revolt at the idea of Charlie Pendleton speaking as if he had but to woo to win her. I interrupt him, therefore, with a degree of heat and asperity that he apparently fails to understand, for he replies:

"That's the way the cat jumps, is it? I thought the communication you made to me just now referred to the mother, not to the daughter?"

"I stand in the position of Mrs. Carruthers's affianced husband," I explain pompously; "therefore her child, to whose welfare she has ever devoted herself in a way that is unparalleled in the annals of maternal love, is as dear to me as herself."

"Really!" Pendleton says sarcastically; "on my word, Power, I don't know whether that sentiment does most honour to your head or your heart; shall we put it to Constance Terriss, and leave the decision to her?"

"Her decision will be mine," I say meekly, and Pendleton roars with laughter, and answers that he hopes Mrs. Carruthers will edit my actions for the future with her head, and not with her heart. "If she revises and improves you according to the dictates of the former, I really think you'll be all right, old man," he says earnestly, "for though she isn't all she fancies herself, and though she wouldn't tear the flesh from her own breast to feed her young, or do any business of that sort as she likes to make believe she would, still she's a clever woman, and a good mother. And if Elinor is in question she won't make a fool of herself."

"I shall stand in the place of a father to Elinor," I say solemnly, feigning to misunderstand him still, "and when Elinor's happiness is at stake my wife will come to me for advice."

"No doubt she will, and not take it when you give it," Pendleton says heartily; "dear old boy, I see it's going to be all right, and I shall not be astonished if your mother-in-law dances a breakdown at your wedding!"

His talk strikes me as being ribald in

the extreme. Nevertheless it is more in sorrow than in anger that I leave Pendleton, and retire to the seclusion of my own study, where I compose and pen a letter to my people at home, announcing to them that I propose to become the husband of Constance Terriss. That they will be afraid, with a great deal of amazement, when they come up to the wedding and see the bride, I have no manner of doubt. But in the meantime, until they do see her, I draw her lines and put in her colours in a way that will astound them a little, and cause them to feel unbounded admiration (I hope) for my magnificent choice.

I grow more and more nervous as I indite the letter, for in the natural order of things, the daughter has to be mentioned as well as the mother. My work is easy as far as Constance goes, for I can say of her literary and artistic reputation generally all that I can remember that the reviews have said during the last ten years. And when I come to the description of her private worth, and her social charms—well! words fail me. That portion of my letter therefore is soon scamped in, but when it becomes necessary to say something about Elinor, difficulties arise, and I feel that I shall blunder in designating her. Common sense tells me that it is senile to speak of this graciously-grown, pretty young woman as Mrs. Carruthers's "little girl," and I shrink with an unaccountable shrinking from speaking of her as my "future daughter." If I carelessly record the fact of her existence and say no more about her, they will all set off speculating about her at home in the wildest manner. My mother's name is to me a synonym for all that is good and kind, generous, truthful, and tolerant. Still she will give a second thought to the fact that I am, at five-and-twenty, going to take the responsibility of a daughter only four-and-a-half years younger than myself upon me! I groan as I erase my first paragraph about Elinor, and commence a second with the words, "My Constance has a child." I break down at this point, and the words I have indited stare back upon me from the paper, and seem to reproach me for having put the fact so crudely and imperfectly. The mention is unworthy of Elinor, and of myself. It never occurs to me at the time that a slight garbling of facts is unworthy of the allegiance I owe to Constance. However, I erase my second para-

graph about Elinor, and make a dash at it thus :

"There is a daughter by the first marriage. Wait till you see Elinor Carruthers before you express any disapprobation of young men burdening themselves with ready-made families." Then I go on to speak of my own happiness, and to my surprise there is very little to say about it! As I conclude my letter to my mother I trust that she will take my bias for granted, for verily there is little of it expressed in the passages I have penned.

I am the eldest son, and my brothers and sisters have caught the old-fashioned custom in our family, of looking up to the eldest son as the hope and stay, the pride and prop of the house. As a race, we Powers are rather conservative, and have a wholesome horror of new grooves. We have always deemed the great Earl Warwick's crucial test for the fitness of women for domestic life, "that they should know how to spin and be virtuous," the right one. I tremble, therefore, for my parents' peace of mind if, on the occasion of their next visit to the market-town, they see the name of Constance Terriss advertised in letters a foot high, as the leading attraction in the current number of "Living Notorieties," which is just now being published with unlimited success. If a peeress has preceded her, and a prelate is advertised to follow, they may bear the blow with fortitude. But if a dashing danseuse carried off the honours last, and a distinguished divorcée will smile upon the world from next week's cartoon, then indeed will they bewail themselves that I have not been lured to the altar by one of the daughters of our own land, who have never done anything famous or infamous enough to win a place for themselves among "Living Notorieties." How fervently I wish, as this dread thought crosses my mind, that the editor of the above-named admirable work of art and fancy were not above suspicion. If gold could procure a place in those pages for the ugliest good woman in England with a handle to her name, she should have it—and so should the stupidest and safest of bishops! But, alas! I know a deaf ear would be turned to my application, and therefore I make no effort to suborn anyone, but just trust supinely to Fate to arrange it, so that when Elinor's mother does appear, she shall appear in good company.

The more I think of Elinor, the more I find myself sharing the sentiments of the

man in Robert Brough's poem, "Neighbour Nellie."

Still, as jealous as a mother,
A suspicious, cackled churl,
I look vainly for the setting,
To be worthy such a pearl.

I writhe as I remember Charlie Pendleton's presumptuous intentions, and feel that (if I were not engaged to her mother) I should have a better right than he has to aspire to the hand of the girl whom I am rapidly coming to love with a warmth that is not at all parental.

My father and mother are warm-hearted, impulsive people, with very little to do. It occurs to them, therefore, that it would be a good thing to come up and answer my announcement of the matrimony that is impending in person. They arrive at my chambers one afternoon, just as I am preparing to start for five o'clock tea with my grand proprietress, and with many misgivings I entreat them to accompany me, hoping fondly that they will refuse. They accede at once with a readiness that is revolting to me, and a hopeful expectation of finding my "future wife all and more than I have described her," that makes me tremble. That they will find her a good deal "more," I have no manner of doubt. Walking over hot ploughshares would be agreeable pedestrian exercise, compared to this ordeal through which I have to pass. If I can only manage to murmur a request to Constance, unheard by the others, that she, will tone herself down," all may yet be well! Buoyed up by this hope, I adventure forth with my parents, with as gay and gallant a front as I can get up for the occasion, and presently we arrive in Mrs. Carruthers's drawing-room, and my trial by fire commences.

It really is a very pretty scene, and as it is the last in which I tread the boards as Mrs. Carruthers's slave I may be forgiven for reproducing it. There are three or four of her perfidious female friends present, and Mrs. Carruthers herself, in a peacock blue Watteau gown, is "dispensing the graceful hospitalities" of the ebonied tea-table and oriental china. What admirable tea she makes! how strong it is; and how hot! How firm and white her hands look as they play about among the rich deep green dragons and corals of that wonderful old Japanese service!

How proud I am of her, how diffident I feel of my own merits when weighed in the balance against those of such a mag-

nificent woman! At the same time how terrified I am as to the effect her free enunciations may have upon my mother. In all the midst of my bewilderment I have time to remark that Elinor is exquisite in an ivory-white serge that wraps itself about her in most artistic folds. I feel a throb of pride in my future step-daughter as I watch her graceful, composed bearing on this trying afternoon, and I endeavour to make myself believe that the throb is only caused by pride, and that no other feeling quickens the pulsation of my heart. These conflicting emotions "have it out" with one another in my mind in a moment or two! At the end of those moments they make peace very hurriedly for a most overwhelming one, for my mother, after greeting both Constance and her "little girl" kindly and gravely, turns with a fine flush on her sweet, good face to Elinor, and says:

"So you're going to be my son's wife, my dear? I don't think I could have chosen better for him myself."

"I don't think you could," Mrs. Carruthers exclaims, with an amount of tact that makes me like her better than I have ever liked her before, for I feel that it is born of true maternal feeling. For Elinor is in an agony of embarrassment at the mistake, and would fall into the error of an attempted explanation of how matters really stand, if it were not for her mother's intervention.

It is a very bewildering hour. But Elinor and I are so clearly revealed to each other by the flash of that divine intelligence which irradiated my mother's remark, that we each feel there can be no going back. If this conviction did not make me so supremely happy, I might experience a pang of wounded vanity at the spectacle of the genuine, debonaire ease and indifference, with which Mrs. Carruthers is evidently prepared to resign me. As it is, I admire her for it, and feel assured that she will make the most agreeable of mothers-in-law.

For of course it speedily settles itself thus! Elinor and I are going to marry, and that little preliminary mistake I have made will never be referred to by us, save as a sort of providential mistake which was made for the furtherance of the great scheme of our lives. I shall warmly bless Mrs. Carruthers for being my mother-in-law, in which capacity doubtless she will be amusing, helpful, and valuable enough, and I doubly bless her for not being my wife!

THE WORLDS IN THE SKY.

GEORGE SAND wrote in confidence to a friend that if, after death, her soul were to transmigrate into another planet, she would like it to be one where they could neither read nor write. For my own part, were I not a terrestrial creature, I think I should like to have been born in the planet Mars. Such at least is the conclusion to which I have been led by the perusal of M. Camille Flammarion's last work, *Les Terres du Ciel*,* which gives, in eloquent and exhaustive terms, the latest intelligence about all the known planets, great and small, besides speculations regarding others unknown.

Many people fancy that Venus must be a delightful residence, because she looks so clear and bright. But all is not gold, nor even silver, that glitters, and Venus can hardly be a worldly paradise. Splendour may be all very well, but comforts merit a passing thought. There is no fault to be found with Venus's days and nights in central latitudes; they are much the same as ours, only just a trifle shorter. But her years put everybody in the position of the famous beggar, whose days had dwindled to the shortest span. Instead of Earth's allowance of three hundred and sixty-five, sometimes sixty-six days, Venus only gives you two hundred and thirty-one, not eight months in lieu of twelve. If the term of life there, as here, be threescore years and ten, four months out of twelve is a terrible discount to deduct for the pleasure of dwelling on the brilliant evening star which is our next-door neighbour.

And then, how quickly quarter-day comes round! That inconvenience, however, or perhaps convenience, takes its quality from circumstances; I mean ours, yours or mine, according as they are straightened or easy. If we are overhoused and over-established, with two horses when we can only afford one, and a butler out of livery when an adolescent buttons would be more prudent, Venus's quarter-day must give fearfully frequent pinches; but if we are overbalanced at our banker's with more planetary three per cents. and midland-Venus railway dividends coming in than we spend, in that case quarter-day may dawn upon us as often as it pleases.

Neither have you, in Venus, the choice of giving servants a month's warning or a

* Paris: Didier et Cie., 1877, pp. 600.

month's wages; neither do monthly magazines, by delighting their readers, afford literary ladies and gentlemen opportunities of earning welcome guineas; neither are there tide-tables nor tidal trains for the navigation of Channels, they being all tideless; no lovers there can take moon-light walks; all the consequence of Venus's having no moon.

The climate? Well; Russia exaggerated; not an Eden bathed in eternal spring. The seasons, instead of being lukewarm and undecided, manifest unmistakably what they are and mean. The Sun stares at you fiercely, opening his eye one full third wider than with us. That would be a comparative trifle if Venus waltzed round her orbit in as upright a position as we do. But in consequence of the great inclination of her axis, her polar overlap her tropical regions, producing two zones, much wider than our temperate zones, whose inhabitants are exposed to alternations of excessive heat and cold. In fact, there are no temperate zones. The snow and ice at the poles have no time to accumulate; a thaw sets in and spring passes like a dream. The agitation of the winds, the rains and tempests, surpass in continuance and violence anything we witness here. There is constant evaporation from the seas, with the immediate precipitation of torrential showers, and the clouds vexatiously resulting thence are the great impediment to our study of Venus's topography.

Picturesque this and even sublime, no doubt, but inconvenient for creatures constituted as we are. M. Flammarion, however, suggests a means, which you shall shortly learn, how climatal difficulties may probably be got over. And here let me remark that our own Earth teaches us to be cautious, in saying that living beings cannot exist under circumstances for which we know no precedent. We, men and women, are air-breathing animals; we know that, if we walk into water and fill our lungs with it instead of air, we die; that life under water, without air, for us is impossible. If our telescopes showed us a world entirely covered with water, we should naturally and reasonably believe that it was absolutely uninhabited and uninhabitable, had not the planet we dwell on taught us the possibility, by their wondrous adaptation to the medium they live in, of fishes, seals, porpoises, and whales leading long and pleasant lives. If we had not the example of fish before our eyes, no philosopher could contrive, or

admit the existence of, creatures breathing aerated water only. The same of flying things. Even although we might have invented balloons, if we had no bats, birds, or winged insects to convince us of the fact, we should treat as fabulous and absurd the idea that a creature heavier than air could raise itself in air by mere muscular power, and convert the gaseous and invisible atmosphere into a support for rapid and long-sustained locomotion. These two simple instances are sufficient to prove that human experiences are quite incapable of setting limits to creative adaptations, under conditions which might seem to render life impossible.

Venus's mountains are much higher than ours—namely, more than twice as high as the Himalayas, her northern hemisphere being more mountainous than the southern. Her Alpine Clubs therefore have fine opportunities for glorious and foolhardy scaling of peaks, without much inconvenience, as it happens, from rarefied air; unless M. Flammarion's supposition removes all danger whatever. The case is this: Venus's atmosphere—whose ordinary state is to be covered with clouds, thereby tempering the rays of the broad-disked sun—although composed of the same gases as ours, is thicker and denser than our own, and more saturated with aqueous vapour, which must feel like breathing diluted water. The deep atmosphere gives lengthened twilights as some compensation for the want of a moon. But with an atmosphere expressly made for flight, why should not the Aphroditeans be organised for flying? Thus can they escape the contrasts of winter and summer by migrating, like our storks and swallows, from hemisphere to hemisphere. Venus's seas are Mediterraneans rather than oceans; the influence of their waters moderates either extreme of temperature; and it is thither that frozen-out or scorched-out populations flock by the help of fleet and powerful wings, instead of by the tardy railways which carry our shivering invalids to winter in the South. The same means enable bashful couples to keep rendezvous on the top of Aphroditean Matterhorns, and allow parties sociably inclined to arrange ice-eating picnics on Venus's Mount Rosas. Nevertheless, graceful and easy as flight looks, it must be hard work, and, when one is lazily inclined, a great exertion. All things considered, I will not transmigrate to Venus, unless on compulsion.

Of life on Jupiter we know less, and

that little is not inviting. As a slightly extenuating circumstance, in consequence of his upright axis he enjoys, in place of four seasons, perpetual spring; but that spring may be more than mild, with a temperature perhaps of boiling water in the shade. For it is not certain how far Jupiter has cooled down from the incandescent state, in which he parted from the Sun. Even if he has formed a solid outside crust, walking on its surface may still be warm work. Possibly it is covered with hot marshes and tall rank vegetation like that which supplied our store of coal, with jungles of gigantic club-mosses and ferns, the haunts of monster megalosauri and other long-jawed, big-eyed reptiles, amongst whom were a man to appear he would be immediately snapped up as a dainty tid-bit. Jovine geography remains unknown at present, and life is probably only at its dawn. The famous changeable bands which streak his disk are so many shifting zones of impenetrable fog, occasionally lighted up by auroræ boreales, which prevent our getting a good look at his actual surface. Consequently, his inhabitants do not often see either the Sun, their four moons, or the starry heavens. Besides the continuous bands, and above them, clouds proper are driven along the equatorial regions by trade-winds beyond comparison more violent than ours. By-and-by, most likely, when Jupiter's fiery youth has passed, those vapours will be condensed into rain and solidified into carbon, the sky will become clear, and our posterity, peeping through perfected instruments, will trace the distribution of land and water, if not the course of rivers and the sites of cities.

Jupiter's years are long enough, and to spare—nearly twelve of ours—making leasehold property almost as good as freehold. A damsel there of sweet seventeen is a doubly centenarian matron with us. His days, on the other hand, are in all latitudes ridiculously short. A day and a night together are over in less than ten hours. Existence is almost entirely occupied by the process of going to bed and getting up again. As to dressing, ladies attending queenly drawing-rooms have to begin over-night to be ready by next noon-time. That penance, however, has been performed by terrestrial belles, when head-dresses were high and hair-dressers scarce.

Jupiter is too big to suit our ideas of comfort—twelve hundred and thirty times bigger than we are. If Jupiter were an

we should feel lost, like the trusty man and wife without encumbrance, deputed to keep the rats out of a vast country mansion during the owner's absence abroad. The possession of one moon, like ours, is pleasant enough, but Jupiter's four moons must render all lunar reckonings a puzzle. Only think of four different sorts of months, and four different fluxes and refluxes of tides! When a prisoner there gets so many calendar months, is he at liberty to choose the shortest? Although Jupiter is only a quarter as dense as we are, in consequence of his enormous size everything on his surface is twice and a half as heavy as here. The baby you dandle so pleased and so proud would, on Jupiter, severely tax your arms to lift it. Lapdogs, poor dears, would be as good as suppressed. On the satellites, which are doubtless inhabited at the present date, things are made more pleasant. Still, upon the whole, I had rather not go to Jupiter or to either of his four attendant moons, in spite of their respectable dimensions.

Saturn has a complicated system, a universe in little, all his own; central globe, rings three or more, and satellites eight. Popularly, he is an unlucky planet, the patron of moping hypochondriacs, the symbol of predestined misfortune. "Saturnine" means crabbed, gloomy, morose. Heavy and poisonous lead is his representative metal; which is inconsistent with the fact, because he is absurdly light for a world pretending to be substantial. Were he to fall into an ocean like ours—our own is not big enough to hold him—he would float on it like a ball of cork, or, more correctly, of maple wood. His year is nearly thirty times as long as ours. His day and night, of only ten hours sixteen minutes in all, present the same inconvenience as Jupiter's. The seasons, each more than seven years long, resemble ours, but the general temperature is probably higher. Saturn still retains some of his primordial heat. We never behold his actual surface, no more than Jupiter's, except perhaps at the polar regions; for a dense atmosphere, laden with cloud and vapour and containing gases non-existent with us, envelopes this slightly-solid globe, on whose surface, in spite of its colossal size, weights are only one-tenth heavier than with us. Its inhabitants, according to M. Flammarion thirty times more long-lived than ourselves, are strictly aerial, with transparent bodies, highly sensitive, swimming in the atmo-

strata like the balloons imitating animals sent up as pilots before a serious ascent, and, as was once believed of birds of paradise, never alighting on the ground or perching on trees. Now and then they may sit on banks of clouds, as the gods of mythology did when assembled on the summit of Mount Olympus.

And this is a matter not of choice, but of necessity. If the atmosphere be as deep as it looks, it must exert at its base an enormous pressure, and be denser and heavier than the objects on the planet's surface. Under those strange circumstances, creatures organised on aerostatic principles can only reach the soil by plunging and diving; to which soil they must hold hard and fast if they wish to remain there. But the air being filled with all sorts of articles saves its inhabitants the trouble of searching after them below. Moreover, the attraction of the rings diminishes the weight of objects, and there is a zone between them and the central globe where bodies have no weight at all, but tend to fall as much one way as the other, and therefore hang suspended, unless the atmosphere allows the Saturnians to fly and fetch them, and perhaps take a morning walk afterwards on the rings, which no one supposes to be the permanent homes of living creatures. Would you like to make Saturn your future residence? I take the liberty of guessing that you would not.

It is useless to go farther afield in search of lodgings in the Solar System. We will return to our neighbour Mars, who perhaps may suit us. Mars, like Venus, has no moon, and therefore has neither lunatics nor lunatic asylums. Mars's day is nearly forty minutes longer than ours, a convenient margin for unpunctual people. Its exact duration within the tenth of a second is known to our astronomers, who, unreasonable men, are not yet satisfied, but recommend further observations next autumn, when the planet will be favourably situated "in opposition." His year is nearly twice as long as ours; to which few will object if the term of life be proportionally extended. Geographical zones of climate exist, as here; atmosphere, analogous to our own; seasons, much the same, only twice as long; inhabitants lighter, more active and more centenarian than ourselves.

I write with M. Flammarion's Planisphere or flattened Map of Mars before me. So complete and precise is it, that one is surprised to see on it "Regions still

unknown, because these latitudes in winter are covered with north-polar snows." It is a pleasure to know that there is rather more land than water in Mars, the whole nicely interlarded together, like the fat and lean in well-fed meat. You may travel round the world almost dry-foot, and therefore with a total exemption from the qualms excited by aqueous undulation. What a blessing that, even if there were nothing else to recommend the planet! The seas are not real oceans, but tideless Mediterraneans connected by pleasant Bosphoruses, unvexed, let us hope, by Eastern questions.

True, we have not yet caught sight of the natives. But when we see a railway train rushing along in the distance, although driver, stoker, passengers, and guard are all and everyone of them invisible, we are perfectly certain that there they are. And when we behold Mars, with his continents, gulfs, clouds, and polar snows—which are his first, second, third, and fourth class carriages—passing us at more than railway speed, may we not be sure that he too carries passengers, who are not so very different from us after all? Nevertheless, there are causes for variation from ourselves in the living organisms that exist on his surface.

Mars is considerably smaller than Terra—his diameter is about the half of hers—and lighter, also, in proportion to his size. A journey round him is no formidable undertaking; in fact, no more than a pleasant tour. Weight on his surface is less than on any other planet in our system. The muscular effort necessary, here, for leap-frog would carry a lad, there, over the tops of houses. Animals and vegetables are taller than with us, although the world itself is smaller. It is not the volume of a globe which regulates the dimensions of creatures living on its surface, but the intensity of weight or gravity relatively to the media (air or water) in which those creatures have to pass their lives. With us, men twice or three times as tall as we are would be inconvenienced by their own proper weight; the greater stability given by their four legs to quadrupeds allows them to attain larger proportions. In water the size of animals can be still further increased by the specific lightness which they thence acquire. With us, a certain number of creatures are winged; but in Mars, from the slight impediment offered by weight, all the superior animals are probably gifted with flight. For the same reason—namely, the feeble central

attraction—Mars's plants would attain a stature unknown in the whole range of our vegetable kingdom.

Further details and arguments might be produced in favour of Mars's eligibility; but it is time to return home to Earth, remembering that we, too, are a World in the Sky—a heavenly body, a shining light—from whom great things are expected by neighbouring planetarians. Only the other day, when a pair of affianced Martials were taking their evening stroll beneath the shade of trees which would overtop the loftiest pyramid of Egypt, the lady whispered to her lover, "Look at that lovely star, Terra, now rising from Newton's Ocean. How bright and pure she looks! a world of innocence, a paradise whose inmates are not yet driven out, the seat of an unceasing golden age! Oh, that we had the wings of a comet, that we might fly away together and be at rest there! Happy, happy Terra, whose inhabitants drink only of the crystal brook; where universal honesty reigns supreme, and cheating, in all its forms, is unknown; where no hurricanes strew the seas with wrecks and the land with ruins; where wicked and bloody wars are unheard of; where husband and wife remain for ever united in harmony; divorce courts are unknown; and no young lady ever brought an action for breach of promise of marriage, because so shameful a breach has never occurred!"

"Terra is certainly beautiful," replied the swain. "As you say, she is a lovely star. Still, let us strive to be contented and happy where we are, on Mars, without too much repining at our lot. Perhaps, as far as Terra is concerned"—he is a bit of an astronomer, and possesses a particularly good telescope—"perhaps, if truth were known, 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER IV. THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

BASIL having furnished me with my letter of introduction, I went to call upon Mr. Toomer Hooton, who was living, it appeared, very near to us, in Cirencester-place, Fitzroy-square.

I had explained to Basil my determina-

tion to attempt the profession of the stage. I did not conceal either from him or from myself, that I felt no special aptitude for the calling, although I believed that it might bring reward of a moderate kind fairly within my reach; and with such a result I undertook to be content. I never pretended for a moment that I was possessed of histrionic genius; but I credited myself, in my vanity, with tolerable intelligence, a measure of courage, and personal appearance of an agreeable kind. I knew, moreover, that my utterance was distinct, and that my voice was not deficient in strength. It seemed to me that I could really acquit myself as well as many actresses I had seen, whose efforts upon the scene had been rewarded with excessive applause, and, as I had heard, with most liberal salaries.

Basil offered little opposition to my plan, although his looks expressed disapproval of it, and I could see that he was not hopeful of my success.

"If you are really bent upon this thing, Doris—"

"I am quite bent upon it."

"Somehow I feel that it should not be, and yet I can say no word against it. What is Paul's opinion?"

"He does not object. He laughs; he thinks I shall soon tire of my occupation. He calls me a good little wife, and a brave little wife, for trying to help him. He blames himself for being so poor, and for bringing so much trouble upon me. But that is absurd, of course."

"He looks forward to your success?"

"I cannot say that. He does not think highly of our English stage. He says we appropriate too much from his compatriots, and badly use what we borrow or steal. It is like ill-gotten gold, it does not thrive in our hands. He complains that our players are not artists, but merely tradespeople. He is severe upon English actresses. They do not understand, he says, how to dress, or how to put on their rouge even. I hope to benefit by his criticisms; but he only laughs when I apply to him for particular instruction. He says that I shall be quite good enough, too good, indeed, for my public. And then he declares that Great Britain is the land of bad taste! I feel that my love of country should be roused, and that I ought to scold him for his rudeness. But, in truth, I am too well pleased to find him light-hearted. So that he laughs, I am satisfied.

"Yet he classes acting as one of the fine-arts?"

"I have heard him say so."

"If he thought you an artist, really qualified to win fame upon the stage——"

"That is not at all his view of me; nor is it my opinion of myself. It is simply poverty that drives me to the stage. Vanity influences me but little; genius certainly does not inspire me. With me acting is a *métier*, mere mercantilisme, as Paul expresses it. You understand, Basil?"

"I am not sure that I do," he said with rather a puzzled air; "but that need make no difference. So that you and Paul understand it, and each other, and are content, there is nothing more to be said."

Accordingly, he wrote the letter for me to take to Mr. Hooton. He offered, indeed, to accompany me on my visit to the elocutionist, the better to enlist his sympathies on my behalf. But I preferred to go alone. I feared I should be rather hampered by the presence of Basil. He was inclined sometimes to be rather oppressively discreet, and meditative, and circumspect.

I found Mr. Hooton the occupant of small and shabby lodgings on the ground-floor. He was attired in a very smart dressing-gown, of a Turkish pattern, bound round him by a tasselled cord, and with a gold-embroidered scarlet smoking-cap perched upon the top of his head. I perceived afterwards, that in this way he adroitly concealed the baldness with which time had afflicted him. The erect tuft of hair, of which Basil had spoken to me, had wholly departed; the red cap still conveyed, however, a suggestion of a cock's comb, and he retained his resemblance to the feathered creation in regard to his curved projecting nose, his retreating chin, his thin legs with their high action, a certain flapping movement of his arms, and his method of rustling the skirts of his dressing-gown behind him, as though they had been bunches of feathers. But he was, as I judged, much stouter than when Basil had first met him. He was absurdly corpulent.

I felt at once that I should not like him in the least. His manner, I thought, was very artificial and insincere. He seemed to be always acting a part; but, no doubt, his tricks of gait, and posture, and glance, which in the first instance had been consciously assumed, were now confirmed habits, that had been grafted upon and had grown into his very nature. I detected falseness in his every movement; in his arching of his brows, in his rolling of

his eyes, in his wide smile that ploughed his whole face into creases, in his swaying to and fro of his head, in his fluttering about of his hands, to display their whiteness and the rings adorning them.

"Pray be seated, madam," he said, in an emphatic and what I may call a supersyllabic manner; and then, having affixed to his nose double gold-rimmed glasses—though I do not believe that he really needed their assistance—he proceeded to read the letter I had delivered to him. "You will excuse," he added, "the *déshabille* in which you find me, and the litter and confusion of my writing-table. But a professional man, my dear madam, a professional man is really entitled to indulgence as to these matters. My correspondence is so extensive; there are such vast interests at stake; and I own to a peculiar fervour and excitability of character. I fling my papers here, there, and everywhere. I am unable to control my emotions, and, as you see, a certain not unpicturesque effect results. Notwithstanding, I am strictly a man of business—oh dear yes, strictly a man of business. Make no mistake on that head. My books are kept with quite commercial punctuality and precision. I really pride myself upon a sort of clerly neatness and accuracy. I like to think that I should have succeeded in mercantile pursuits, had it pleased Providence to assign me that walk of life. It is to me a gratifying reflection that in my humble way I present an instance of the combination between the man of taste, of artistic occupations, of æsthetic ideas—in short, the man of genius and the man of business. But you will understand that by that remark I would convey nothing of a vainglorious character."

I found Mr. Hooton's flow of language rather irritating, although upon any other occasion perhaps I should have held it to be amusing enough. But I wanted to speak upon the subject which had brought me to Cirencester-place. I turned from Mr. Hooton, and for a moment my eyes rested upon the wall-spaces on either side of the fireplace. Here hung in gold frames, as though they were pictures, certain old and faded-looking playbills, the dates of which I observed were carefully concealed by strips of paper pasted over them. Mr. Hooton quickly noted my proceeding.

"You are looking at those curiosities? Interesting relics of the past. Those playbills are as the milestones upon a long journey; they mark the progress of a life that has known many strange vicissitudes

and experiences, but has been always, if I may say so, devoted to my fellow-creatures in regard to their entertainment, cultivation, and amelioration. That is my first playbill. I performed Hamlet at Hull in the year—but never mind the year. My success was quite unquestionable. Here you find me impersonating Macbeth—always a favourite part of mine—at the Theatre Royal, Lyme Regis; and there I am at Winchelsea, appearing as King Lear and Jeremy Diddler on the same evening, the occasion being my benefit, under noble and distinguished patronage—a perfect bumper—quite the largest receipts ever known on that circuit. These are the records of my appearance as the Stranger, at Doncaster, during the race week; as Octavian, at Wakefield; and as Penruddock, at Leeds. I was always a favourite in the North of England. I found the audiences there remarkable for their intelligence and sound judgment. In London, I will admit, I have not met with the welcome or the encouragement due to me. I have been received, indeed, with very considerable unkindness, opposed by an infamous cabal. Alas! that it should be so; but my profession is disfigured by much jealousy and envy. I grieve to say that my appearance at Covent-garden Theatre, although I undertook merely a subordinate character, and the occasion was a ticket-benefit, was the provocation of bitter heart-burning, of rancorous enmity, on the part of those calling themselves my brother-actors. They sought to ridicule me, to drive me from the stage, and from the lawful exercise of my profession. But their machinations did not avail. The general body of the house was with me. The gallery, as one man, rose in my defence. My foes were baffled, humiliated. My vindication, my triumph was supreme. Still the struggle told upon me. The artist nature is ill fitted to cope with ungenerous combinations, with systematised opposition. I felt that I had sufficiently asserted myself. I withdrew from the conflict. I decided upon retiring from the stage, not absolutely, but still in a great degree. I felt that another and a special field was open to me. I would turn my acquirements to an educational account. Skilled myself, I would impart my skill to others. An actor, I would create actors. I would teach the young idea how to shout, if it is permitted me to vary the expression of the poet. Always distinguished for my elocutionary excellence, I would instruct others

in their turn to be elocutionary. And so, my dear madam, we come down to the present time, and I have the pleasure of receiving you in this unpretending yet not wholly uncomfortable abode. Let me see;” and he turned again to the letter, holding it in his left hand and striking it with his right so as to open it more completely. I remembered that on the stage the reading of a letter was invariably treated in that fashion.

“Doubleday? Oh dear yes! I remember the name perfectly. Your father, of course. And you are the sister of my young friend Basil. The married sister, I see; you are Madame Riel. And you wish to be an actress. We might call you Mademoiselle Riel, with a telling christian-name, Joséphine, or Angélique, or Antoinette. Mademoiselle Antoinette Riel would look very well indeed upon a placard. And if you were to speak English with a French accent—not a difficult task by any means—I do think we might manage to hit the taste of the public. I do think we might.”

There was the sound as of some one or more jumping heavily on the floor above.

“Do not be alarmed,” said Mr. Hooton, blandly; “it is only Madame Frascati, who is giving a lesson overhead. Perhaps you noticed her little brass plate on the door-post as you entered? No? Madame Frascati teaches dancing, deportment, calisthenics, the Indian club exercises, and so forth. She is a woman of very distinguished ability; her system of instruction is most admirable. She offers peculiar advantages to her pupils. But why should I disguise the fact? Madame Frascati is in truth my wife, being the fourth lady who has done me the honour to become Mrs. Toomer Hooton.” He flourished before me his left hand; three wedding-rings, worn in life, as I assumed, by the three departed Mrs. Hootons, circled one of his fingers. “It is not every man,” he continued, “who can make the proud boast that he has been devotedly loved by four angels, four ministering angels. I sometimes fancy that they are all watching over, protecting, and cherishing me, hovering about me, like—like guiding stars in fact, or will-o’-the-wisps—that kind of thing.” A heavy bump on the floor over our heads demonstrated the material presence of his fourth wife on the premises. “She retains her professional name. We thought that advisable and excusable. We are thus enabled to be mutually useful, to play into each other’s

hands, if I may so express myself. She always advises her pupils to study elocution and rhetoric, to seek my services as dramatic agent, or whenever they desire the removal of labial or lingual impediments, the defects of stammering, stuttering, &c. For my part, I recommend all who come to me to avail themselves of Madame Frascati's peculiar arts. Dancing is not merely an admirable accomplishment, it is really indispensable to the actor. If you have to appear as Letitia Hardy, my dear madam, you must perfect yourself in the graceful minuet de la cour. Juliana, in the Honeymoon, is required to figure in a country dance. Of other heroines, hornpipes, I think, are demanded. But I need say no more; the thing is so obvious. Throw out the chest by means of calisthenics and the Indian clubs, and then, I, as professor of elocution, will teach you how to throw out the voice."

I told him that I did not need Madame Frascati's services, that I had learnt dancing and undergone calisthenic exercises during my long stay in Bath. And then I endeavoured to bring him back to the subject of Basil's letter. How soon, I asked, having the benefit of his instructions, should I be able to make my appearance on the stage?

"You are quite a woman of business, I see," he said. "You inherit your poor father's clear intelligence and practical way of looking at things. He had a very engaging manner, I always thought. I had the pleasure of instructing him in elocution. He was kind enough to say that he had derived great benefit from my services. Of course he had commenced his course of study at rather an advanced period of life. But he was merely studying en amateur. He had a pleasant voice, not strong, but decidedly musical. I don't pretend to say that had he taken to the stage he would have attained to a position of any great fame. But he would have been esteemed by the more refined among the audience, and probably would have been thought deserving of a small salary. I met him first in——," he checked himself as though discovering that his speech was indiscreet, "but that is a detail I need not discuss. We both had occasion to seek seclusion for a time, and we chanced to encounter each other. A very pleasant man; amiable, genial, and remarkably well-informed. It is very agreeable to me to reflect that I made his acquaintance. I am proud to think that he was once my

pupil. I shall never cease to regret his untimely loss. Poor dear Doubleday!"

Mr. Hooton affected—it was undoubtedly affectation—to be staying the flow of tears. He dabbed his dry eyes with a scented cambric handkerchief.

"But you, my dear young lady," he resumed presently, "more ambitious than your father, contemplate a serious début; you would become a professional actress. I shall be happy to assist you, both for your own sake and for your father's sake, and upon moderate terms. What do you take to be the special inclination of your talents? Are you a votary of Thalia or of Melpomene? Your face is, I think, of a serious cast. Your air and manner appeal readily to sympathy. Your voice, I notice, has a certain tone or throb of melancholy. What we call juvenile tragedy should be your line of business, as we phrase it. Let me hear you read these delightful passages from my favourite bard."

He handed me a very soiled and dog-seared and tobacco-scented volume of Shakespeare, open at the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet. I was nervous and ill at ease, and my voice faltered a little; but I was determined not to be abashed, and I read as boldly as I could, in a theatrical manner. I knew the speeches of Juliet by heart, so that I had no need to keep my eye fixed upon my book. I tried to discover the effect of my performance upon Mr. Hooton.

He took a chair at the farther end of the room, draped his dressing-gown about him, folded his arms, and assumed altogether a judicial attitude. Sometimes he gazed at me fixedly, as though determined to intimidate me; then he shut his eyes, and indulged in a sort of rapt simper, expressive of his appreciation of the exquisite poetry of Shakespeare; presently I found him wincing and frowning, as a musician might at the sound of a false note.

"Really, you know, that's not so bad, my dear young lady; not so very bad. You want instruction, I need hardly say. You take your breath in the wrong places; you are not sufficiently articulate; and you neglect that golden rule of elocution, which prescribes the elevation and not the lowering of the voice when you come to a comma. But, altogether, it's really by no means bad. Allow me."

He took the book from me and read the scene over again, in a very stilted, artificial, and affected manner.

"That's rather more like the real thing,"

he said, with a self-satisfied smile, as he jauntily tossed the book from him.

I did not much like his method of reading, yet I felt that it had the merit of distinctness at any rate. I noticed, too, that his elocution was of the kind that usually obtained applause at the theatre.

How soon, I asked again, did he think I should be able to appear creditably upon the stage?

"That is a difficult question," he said, "although it is one often put to me. Success in the profession of the stage depends upon so many conditions. It is not absolutely a matter of calculation, and yet it can really be almost counted upon and provided, so to say, at a certain cost." He looked at me significantly as he spoke, but I did not quite understand him. "You see, it's a plain matter, after all. If we want a crop of turnips, we must sow turnip-seed in good time. If we would reap a harvest of bank-notes, well, we must take care to plant our sovereigns in due season."

"How much money will be required, Mr. Hooton? Please tell me that." I thought it best to speak plainly.

"A woman of business—as I said," he exclaimed, with an approving smile. "Now let me see. You're not rich? No. I thought not. Your poor father admitted to me, on more than one occasion, that his circumstances were not all he could wish, and that he had little to bequeath to his children beyond his pecuniary embarrassments. You want to arrive at a professional position, per saltum, as we say in the Latin tongue? Well, now what shall be our terms? How will this do? Twenty pounds down, and that shall include elocutionary instruction, sufficient rehearsals, and a début guaranteed at the Soho Theatre, in a leading Shakesperian character? Come now, I call that a good offer."

"Twenty pounds? That is a large sum."

"Yes, but a leading Shakesperian part! It's really dirt cheap. But of course I could find you a smaller and more economical kind of opening, if you think you would like that better. Let me consult my books. I have several performances in prospect, supported by my pupils and aided by myself. I do all I can to oblige them. I am content myself to fill minor characters, if my protégés are bent

upon leading business. I am without ambition in the matter. If a young gentleman is resolved upon playing Othello, I content myself with Iago, and vice versa. Let me see. Macbeth on the 25th, but the cast is nearly complete. You would not care, perhaps, about Donaldbain or Fleance? They're thought to be nice leg parts for beginners; well suited to young ladies who like to wear a kilt, without much to say. Or what do you think of the Gentlewoman? really a very telling little character. We could do that for you at say thirty shillings. Would you like Celia, in *As You Like It*, for two pounds? Or Hero, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, at the same price? Or there's Lady Anne, in *Richard the Third*—fixed for the 15th of next month—at two pounds fifteen? Now that's really a good opportunity. A nice part with a cheap and becoming dress, for, with a few yards of crape, you can make any old black silk do for the train. You don't like it? I am afraid I've nothing to suit you, then. But, take my advice; do it well while you're about it. You'll find the money well laid. Twenty pounds down, and please yourself: Shakespeare's Juliet, or Julia in the Hunchback. I've known many excellent engagements result from merely one appearance in a good part, at the Soho—the performance being under my direction."

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SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. II. LINDENHEIM.

CHAPTER V. ON THE THRESHOLD OF BABEL.

"Who are you going to walk with, Herr Walter?"

"I? Oh, with everybody."

"Of course, you always do. But to begin with, I mean?"

"Ah, Miss Lotte, that's just the question. It is always that first step that's the trouble, you know. I'm so torn by candidates on all sides that there's scarcely enough left of me to be called a Me. That's what we used to call metaphysics in Jena, Miss Lotte. I must divide myself fairly: a leg to one, an arm to another, a head——"

"A head? How many heads have you, then?"

"Cerberus had three, that's what we used to call Greek at Horchester, Miss Lotte. He was only a dog; and a man has more head than a dog; at least I suppose so. That is what we used to call logic at Oxford, Miss Lotte."

"There! I should never have thought it. But then, of course, it needn't follow that each has got a brain."

"Doesn't it, though! We used to call it so in Paris, I assure you. But, in the same place, to contradict a lady was not what we used to call manners, so let it be one head, if you like it, by all means. My head, then, to Lucas, he is the one exception to the rule that a head must contain some sort of a brain. My ear, an ear, to Wilson: he wants one badly. My——"

"And a heart? You have at least a hundred hearts, I know, considering the number you throw away."

"On the contrary. My stock-in-trade consists of Head—cool, calm, calculating head, I assure you. I never throw anything away, except good advice and compliments. I have but one heart, Miss Lotte, and that goes with you."

"Thank you. But, after all, when walking is the question, whom the legs go with is the great thing. Suppose, for once, you let them follow your heart, and come with me and—suppose I say Ilma? What does that lonely heart of yours say now?"

"Ilma is going with you?"

"Should I have asked you else? Am I really the mischief-maker and mar-plot they call me? Do I want your heart, Herr Walter? Heaven forbid!" said Miss Lotte, with a bright smile of affected horror at the idea of such a thing. "How slow everybody is in starting—and you call yourself on the committee! A committee of tortoises, I should say. But we are all getting so terribly old. There is no more youth left in the world. As for me, this is my hundred-and-first birthday. But, thank goodness, it's a fine day."

The centenarian bore her years wonderfully, for she looked no more than eighteen. He with whom she was talking all this nonsense, with a gravity befitting her professed age, did not carry his so well; he looked at least one-and-twenty, perhaps more. The other old people, scattered in groups round them, mostly ranged from an appearance of fifteen years old to that of twenty. And a cosmopolitan set they were who were gathered together on a lovely summer morning in a dull, rough-

paved yard that might be part of a warehouse, or else of a gaol.

The language in which they laughed and chattered was that of Babel, with a strong dash of German. Their faces belonged to a great country, the land of everywhere; or at least to that province of it which is bounded on the west by the Red Indians, on the east by the Tartars, and on the south by the Moors. Nevertheless, among all these boys and girls, French, German, English, Scotch, Irish, Swedish, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, American, there was a striking family likeness, more marked than is to be sometimes found even in actual families. There were a few elder people among the groups, and their presence will serve in full for a complete explanation of where we are, and why. Fame has since then begun to whisper the names even of a few of the younger ones, and many, very many, have learned to perform magnificently on a trumpet hardly to be distinguished from hers—their own. But the elders were all to be recognised. That short fat man, suggestive of nothing so much as a broken-down beer-barrel, with a cigar-stump for a vent-peg, was unrivalled in Europe as the trainer of pianists—unless, indeed, it was by that short lean man, like an electrified mop-head stuck at the top of a pint bottle of sparkling champagne. That other stout and short, quiet and elderly personage, humming a tune in a corner to the prettiest girl he could find, was grand master of all the fiddlers in the world. That tall burly fellow, with the air of a jovial bully, was field-marshal of orchestral armies. That marvellously gentle, child-faced old man, with amiability written even in his creep, was popularly supposed to be capable of harmonising the music of the spheres if he pleased, and of extracting a fugue from the filing of a saw. In one word we are in the centre of the great music-school, which is the centre of Lindenheim, which is the centre of music itself, which many people think, or think it to be the correct thing to say they think, is one of the centres of the world. For it is a mistake to suppose that, in the case of the world, a circle can have no more than one centre.

Herr Walter was less distinctively a musician, and more distinctively an Englishman, than any there. He had so little of the embryo artist about him, as nearly to look like a fish out of water. He did not behave as such however. He

moved about incessantly from group to group, with a ready jest or laugh for everybody; and it was only a most un-Teutonic volubility of tongue that betrayed his speech, at least, to be a foreigner's. Unusually handsome and overflowing with life and high spirits, it was not strange that the privilege of having Herr Walter for a cavalier should be a little fought for. Meanwhile, however, he still kept himself free; and it was only a suspicious bunch of violets in his hand instead of his button-hole, and a roving look while he talked to his ever-changing companions, that made him look as if he were less free in reality than in seeming.

Those violets made excellent pegs for jests that seemed very witty to their makers, and even to their hearers; for nobody there had as yet heard them all more than two hundred and fifty times before. They were more remarkable for hard hitting than for wit; but they did not put Herr Walter out of countenance. He invariably gave as good as he got, and better; and he seemed to enjoy so much the hits he received, that the others would have been ungracious indeed to grumble. In some subtle way, the day's sunshine appeared to be inseparably connected with him. The violets were still in his hand when a tall old gentleman in a long frock-coat, with bent shoulders and a smiling Hebrew face, entered the yard, accompanied by a young girl, remarkable in no respect but for a shy colour in her cheeks, and for very large dark eyes that were looking steadfastly on the rough stones of the floor. The old gentleman led her up to Miss Lotte, and therefore to Herr Walter, who happened to be there because he was everywhere.

"My dear young lady," said the old gentleman blandly, "I bring you here Miss Celia March, out of England. She first comes among you on an excellent occasion for making friends. I leave you in good hands, Miss March," he said, in English. "And I hope you will enjoy your first day in Lindenheim very much indeed."

"And so she shall, Herr Professor," said Herr Walter. "I am also out of England, Miss March—very much out—and I'll see that you do."

Miss Lotte smiled, and held up a forefinger, like a sign of warning.

"Well?" he said. "If I can take care of two, I can take care of three—can't I? What's the good of having three heads, if one throws one away?"

"I wasn't thinking of your heads," said Lotte. "I've just been appointed chaperon, you see; and I must do my duty. Are you still coming with us? Or how long are Miss March and I to wait for you?"

"Just half a minute," he said, still looking round him with the glance which was the only undecided thing about him, and lingering. Suddenly his quick eyes fell upon a group hitherto hidden; and then he showed he could do something else than smile—he frowned. But the frown lasted no longer than an instant. He at once stuck the bunch of violets into his own button-hole. "Come on then," he said. "I'm ready now."

Miss Lotte saw where the violets went; and she also looked round. "Ilma—with the enemy! What does that mean?"

"Fancy a girl asking a man to say what a girl means!" said Walter, with the brightest and most genuine of smiles. "Come along; how long are Miss March and I to wait for you?"

"Your heart won't go with us, though, after all."

"Won't it, though! It will go exactly where I please. 'There are maidens in Scotland.' Forwards! March!"

CHAPTER VI. THE NEW GIRL.

CELLIA, out of Deepweald. Celia thrown all at once among a hundred lively and chattering young people—all strangers and all strange! Surely there is matter for a hundred metaphors; one a head at least, and more. But the fish out of water himself is too much at home, compared with her, to serve for a simile. It is enough, without metaphors for crutches, to think for one moment of Deepweald; that sleeping, aye, and snoring beauty, with its unbroken and monotonous caw of rooks and old maids; its slumberous cathedral atmosphere; its days of plodding, with nothing but incomprehensible and mystical talk about a piece of never-ending work to represent Hope, and that desperately; its absence of conscious thoughts, its impenetrability, even to unconscious dreams, its humdrum ways of vegetating, with no breaks but a weekly Dorcas meeting; and then to turn at once to sudden picture of eager, overflowing life that swarmed round Celia now, intensified as it was by more than a merely foreign colouring. She—if indeed she were still the same she—was overwhelmed; she must, by the help of steamers and railways, have arrived there somehow, but

she felt as if she had fallen there from the sky into the sea. The sun shone brightly, and there was nothing but merriment to be heard or seen. But it was not the same sun that used to shine through the elms in the home-close; and the sea, to her, looked and felt bitterly black and cold. She was afraid of life, just as the thought of happiness frightens those who have grown to be at home with misery. She had never lived, and did not know how.

Lotte said something to her kindly, as they left the yard and entered the quaint old-world German street, whose atmosphere, by half suggesting the old-world quiet of Deepweald, made her feel her strangeness in a strange world all the more keenly.

"Don't you speak German, Miss March?" asked Herr Walter, who certainly was not one to sympathise with the sorrows of the shy. Of all the contrasts in this world of such things, the greatest, at that moment, was that which lay between Celia March and Herr Walter. It seemed strange that they should own the same mother-tongue.

"No," said Celia, blushing at nothing. Lotte smiled a little. Was Herr Walter beginning a new flirtation so soon?

"Never mind, it will soon come. I'll be dragoman. You don't know Lindenheim? We're now in the Rosenthal—valley of roses that means. A delightful thing, isn't it, to find such a piece of real nature in the middle of a town? It will get quite wild farther on. It's a wonderful place for 'savage greens,' as a friend of mine, who studies English, calls wild flowers. I mean to learn painting some day, for the sake of the Rosenthal. How is it you are only among us to-day? The new students were examined long ago."

At that moment she was suddenly seized with a new and doubly uncomfortable fear. She had gathered, even at Deepweald, that when a very young man is walking into the country with a very young woman, a third companion is tolerably certain to be in the way. No doubt the German girl looked very good-tempered as well as good-natured, and the young Englishman was doing his best to put her at her ease; but she felt what for a shy person is even worse than feeling bored; she felt like a bore. She was no doubt spoiling for others a walk that she herself was not going to enjoy; and, under the influence of this dog-in-the-manger-like feeling, would have given a great deal for courage

enough to ask the others to go on talking German, and to treat her as if she were not there at all. She was still more vexed when the girl went on a few paces in front, as if piqued at being dropped out of the conversation. But there was only the faintest suspicion of the best-tempered mock-malice in the smile and nod that Lotte threw back at Herr Walter, as she joined another group, and left the young Englishman and the raw girl to themselves.

"What are you going to study?" he asked, without giving her time to be frightened at the thought of a tête-à-tête with a stranger. "Where are you living? Have you many friends here? Excuse me, but I should never have taken you for a fellow-countrywoman; your colouring is too dark, and your eyes are too large. Whom do you believe in? Schumann? Of course. I can see at once that you despise and abhor everybody else, from the bottom of your soul. You will be drenched here with Mendelssohn—Mendelssohn—Mendelssohn—till you are sick of him. When you are rebel; and I'll back you. I lead the opposition here, you know; I always do, everywhere; and I knew you were one of us, from the first moment I saw you. By-the-way, you don't know my name yet: I am Walter Gordon; at your service, 'out of England,' as they always add here."

"You are very kind," said Celia, with a half-quarter smile; for there was this about Walter Gordon, that, after a minute, it was harder to feel shy with him than not to feel shy. "But, please, don't let me keep you from your friends."

"And that's very kind of you, Miss March; but you couldn't if you tried. If I see you safe through the valley of roses, as I mean to, it's because I choose, and nobody shall prevent me, not even you. I am passionately attached to all new friends, and the newer the better. Besides, you may be attacked by the wild beasts—the butterflies, or the savage greens. Only think of being torn in pieces by wild butterflies! So answer my questions, please; that was always the first duty of a new boy at Horchester; so why shouldn't it be of a new girl? Now that girls are claiming men's rights, they must accept men's duties."

His good-natured nonsense had either its intentional or accidental effect; it turned her shy half-quarter smile into a whole quarter.

"I am going to be a singer," she said, answering his first question.

"I know that; I could tell that from your profile."

"I am to live at a chemist's, the Golden Lion."

"I know. He has a freckled daughter with red hair, who studies the piano. Whom do you know here?"

"Nobody."

"So you have no friends? Nor had I at first; and now I have a hundred and seventy-six friends—no, a hundred and seventy-seven, reckoning you. And now, you do schwärm for Schumann?"

"I don't know—"

"Not know!"

"I never heard of him; and what is it to schwärm?"

"To schwärm is—to schwärm. But, *Corpo di Bacco, Miss March!* If you don't believe in Schumann, in whom do you believe? Don't oblige me to cut you by saying Mendelssohn!"

"I know Palestrina, and Porpora, and Cimarosa, and Bach—"

Walter Gordon took off his hat, stood still for an instant, and bowed profoundly. "I reverence your taste, Miss March. I have the deepest veneration for my grandfather. He was a most worthy gentleman; but alas! he died before I was born. Forward! is my word, and it must be yours. Let the dead bury their dead, say I. We have new worlds to conquer, and have done with the old."

Was this nonsense, or jest, or blasphemy? She could not tell; and, indeed, her companion gave her no time to criticise the talk with which he bewildered her. She could only dimly and timidly feel the contrast, beside which Deepweald and Lindenheim, herself and Walter Gordon, were as nothing—her father's grim spirit, engaged in the Herculean labour of reviving the Past with its dead glories, and the eager spirit of the Future which first met her face to face to-day.

"Where do you live, Miss March, he asked suddenly, "when you are at home—as we used to say at Horchester? In London, I suppose?"

"At Deepweald."

"Deepweald! Ah, I was sure you did not live in London. I don't know Deepweald; it's about the only place I don't know. I am what they call a rolling stone, and I'm proud to own it. I like rolling, and I hate moss. I think we must have got a drop of gipsy blood in us, we

Gordons. We're mostly in the cotton line at Manchester, and the moss sticks pretty well; but I had a desperately Bohemian uncle, to judge from all I've heard of him, and I flatter myself I take after him. So, after rolling from Manchester to Horchester, from Horchester to Oxford, from Oxford to Lincoln's Inn, that drop of gipsy blood broke out. I felt I couldn't rest in one place, Miss March, if it were the wool-sack or the throne in Canterbury Cathedral. I am sure you agree with me. You look like a very queen of the gipsies."

"I don't know——"

"But I do. I can see it in you. Depend upon it, everybody who feels a call to go singing about the world is one of the wandering races, a gipsy or a Jew. So I went off to Paris, and studied medicine for a whole year. That is a profession if you like, Miss March—the only one that deals with real things, and brings you face to face with Nature. But—I don't know exactly how—I rolled on to Jena, and then at last I found my true vocation, which is music, and here. That vagabond uncle of mine that I take after was a musician, you must know. I shouldn't wonder if it were a case of transmigration of souls."

"He is dead, then?"

"As a door-nail. I don't know why, but I have a tremendous sympathy with that ne'er-do-well uncle of mine. I suppose it's because uncles, as a class, are so confoundedly respectable. I beg your pardon, Miss March, but we don't measure our words by the inch here. And I feel rather sore on the subject of uncles in general—my live uncles are such desperate Cottonopolitans. Do you suffer from uncles, Miss March?"

"I have no relations; only my father. He is the cathedral organist at Deepweald."

"And he brought you up on all those old fellows, Palestrina and Porpora? Let me see. Deepweald—Deepweald—no; I'm afraid I must confess I have not heard of him; and yet cathedral organists—he is not a composer, I suppose?"

"My father? He is the greatest composer in the world!"

"Indeed! I've no doubt I'm very ignorant—let me see—what has he written?"

"He has not finished it yet, and I don't know its name. He has only been twelve years over it yet——"

Walter Gordon did not even smile, not even in the slightest degree, though he must have been sorely tempted. "I have

no doubt it will be splendid," he said, quite gravely. "My Bohemian uncle, too, was a one-work man, so far as fame goes. In fact, he was the Gordon—Andrew Gordon—and being his great-nephew is my bit of pride. Talk of Englishmen not being musicians if they like, or anything else they please to be! Of course you know his 'Comus'?"

"I'm afraid I'm very stupid. I never heard of him."

"Your father must be a strange teacher! You've never heard of 'Comus'—never heard of Andrew Gordon? Never heard the story of its coming out in London when the composer was not as old as I am, and the craze it made? Nor how, just when he held the top of the ladder in his hand, he went off to Italy, or somewhere, and dropped out of sight and under water, and never was heard of again?"

"Never."

"Well, such is fame. But he was a great man; and whatever his end was, I'd rather roll on down to the dogs, and have written 'Comus,' than own all the cotton in Manchester. But here we are at Waaren; this is where we are going to enjoy ourselves. Are you hungry, Miss March? I am."

OLD FRENCH ACTORS.

LEKAIN.

It would be a curious study for those interested in the history of the drama, as set forth in the theatrical annals of our own and other countries, to examine how many of its principal representatives have been partially, if not wholly, indebted for the success obtained by them to their personal appearance. It is evident that a comedian, endowed with physical advantages, has a sort of *primâ facie* claim on the sympathy of his audience which, if not altogether denied, is at least reluctantly accorded to his less attractive rivals; and no surer test exists whereby we can fairly appreciate the real merit of an actor, than the fact of his having overcome, by the unaided force of genius, the effect produced on the spectator by his unpromising exterior. The courtier's advice to Louis the Fourteenth, on the arrival from Bavaria of the notoriously ill-favoured Dauphine, "*Sauvez le premier coup d'œil, sire, et tout ira bien,*" was a sensible admonition, first impressions being difficult to eradicate, and it being easier, as Legrand of the *Comédie Française* aptly remarked,

for the public to accustom itself to an ugly face than for its owner to change it.

Were we to pass in review the bygone celebrities of our own stage, restricting ourselves to our present subject, the interpreters of tragedy, we should find more than one example of the highest artistic talent combined with a comparatively insignificant or unprepossessing person; and, in proof of the assertion, it will suffice to mention two instances still familiar to the memory of many of us—Edmund Kean and Macready. Neither of these could certainly be called an Adonis, the former being small and puny in stature, and the latter positively plain; yet how completely, how triumphantly did they rivet our attention, the one by his ever-varying play of feature, and those irresistible bursts of passion that shook the house like a whirlwind; the other by his exquisite tenderness and impressive delivery! Kean in private life, or when carousing with his boon companions, may have seemed a very ordinary and uninteresting individual; but in the grand scene with Iago, and the final struggle with Richmond, he was a giant. Macready, in his early provincial wanderings, may have shrunk from entering the lists against the handsome and popular Conway; but when he did put forth his strength, and challenge comparison between the true ring of sterling worth and the false glitter of overrated mediocrity, where was Conway then?

As much, and even more, may be said of the actor whose career forms the subject of our notice. Whatever may have been the natural defects of the tragedians above alluded to, his were far greater and infinitely more discouraging; and, as we shall see, placed obstacles in the way of his advancement, which his indomitable energy and perseverance alone enabled him to surmount.

Henri Louis Lekain was born in Paris on April 14, 1729, eight months previous to the death of the celebrated Baron. His father, a goldsmith established in the parish of St. Eustache, destined him for the same business, and, besides sparing no expense in his education, especially insisted on his cultivating the art of drawing. From his earliest youth he evinced a strong inclination for the theatre; and, in default of any other audience, was in the habit of declaiming to himself passages from Corneille and Racine, draped in his dressing-gown by way of toga, and studying the effect of his gestures

reflected by the looking-glass. When in his nineteenth year, he eagerly embraced the opportunity of joining one of the three dramatic companies recently founded by different societies of amateurs, and made his first appearance, somewhere about 1748, at the Hôtel Jaback, in the Rue St. Merry, which he subsequently quitted for the Hôtel de Clermont-Tonnerre, in the then fashionable Marais. Their performances, though hardly of sufficient excellence to justify any interference, nevertheless alarmed the magnates of the Comédie Française, who solicited and obtained an order for the closing of the little theatre; and it was only at the intercession of the parliamentary counsellor, M. de Chauvelin, that this arbitrary decree was revoked.

Two years later, the same gentleman induced Arnaud Baculard, the future correspondent of the Great Frederick, to allow his protégés to represent his comedy, *Le Mauvais Riche*; the author, as was customary, being present on the occasion. So struck was he by the superior talent of Lekain, that he communicated his impressions to Voltaire, who, though probably not anticipating much satisfaction from Arnaud's piece, was curious to see the actor of whom report spoke so highly, and consented to accompany his fellow-dramatist to the Hôtel de Clermont-Tonnerre on the ensuing evening. At the close of the performance, to which he had listened attentively, but without comment, he enquired the name and profession of the young man who had played the lover, and commissioned Arnaud to inform him that he would receive him at his house on the following day.

The interview and its results have been thus described by Lekain himself. "The delight this invitation gave me even exceeded my surprise, but no words of mine can express what I felt on finding myself alone with M. de Voltaire; it was a mixture of respect, enthusiasm, and timidity. His reception was most cordial; he questioned me closely as to my profession, the manner in which I had been brought up, and my future projects. I told him candidly that having had the misfortune to lose my father, and inheriting in consequence a small annual income of seven hundred and fifty livres, I had but one desire—namely, to obtain admission among the comedians of his Majesty. M. de Voltaire shook his head disapprovingly. 'Take my advice,' he said, 'continue, as you have hitherto

done, to act for your own amusement and that of your friends; but abandon all idea of cultivating the stage as a profession. It may be that at some future day the dramatic art, now proscribed and vilified by hypocrisy, will be honoured and respected as it deserves; but then there will be no great actors left to illustrate it. If you are wise, you will resume the occupation for which you were originally intended; I will advance you ten thousand livres for the necessary outlay, and you can return them when you are in a position to do so. Reflect on what I have said, and let me know your decision. Stay,' he added, as, with a heart too full for anything but a few muttered acknowledgments, I was leaving the room; 'let me hear you repeat a passage or two from some part you have already played.' On my proposing to recite a monologue from Piron's *Gustave*, he stopped me abruptly, saying: 'No, no, not a line of Piron! Racine, nothing but Racine!' I remembered that, while at the Collège Mazarin, I had committed to memory the entire tragedy of *Athalie*, and commenced declaiming the opening scene in the first act, personating alternately the characters of Abner and Joad. When I had finished, he exclaimed in a sort of ecstasy, 'Ah, that is indeed poetry! And the marvel is that from the beginning to the end of the piece all is equally fine, equally inimitable!' He then embraced me affectionately, prophesied that I should one day become a celebrity, and once more adjured me, as I valued my reputation, never to prostitute my talents in a public theatre.

"Such was my first interview with M. de Voltaire; the second was more decisive, inasmuch as he agreed to receive me as an inmate of his house, where, on a small stage erected for the occasion, I subsequently acted with his nieces and other members of his usual society. The expense incurred by him on my account, together with the handsome offer he had previously made me, are convincing proofs of his generosity, and entirely refute the accusation of avarice, which his enemies have falsely and unjustly brought against him."

Voltaire's conduct towards Lekain was indeed that of a kind and liberal protector; not only did he entertain him hospitably and gratuitously during a period of six months, but devoted a certain number of hours daily to his instruction; nay, he even so far conquered his own prejudices

as to yield to the pressing solicitations of his pupil, and by personally applying to the Duc d'Aumont, the superintendent of the theatre, obtained for him the long-wished-for permission to try his fortune at the Comédie Française. Judging also some preparatory practice to be necessary, he requested the Duchesse du Maine, in August, 1750, to allow him to appear before her at Sceaux, in his own tragedy of *Rome Sauvée*. At the conclusion of the performance, the duchess remarked that the actor who had played *Lentulus Sura* was the best she had hitherto seen. "All Paris will soon agree with you, madame," replied the delighted Voltaire.

At length, September 14th, in the same year, the début of Lekain took place at the Théâtre Français, as *Titus*, in *Brutus*; and seldom has public opinion been more divided than on that memorable evening. On the one hand, the fashionable part of the audience, the beaux, the abbés, and naturally the ladies, shocked beyond measure by his physical defects and un-gainly aspect, unanimously opposed his reception; on the other, the amateurs of the pit, less influenced by his unpromising exterior, and consequently better able to appreciate his real merit, were with him to a man. The following description, from the pen of an impartial contemporary, gives a tolerably correct idea of his appearance at this period of his life: "Lekain was about the middle height, short-legged and swarthy-complexioned, he had thick lips, a wide mouth, and expressive eyes; but with the exception of the last-named feature, the ensemble of his face was disagreeable, not to say repulsive. His voice was harsh, and his intonation unmusical and defective." It is therefore not to be wondered at that a considerable portion of the spectators, many of whom remembered Baron, and who had all been accustomed to the graceful figure and sympathetic accents of his successor, Quinault Dufresne, were but little disposed to relish the new comer, more especially as the characters in which he appeared were already appropriated by Grandval, indisputably his superior in personal attractions. Nor was this the only obstacle against which he had to contend. Fearful lest his partisans might eventually succeed in enforcing his admission, their opponents brought forward a fresh candidate, in the shape of Bellecourt, from Bordeaux, and exerted their utmost influence in his favour. Unluckily for them, Bellecourt, though endowed with a

handsome person and every requisite for comedy, proved himself to be a mediocre tragedian, and notwithstanding the energetic support of his friends, made little or no impression on the public; whereas his rival, in spite of the united efforts of his adversaries, continually gained ground, and gradually enlisted on his side an enthusiastic band of admirers, who loudly demanded his immediate reception as a member of the society.

The management of the theatre had so far acknowledged the value of his services, as to admit him from January 4, 1751, on trial; but this was not enough for the piftites, who insisted on his definitive enrolment among the company, and six weeks later, after the representation of *Oedipe*, in which he had been tumultuously applauded, summoned him with one accord before the curtain to announce, as was usual, the performance of the ensuing day. "Messieurs," he began, "on aura l'honneur"—here he was interrupted by the pit, "No, no, say, nous aurons l'honneur." He paused a moment, and then repeated, "On aura." "Nous, nous!" shouted a hundred voices. On this second interruption, he advanced to the front of the stage and addressed the audience as follows: "Not having been yet received, messieurs, the rules of the theatre forbid me to express myself as you desire; but, as an act of simple obedience to your wishes, I venture to say that 'nous aurons l'honneur,'" and concluded with the accustomed formula.

This public tribute to his merit was doubtless gratifying to Lekain's feelings, but sixteen months of uncertainty and disappointment had almost exhausted his patience, and at one moment he was on the point of abandoning Paris and accepting an engagement at the French theatre in Berlin; the Princess de Robecq, however, his stanch protectress, dissuaded him from this step, and he at length decided, as a last resource, on appealing to the highest authority of the realm. "Better know my fate at once," he said, "than linger on in my present state of anxiety and doubt." His inferior position rendering the consent of the leading tragedian indispensable, he went to Grandval and requested his permission to play *Orosmane* in *Zaire*, before the king. "You, monsieur, play *Orosmane* before the court!" exclaimed the haughty sociétaire, in a tone of real or affected surprise; "are you not aware of the probable consequences of

your—pretension?" "Monsieur," replied Lekain, "I have considered the matter well, and am prepared to run the risk." "In that case, monsieur," said Grandval, "I shall not oppose your wishes; but remember, if you fail, it will have been your own doing."

The ordeal to which the young tragedian was about to expose himself was a trying one; the public of Versailles, almost exclusively composed of the patrons of Grandval and Bellecourt, had already resolved on his rejection; and, above all, Madame de Pompadour and her time-serving ally, the Maréchal de Richelieu, were notoriously hostile to him. A less ardent nature might well have been daunted by such apparently insurmountable difficulties; Lekain, on the contrary, beheld only the possible glory of success, and nerving himself for the struggle with that self-confidence which never deserted him, determined to achieve it. His entrance on the stage produced a strange and disagreeable sensation; the ladies, accustomed to the elegance and noble bearing of Grandval, beheld the uncouth figure before them with an involuntary shudder, and more than one murmured behind her fan, "How ugly he is!" Lekain had foreseen this, and far from paralyzing his energy, the coldness of his reception only stimulated him to fresh exertions; and, before the end of the first act, he was listened to, if not yet with sympathy, at least with deep attention. As the tragedy progressed, the impassioned fervour and intense pathos of his delivery so impressed the spectators, that they no longer saw the actor, but *Orosmane* himself; so profound, so absorbing was the emotion felt by them, that even those most prejudiced against him forgot their animosity; and, at the close of the fifth act, the entire auditory, thoroughly subjugated by the force of genius, with one accord acknowledged his supremacy. After the performance the first lord-in-waiting, in compliance with the usual custom, solicited the king's decision respecting the débutant. "He has made me shed tears, which has rarely happened to me," said Louis the Fifteenth. "I consent to his admission." The order was formal, and not to be disobeyed; whatever surprise or discontent may have resulted at the Comédie Française from this judicious exercise of the royal prerogative none was expressed; from the date of February 24, 1752, the newly-elected member took his place among the socié-

taires, and henceforth sustained the leading tragic characters conjointly with Grandval; until the latter, conscious of his own inferiority, voluntarily relinquished them, and devoted himself exclusively to comedy. It is but fair to add that, previous to Lekain's appearing at court, one of his comrades, whose name has not been given, had strenuously argued in favour of his reception; and, indignant at the persistent opposition manifested by certain of his fellow-performers, had exclaimed as he left the room where the committee were sitting: "If you refuse to receive him as your equal, receive him at least as your master!"

Scarcely had the pupil of Voltaire attained the summit of his ambition, when he applied himself seriously to the task of correcting, as far as lay in his power, the natural defects under which he laboured. His voice, originally harsh and unmelodious, acquired in time a degree of flexibility, which enabled him to vary its modulations; and his gestures, hitherto deficient in grace and dignity, became less constrained, and more in unison with the requirements of the stage. By dint of incessant study, he made himself completely master of the leading characters in the classic repertoire; and contributed largely to the success of a great number of contemporary writers, among his most remarkable modern personations being Edward the Third, in *The Siege of Calais*; Antéor, in *Zelmire*; Warwick; Guiscard; and Oreste, in *Iphigénie en Tauride*. He even occasionally essayed comedy, and was the original Desparville fils, in Sedaine's *Philosophe sans le savoir*; but this momentary inclination for Thalia being totally unsuited to his essentially tragic nature, he, after a few unsatisfactory trials, wisely abandoned it.

One important point to which he specially devoted his attention was the reform of theatrical costume; and in this laudable design he was warmly seconded by Mdlle. Clairon. At the epoch of his first appearance, this indispensable accessory to dramatic effect was still comparatively unknown; with the exception of a sort of cuirasse worn by the actors representing warriors, the same attire sufficed for tragedy and comedy; and this was neither more nor less than the court dress in vogue under Louis the Fourteenth. The Emperors Augustus and Nero wore enormous wigs; Agamemnon conducted his daughter Iphigénie to the funeral pile as if he were about to commence a minuet; and if Cor-

nelia, when bearing Pompey's urn, had omitted the traditional white gloves and hoop of fabulous circumference, she would inevitably have been hissed off the stage. It is strange how the spectators, with such anachronisms continually before their eyes, could have so long tolerated an absurdity entirely destructive of scenic illusion; and more singular still that Baron and Quinault Dufresne, both men of education, should not have perceived and at least attempted to remedy it. As early as 1661, Molière, in the first act of *Les Fâcheux*, inveighed against another equally glaring abuse, namely, that of permitting the sides of the stage to be lined with benches for the accommodation of the courtiers. Ninety-eight years later, in 1759, this deplorable custom still obtained, and was only then suppressed, after much discussion and opposition, at the instigation of the Comte de Lauragnais. Dorat, in his *Déclamation*, thus happily alludes to the exclusion of the "petits maîtres":

Le public n'y voit plus, borné dans ses regards,
Nos marquis y briller sur de triples remparts.
Ils cessent d'embellir la cour de Pharasmane;
Zaire sans témoins entretient Orosmane.
On n'y voit plus l'ennui de nos jeunes seigneurs
Nonchalamment sourire à l'héroïne en pleurs;
On ne les entend plus, du fond de la coulisse,
Par leur caquet bruyant interrompre l'actrice,
Pensifler Mithridate, et sans respect du nom,
Apostropher César, ou tutoyer Néron!

Not only had Lekain and his able auxiliary, Mdlle. Clairon, in a great measure contributed to the above reforms, but they also effected notable improvements in the scenery and decorations of the theatre, which had up to that period been utterly neglected. Thanks to their judicious intervention, the grotesque and shabbily-clad candle-snuffers, who had formerly represented the attendants of Tancred or Vendôme, were replaced by well-trained supernumeraries, the additional expense thereby entailed on the treasury being amply compensated by the nightly augmentation of the receipts.

The reputation of this great actor, already established in Paris, was ere long confirmed by the unanimous verdict of provincial audiences, Lekain having been the originator of the "starring" system in France. Every year he regularly visited Voltaire at Ferney, and, on his way thither, frequently gratified his country admirers, by organising a series of performances in the different towns through which he had occasion to pass. This then novel source of profit was highly displeasing to the

autocrats of the Comédie; they complained, not without reason, that whereas the truant did not scruple to act as often as twice a day during his absence from the capital, yet on his return he invariably pleaded ill-health as an excuse for not appearing more than once a week. They therefore ordained, by a decree which has since fallen into disuse, that henceforward no member of the society should be allowed to exercise his professional talents when on leave of absence; and even ventured to put a veto on Lekain's proposed journey to Berlin at the special invitation of Frederick the Great. That monarch, unaccustomed to opposition, quietly put the matter into the hands of his ambassador, by whose diplomacy the affair was amicably adjusted, and the desired permission accorded. The following extract from a letter of Frederick to Voltaire conveys his impressions respecting the tragedian: "Lekain has played *Œdipe*, *Mahomet*, and *Orosmane*, the former part twice. His delivery is excellent, he is dignified, energetic, and imposing, and his gestures are strictly appropriate. But shall I tell you simply what I think? Were he less exaggerated, I should consider him admirable." This opinion by no means accorded with that of Voltaire, in whose eyes Lekain was perfection itself; for Fleury relates that the literary patriarch, alluding to his favourite pupil, declared him to be "the only really tragic actor that had yet trod the French stage." It is certain that he derived great advantage from his annual visits to Switzerland, and was indebted for sundry happy inspirations to the counsels of his mentor; for on one occasion, returning from his accustomed trip, he performed *Gengiskan*—perhaps the most difficult modern character in the *répertoire*—in a totally different and strikingly original manner. "One can see plainly enough," remarked Madame Drouin, "that he has been to Ferney!"

Lekain's excursions, however, were not confined to France, or to the abode of his protector, for we find him in 1768 at Aix-la-Chapelle, of which then fashionable spa he gives, in a hitherto unpublished letter, the following not very flattering description: "The burgomaster and the mayor of this town are disputing under whose authority the actors ought to be placed, and as neither of them will give way to the other until the emperor shall have decided the question, the strangers and the

inhabitants are compelled to do as they can without any. I hardly know how our fine ladies from Paris can exist where there is no theatre and no music; the waters are unpleasant to drink, and give them indigestion; and all this because an idiotic mayor and a brutal burgomaster are more ridiculously vain of their rights than Laruette (the celebrated singer of the Comédie Italienne) is of his good fortune."

In another letter, also unpublished, and dated August 24, 1769, from Bagnères de Bigorre, after alluding to the approaching publication of a new edition of Voltaire's works, certain alterations in which he evidently dislikes, he says: "You know as well as I do that this is not the first time that M. de Voltaire has weakened several of his productions in trying to improve them; the first inspiration is often the best. If, for the sake of contenting an old maniac, my comrades are fools enough to spoil the fifth act of *Iphigénie*, the public will be likely to tear the house down."

With the single exception of Collé, who, from the inveterate animosity he uniformly displays towards him, seems to have owed him a private grudge, Lekain's contemporaries are unanimous in his praise. Horace Walpole, writing from Paris to George Montagu in 1765, alludes to him as follows: "The French stage is fallen off, though in the only part I have seen Lekain, I admire him extremely. He is very ugly and ill-made, and yet has an heroic dignity which Garrick wants, and great fire."

Fleury, in his *Memoirs*, speaks of him as being "perhaps the actor who, of all others, has the most completely mastered the difficulties of his art;" and Madame Lebrun, in her *Recollections*, thus records her youthful impressions of his personal appearance: "Lekain's ugliness, prodigious as it was, seemed less observable in certain characters. The costume of a chevalier, for instance, softened and relieved the harsh and severe expression of a face, every feature of which was irregular."

In private life he was serious and taciturn, and more inclined to solitary musings than to the social dissipations in which most of his companions were wont to indulge; an ardent admirer of the classic masterpieces of dramatic literature, he was a declared enemy to any mutilations of the original text. When Mar-

montel revived Rotrou's *Venceslas*, with interpolations of his own, he alone had the courage to oppose its reception; and, the majority having necessarily carried the day, resolved at all hazards to act up to his opinion. The tragedy, thus revised and corrected, was represented before the court at Versailles; and Lekain, without communicating his intention to anyone, played the part of Ladislas exactly as Rotrou had written it, carefully omitting every passage introduced by the adapter. The spectators, excited by his powerful acting, and probably not over familiar with the language of the old dramatist, applauded him to the echo, and at the conclusion of the performance warmly congratulated Marmontel on the success of his alterations, a compliment which, it is to be feared, the author of *Les Incas* took in anything but good part. Of Lekain's scrupulous attentions to costume enough has been said; it was, however, long before he could inspire his fellow-actors with an equal desire for accuracy in this particular. When *Oreste* was produced, he appeared attired after the fashion of the ancient Greeks; upon which Dauberval (not the dancer, but the tragedy confidant), surveying him with admiration, exclaimed: "The first time I have to play a Roman, I will order a Greek dress exactly like yours!"

In the course of his theatrical career, this great artist had amassed a considerable fortune, partly due to his frequent provincial excursions, and partly to his own strictly economical habits; it has even been asserted that at his death his heirs found themselves unexpectedly in possession of no less a sum than three hundred thousand livres, but this is probably one of Bachaumont's customary exaggerations. Certain it is that he was far from satisfied with the amount of his salary; for one evening in the foyer of the theatre he complained that his annual share of the receipts did not exceed ten or twelve thousand livres. "Morbleu!" cried a knight of St. Louis, who had overheard him; "here is a common stage-player not contented with gaining twelve thousand livres a year, while I, who am in the king's service, and shed my blood for my country, am only too lucky if I obtain a miserable pension of one thousand livres!" The tragedian indignantly retorted, "Do you count for nothing the privilege you enjoy of saying this to me with impunity?"

Lekain had contemplated retiring in 1779, but he was not destined to accomplish his design. Early in the preceding year, although suffering from illness, he insisted on playing *Vendôme*, one of his best and most fatiguing characters; in this last performance he is said to have surpassed all his former efforts, but the reaction was fatal to him, and after lingering for nearly a fortnight in the greatest agony, he expired February 8, 1778, at two o'clock in the afternoon, in his forty-ninth year. By a strange coincidence, the day appointed for his funeral was the same on which Voltaire returned to Paris after an absence of more than a quarter of a century. On his arrival at the house of the Marquis de Villette, where the actors in deep mourning were assembled, his first enquiries were for Lekain. Bellecourt, pointing to his fellow-performers, replied sadly, "This is all that remains of the *Comédie Française*!" The old man stood for a moment speechless, then, overcome by the sudden emotion, fainted away.

Among the most esteemed portraits existing of this admirable actor may be mentioned one by Elluin, in the part of Gengiskan; another in colour, as Mahomet, published after his death, with the inscription, "Aux manes de Lekain;" and a charming engraving after a miniature by Foesch, as Orosmane.

His wife, whose maiden name has not been handed down to us, was an actress of the *Théâtre Français*, but of no great ability, and entirely indebted for her position to the celebrity of her husband. All that need be said of her is that she first appeared in 1757, left the stage in 1767, and died in 1775.

AT THE BAR.

"Who speaks for this man?" From the great white Throne,
Veiled in its roseate clouds the Voice came forth;
Before it stood a parted soul alone,
And rolling east, and west, and south, and north,
The mighty accents summoned quick and dead:
"Who speaks for this man, ere his doom be said?"

Shivering he listened, for his earthly life
Had passed in dull unnoted calm away;
He brought no glory to its daily strife,
No wreath of fame, or genius' fiery ray;
Weak, lone, ungifted, quiet, and obscure,
Born in the shadow, dying 'mid the poor.

Lo, from the solemn concourse hushed and dim,
The widow's prayer, the orphan's blessing rose;
The struggler told of trouble shared by him,
The lonely of cheered hours and softened woes;
And like a chorus spoke the crushed and sad,
"He gave us all he could, and what he had."

And little words of loving kindness said,
 And tender thoughts, and help in time of need,
 Sprang up, like leaves by soft spring showers fed,
 In some waste corner, sown by chance-flung seed;
 In grateful wonder heard the modest soul,
 Such trifles gathered to so blest a whole.
 O ye, by circumstance' strong fetters bound,
 The store so little, and the hand so frail,
 Do but the best ye can for all around,
 Let sympathy be true, nor courage fail;
 Winning among your neighbours poor and weak,
 Some witness at your trial hour to speak!

OUR MAD MATE.

A STORY.

IN the days I write of—thirty years ago—English soldiers were not conveyed to India with the celerity, nor in the comfort, they now enjoy. To begin with, the Suez Canal was then not even dreamt of. The only road to the East was round the Cape of Good Hope, and on that route steamers were unknown. During my service in the army I went once to Bombay with recruits for the different regiments serving in that presidency; and once with the head-quarters of another corps, into which I had exchanged. Both voyages were made in sailing vessels. During the first one—when the incident I am about to relate occurred—we were exactly five calendar months and four days from port to port, never seeing land, except at a distance, the whole time. In the second voyage I was more fortunate. We were not quite four months from the “Start” to the Bombay lighthouse; and deemed ourselves exceedingly fortunate in consequence. At the present day both officers and men think themselves very unlucky if they are more than thirty or thirty-one days between Portsmouth and the Bombay harbour. They go out in large and comfortable troop steamers; proceed through the Suez Canal, having previously coaled at “Gib,” and stopped for a day or so at Malta. After having got through the canal, seven days takes them to Aden, and they find themselves landed in India about a week later, almost before they have time to think of the annoyances consequent on having left England.

I had not been a month with the dépôt of my first regiment at Chatham, and was not yet seventeen years of age, when I received sudden orders to embark for India, where the head-quarters of the corps to which I belonged was then serving. The order reached Chatham late on the Thursday night, and on the following Monday morning I had to embark at Gravesend. In military language I

“did not know my right hand from my left.” I was not half drilled; could barely put on my uniform correctly; was as ignorant of the Articles of War as a Hindoo is of skating; and could no more handle a musket, or give the proper word of command to a squad of men, than a Whitechapel rough can dance the *trois temps*. Nor was this to be wondered at. Less than thirty days before being ordered on foreign service I had been at school; and, I am afraid, thought far more of cricket and football than of anything that was taught me there. But in those times such details were little cared for by the military authorities. The Punjab War had broken out, and officers and men—whether drilled or not it did not matter—were wanted in India. The detachment of which I made one consisted of two hundred recruits, with a captain in command, and two subalterns doing duty under him—of the latter I was the junior. The captain was an officer of some ten years' standing, who had seen a good deal of service in China. He was newly married, his wife was with him, but was so ill from various causes during the whole voyage out, that he could hardly ever leave her side. My brother sub was a young fellow who had been about a year in the army, but being as he thought so much senior to myself, used to lord it over me whenever he could. As a matter of course I resented this, and the result was that we were never on very cordial terms. The two hundred recruits—there were only three old soldiers amongst them—were one and all mere lads, none of whom had been more than a month or six weeks in the army. They had no idea what the word “discipline” meant; and there were no non-commissioned officers on board, either to teach them their duty, or to keep them in order. It will hardly be believed in the present day that, in the time of which I write, whole detachments of young soldiers were often sent on voyages round the Cape to India, the only sergeants and corporals on board being raw recruits like the rest, who were made “acting” non-commissioned officers for the journey, and to whom, as a matter of course, the men themselves did not pay the slightest attention. When to this I add that the men we had on board were, without exception, the most unmitigated set of ruffians it ever was my luck to come across during the ten years I was in the army; that we had no means of punishing them; that we were not

numerous enough to hold a court-martial, which requires at least three officers to form the court, and a fourth to confirm the finding and sentence; that there was not even a place on board in which a refractory soldier could be confined; and that the crew of the ship was composed of the scourgings of Eastern London, with a few of the very worst class of foreign sailors—it will be seen that the voyage to Bombay did not promise much enjoyment to anyone on board.

Such as we were, and such as the men of whom we had charge proved to be, we marched out of Chatham early that fine September morning, and by ten A.M. were all on board the *Marland*, off Gravesend, a sailing vessel of some seven hundred tons, which was to be our home for the next few months. Captain Mares, who commanded the ship, was a very good specimen of the English mercantile seaman. He received us exceedingly well; but was, as he told us, very much put out at the hurried manner in which he had been ordered to sea. His ship had only been chartered by the Leadenhall-street authorities on the previous Thursday, and, since then, he had been obliged to get together his sea stores, his crew, and everything that was necessary for a long voyage. He apologised for what he feared by anticipation would be the shortcomings of the cabin fare; but said, and proved his words to be true, that he had on board as good wine as anyone could wish to drink. With his crew he was by no means satisfied; and no one could wonder at his not having a good opinion of them. They were, all told, about fifty in number; and, with perhaps a couple of exceptions, were, when we sailed, as drunk as men could well be. The captain spoke to the officer commanding the troops on board, and said that as soldiers were going out in the ship he hoped the latter would be able to keep the sailors in order. But, when he was told that our men were a mere undisciplined rabble, that not one of them had been more than a month in the ranks, and that we had no means whatever of keeping them in order, his countenance fell, and he said that he feared we should have a rough time of it on board.

Of the officers of the ship, two, the surgeon and the first mate, had sailed with the captain before, and were all that could be desired in their respective lines. The second mate, of whom more presently, was a young man, very broad and strongly

made. He had a very good address when addressing his equals, but never spoke to one of the crew without cursing and swearing; and if a sailor showed the least hesitation in obeying him, he thought nothing of striking him, either with his fist, or with anything that came to hand. Before we got to the Downs he had a quarrel with an Italian seaman who was on board. The latter, half stupid with drink, either could not, or would not, understand what the mate told him. The latter hit out and knocked the man down. This aroused the blood of the Italian, who in a moment whipped out a long dagger-like knife, and before he could be prevented, had wounded the officer somewhat severely in the shoulder. The captain ordered the Italian to be put in irons, but the crew sided with the latter, and hustled him down to the fore-castle, where they would not allow anyone to enter. Thus we may be said to have commenced our voyage with a mutiny on board. The officer commanding the troops wanted Captain Mares to put into the Downs, and to report to the authorities in London that his ship was unfit to proceed to sea. But the captain would not listen to him. He declared that if he did so the owners would at once dismiss him from their service; and that hit or miss, fair or foul, mutiny or no mutiny, we must proceed to sea; more particularly as the wind was fair for going down Channel. This difference of opinion at starting created a coldness between the captain and the commander of the troops, which lasted pretty nearly until we sighted the Bombay lighthouse, and our troubles of the past were forgotten.

It is now thirty long years since that voyage to India occurred, but if I live to the most unheard-of age, I shall never forget the misery, the utter misery, of those five months. As I said before, the officer commanding the troops was hardly ever able to leave his wife for more than an hour or so at a time. He could therefore take no very active part in the duties on board. My brother subaltern, soon after we left England, fell ill of a bad fever, and was unable to come on deck, except to lie down on a mattress brought up for his use, for some two months or more. The consequence was that I had all his duty on board to do, and was often, for several days following, never off the deck. Of the men of our detachment it would be difficult to say anything

that was too bad. With perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, they were the most insolent, mutinous, drunken, thieving set of rascals it was ever my fate to come across. They had served out to them a daily allowance of a pint and a half of excellent draught porter. Of this they got half-a-pint in the forenoon, and a pint after their dinner at one P.M. For a long time we could not discover how it happened, that there were at least twenty men who were more or less drunk every afternoon. But after a time we found out that they had divided themselves into parties of five men each. Of each such party, number one would drink the porter of the whole five to-day; number two would do so to-morrow; number three the next day, and so on. Thus they each and all preferred going without any liquor for four days, provided on the fifth day they got enough to make themselves drunk. This will give some idea of the kind of men we had to deal with.

But even with this amount of drunkenness we could have managed, had it not been for the rascally propensities of the recruits. Amongst them, as we discovered afterwards, there were several professional thieves. From almost the very beginning of the voyage, the store-room, the after-hold, indeed every place where wine, or beer, or eatables had been stowed away, were regularly and systematically broken into. Almost every day the cabin steward, one of the very few respectable men on board, reported that hampers, cases, and bottles had been taken, and, after being emptied, were found here and there in the ship. On one occasion the sentry whom we had placed over the after-hold was found dead drunk, with two champagne bottles and one that had contained curaçao empty by his side. This will give some idea of the state of discipline on board, and of our utter helplessness to enforce anything like order amongst the recruits. The very men employed to prevent others committing crime were themselves the first to misbehave. Before we had been a fortnight at sea, most of the crew and the soldiers had fraternised, and joined together to perpetrate every sort of crime. The ship's officers were powerless as we were. It is true that the second mate, of whom I have spoken before, used to enforce his orders amongst the sailors with blows and kicks. But it was impossible for officers of the army to do the same with the men under their orders; we should

not only have lowered ourselves in the eyes of the recruits, but have disobeyed the most stringent orders of the Service, and have made bad worse.

What we all hoped for was to put into Cape Town, there to represent to the authorities the state the ship was in, try some of the worst offenders by a court-martial, and induce the Governor to give us an armed guard, which should go on with us to Bombay. And that would have been done, had not the winds and weather gone against us. Captain Mares had agreed to run for the first port he could in the Cape Colony, not only for the purpose of serving us, but also with a view of getting rid of some of his own men, amongst whom there were not a few who were known—in fact they made no secret of it—to be planning, together with some of the worst of the recruits, an open mutiny against their officers. The second mate was more particularly an object of aversion to the crew. On one occasion he was told by the boatswain, that the latter had overheard some of the sailors say they intended to take the ship, throw the military and ship's officers overboard, but reserve the second officer, who was to be hung by his feet from the yard-arm until he died. It is not difficult to understand why we all felt anxious, and that not one of us ever moved, or even slept, without having our pistols—in those days revolvers were rare amongst Englishmen—at hand. In short, there was not one amongst us, always excepting the ruffianly crew and recruits on board, who did not a dozen times a day wish that the ship would reach Cape Town, or some other port, as soon as possible.

The winds and the weather seemed, however, against us. We barely got abreast of the Cape, when a violent gale of wind from the north-east overtook us, and drove us so far to the southward, that when the storm abated it would have taken as long to beat up to Cape Town as to proceed to Bombay. In fact the captain hoped that he could, if fortunate in finding the trade-wind, make the latter port before he could the former; and thus the idea of getting rid of the scoundrels we had on board was reluctantly given up.

From almost the very day on which Captain Mares determined to steer direct for India, a change was observed in the manner of the second mate. He spoke little; but when he did so, talked of nothing but the doomed ship, as he called

the Marland, and prophesied that we should never reach either Bombay or any other port. To the crew he was much less violent than before; and, to the astonishment of everyone on board, he, who up to that time was never heard to utter half-a-dozen words without an oath being intermixed therein, actually offered to lead a prayer-meeting which he proposed to hold the first Sunday after Captain Mares had borne up for Bombay. And what is more, he did so; not only on the Sunday, but on the evenings of several days afterwards. On one or two occasions I went forward to hear him. His extemporary prayers, and his preaching or commentary upon certain verses of Scripture, were of very much the same nature as can nowadays be heard every Sunday afternoon in the London parks. The subject of his discourse seemed to be always the same—viz., that certain of those who were embarked on board the vessel had offended the Almighty, and that for their punishment the ship was doomed, and would never reach land. At first Captain Mares forbid him to continue these meetings, but was afterwards induced to alter his determination. For not only was it evident that the second mate had gone mad, but that these prayer-meetings were the only means of toning down his infirmity. When ordered to give them up, he became quite insane upon all ordinary topics, and was actually unfit for duty. But when allowed to pray and preach after his own fashion, there appeared to be an outlet for his ravings, and he was perfectly sensible on all other subjects whatever, including matters connected with his duty. Strange to say, the crew—or at least a large number of them—listened regularly to him; and not a few of those who had hitherto been looked upon as the greatest ruffians in the ship appeared to be positively in some measure reformed, at any rate for the moment, by the wild ranting of their officer. Still more surprising was it to see that some of the recruits also went regularly to his prayer-meetings, of which the end and aim seemed to be to avert the anger of Heaven in another world, from those who were certain to perish with the ship that was doomed never to see land. Amongst both sailors and recruits he appeared to have caused a scare which, if it did no other good, certainly caused them to steal less, to be more civil to their officers, and to do their duty better. His favourite text was, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In the course of

prayers as well as of sermon, he would repeat again and again—perhaps fifty times in the course of the evening—that no one on board need have any hope of ever landing alive from the Marland. The vessel was doomed, and would never reach Bombay. But for those who repented of their sins, there was hope in the next world. When pacing the deck with him during the night-watch, I often questioned him about the fate of the ship. I said that as we had now every day the hope of getting into the trade-wind, it was very unlikely that we should have any more bad weather; that the navigation was open all the way to India; and that except from fire, there was hardly any reason why we should meet with any misfortune during the remainder of our voyage. To this he replied that he could not tell me how the ship would come to grief, but that he was perfectly certain that it would do so, and that not one of all those on board would ever set foot on shore.

One evening after dinner, we were all on deck, when Captain Mares told us that we should pass the island of Tristan d'Acunha about midnight, but at a considerable distance to leeward, so that, even with the three-quarter moon which we had, it would be impossible to see the place. As a matter of course, all sorts of questions were asked the captain concerning the island. He knew very little about it, except that close to it the navigation was dangerous, and that there were nautical traditions of ships having been lost on the breakers that surrounded it. As we had not seen land since leaving England, regret was expressed by several of the party that we should lose the opportunity of seeing that solitary spot in the middle of the ocean. The second mate, who was present, all at once broke out with the words: "Don't be too sure, you may see the island much nearer than you expect." And that night, before I turned in for the night, my soldier servant told me that, at the prayer-meeting held on the fore-castle during the evening, the second mate had told his hearers that the day of wrath was at hand, and that they had not a dozen more hours to live.

Ever since the commencement of our troubles during the voyage, it had been my habit to be called at midnight, so as to see that there was no disturbance amongst the recruits; to look at the different hatches; to go the rounds of the ship with one of the ship's officers, and to see, as far as possible, that in order to make more room

below, one-third of the recruits were on deck. We had, as is the custom on board all troop-ships, divided the men into three watches, each one forming a third of the whole detachment. Of these a third was kept on deck from eight P.M. to midnight; a third from midnight to four A.M.; and an equal portion from four A.M. to eight A.M. On this particular night I was called as usual at midnight, when the second mate was waiting to go round the ship with me. We found nothing much amiss—at least, nothing for a ship in the order, or rather the disorder, that distinguished the Marland—and, it being a warm evening, there was no difficulty in keeping a third of the men on deck. When our rounds were over, which they were as the bell struck one—that is, half an hour after midnight—the second mate asked me for a cigar, saying it was the last time he would ever trouble me with a similar request. His voice and manner appeared more strange than ever; but I took no notice, thinking that perhaps he was not very well. It was a lovely night, with a beautiful three-quarter moon, which made it almost as light as day. After I had left the mate, and had turned to go down the cabin stairs, I heard him call the sailors of the watch, and order some alterations in the sails. I laid down in my berth, but, after remaining there about half an hour, found I could not sleep, and determined to go on deck again and smoke a cigar. I did so, and, as I reached the quarter-deck, found that the course of the vessel had been altered, and that the wind, which had been for some days on our quarter, was now right abaft. I forgot to mention that for the last week or more we had been in the trade-winds, and had hardly had occasion to shift a rope. Being somewhat surprised at this change, I went aft to the wheel, and found, to my great astonishment, that it was the second mate who was steering the ship. This, as many of my readers must be aware, is contrary to all custom. A merchant vessel of the size of the Marland rarely has any quartermasters, but there are generally half-a-dozen of the best seamen who are told off to take their turn at the wheel. I asked the mate why he was steering, and he returned me an evasive answer, muttering that I would know all in good time. Thinking that he had a more severe attack than usual of his madness or eccentricity upon him, I said nothing, but lit my cigar and walked forward to the bow of the ship. We were

going, I noticed as I looked over the side, at a considerable speed through the water.

It so happened that as a boy I had seen a great deal of what might with truth be called difficult navigation with sailing-vessels. A relative of mine who lived on the coast of Kintail, in the Western Islands, used to ask me up to his place each midsummer holiday, and always took me out cruising in his small yacht of thirty tons, amongst the islands of the Hebrides. It was no child's play, that navigation of the north-west coast. We had to look out, not only for squalls, but very often for breakers; and on one occasion the little craft was wrecked in shallow water, all of those on board having to swim for their lives.

I remember as if it were yesterday how I stood smoking at the bow of the Marland, watching the progress she made through the water, wondering when we should get safe to Bombay, and asking myself why it was that the second mate had taken to do an ordinary seaman's duty, in steering the ship. The night, as I said before, was most lovely. There was one of those beautiful moonlights upon the water that are only to be witnessed in southern latitudes. The temperature was warm, and from the whole ship, with its two hundred and fifty souls on board, not a sound could be heard.

All at once something struck my ear which made me start. I listened, and it was repeated. Half a minute later, and my first impressions were confirmed. There was no longer any doubt about the matter. To many—to most landmen—the sound would have been as one from the sea which could not be explained. With me it was otherwise. There were breakers, and breakers of no ordinary magnitude, right ahead of us; and we were steering, and at the rate of at least eight or ten knots an hour, right for this awful danger.

Instinctively I sprang aft, and told the second mate, who was still steering the vessel, what I had heard. He seemed wilder than ever in his manner, and answered me with a fearful curse. I urged him to call the watch to put the ship about, or we should all be lost in a very few minutes. He told me to mind my own affairs, and repeated the most awful imprecations. I then sprang towards the door of the captain's cabin, which opened on the upper deck. The mate tried to prevent me, and in doing so

abandoned the wheel, when, as a matter of course, the ship veered round, and brought up head to wind. In the meantime Captain Mares had heard the noise, hurried out of his cabin, and with a glance saw what was wrong. "My God!" he exclaimed, "why the madman has been steering the ship straight for the island of Tristan d'Acunha." The watch was called, the sails shifted, and the first mate took charge of the deck; the ship was put on her right course, and saved from certain destruction.

When a search was made for the second mate he was found in his own cabin, foaming at the mouth, a helpless, hopeless maniac. As a matter of course, he was not allowed to do any more duty on board. From the night on which—I may without vanity say—I saved the ship, until we reached Bombay, he never ceased denouncing me for having prevented "God's judgment," as he termed it, being carried out against the ship. He died raving mad in the hospital at Colaba, near Bombay, about a week after we reached India.

Some people argue that everything in this world is ruled by chance. I can hardly agree with them. And yet it was certainly a mere chance that led me to smoke on the bows of the Marland that night. It was also chance that caused me to be acquainted with the sound of breakers. Had I not done what I did—had the mad mate held on to the wheel another twenty minutes—the chances are a thousand to one that neither the ship, nor the two hundred and fifty odd persons on board, would ever have been heard of.

I may add that, save in the matter of names, this tale is strictly true; and is moreover a faithful picture of the manner in which they used to send troop-ships—or rather ships hired for the conveyance of troops—to India, thirty years ago.

OXFORD REVISITED.

THERE are places, as, according to Lord Macaulay, there are books, which require to be periodically reviewed. The lapse of time alters the relations in which we stand to them; the light of newer experience changes the colours in which they appear to us. Shakespeare, the myriad-minded, can never be exhausted by the critic so long as human ingenuity exists, and who

shall say that he has sounded as with a plummet the depths of the writings of those other immortals, who may not indeed be ranked above Shakespeare, yet may be placed on the same pedestal with him? Men who have written, not for a generation but for the ages, must always afford new material for each successive generation of commentators. The common facts and laws of our human nature may be few, but the modes of interpreting them are countless. Essentially, the facts may not change, nor the laws undergo any material modification. It is the forms in which they are revealed to us that perpetually vary, and it will never be impossible to detect new illustrations of their working, as in real life, so in the scarcely less real life that is lived in books which do not die. What is a necessity in the case of books is a necessity in the case of places, though for an obviously different reason. Places change as books, save to the reader's mind, do not. The open country of one generation is the suburb of the next, and is part of the city of the third. Science advances, annexes new territory, transforms a peaceful and secluded vale into a smoky manufactory, or, probing well the soil, detects the presence of copper, iron, or coal, and desolates the beauty of a district with shafts and pits. Similarly, trade and fashion are alike capricious. The prosperous borough of a century ago, upon the waters of whose river argosies may have floated, has ceased to have any political existence, and has found itself outstripped in the commercial race by a neighbouring village. The city which was, in the days of our great-grandfathers, the chosen haunt of beaux, belles, wits, young bloods, demireps, adventurers, gradually loses the last shred of social prestige, and settles down to a steady, respectable career, as the home of gentlewomen in reduced circumstances, and retired officers in her Majesty's Indian army, who have returned to the land of their birth with a pension and without a liver. Thus does the wheel of fortune revolve, and thus does time work its vengeance.

With the sole exception of certain quarters of this great metropolis—say, for instance, the whole of that area which is included in that most elastic of local terms, South Kensington—there is no place on the earth so rich in facts for the periodical reviewer as Oxford. Oxford, which, like Rome, was within a few years mediæval,

has, like Rome also, suddenly become modern. The old cannot indeed be all destroyed; but it is supplemented by the brand-new, by buildings whose freshness of appearance and richness of construction are positively aggressive, by customs and manners from which the genius loci, not many generations back, would have revolted in horror. It is not only the Oxford of Dr. Samuel Johnson, not only the Oxford of Dr. John Henry Newman, which has gone. The last two decades, nay, the last decade and a half, have sufficed to work such a revolution on the Isis, as surely nowhere else in the world was ever accomplished in a similar period. The revolution is a good one, no doubt, but, like most revolutions, some of its immediate results are not picturesque. A single specimen will illustrate its character. In an ancient street at Oxford, you, who are now visiting the place, look for an ancient college. The thoroughfare is called Broad-street, and the college of which you are in quest is Balliol. It stood, you are certain, on the spot which you are investigating, ten or twenty years since, a venerable pile whose walls were black and crumbling with age, and whose whole aspect stamped it as the abode of the academic muses. You have before you now a spick and span new structure, whose gleaming white, red, and yellow stone dazzles the eye. All the latest improvements are viable in the design and its execution. The old creaking door, scarred by many blows and kicks, has disappeared before a portal of bright polished wood. The porter's lodge bears no more resemblance to the dwelling of his predecessor when Plancus was consul, than does a model lodging-house to a tenement in Tom-all-alone's. As you enter the precincts, and pass through the quadrangles, a score of the same surprises is in store. The crank, breakneck staircases of decaying timber are replaced by easy flights of stone steps. The rooms which were once garrets have been metamorphosed into elegant apartments, with windows of the new bastard Gothic order. There are hanging gardens and conservatories on the window-ledges, while ever and anon your ear is startled by the notes of a piano, on which is strummed the tune of the Two Obadiahs, or Don't Make a Noise. Only in one part of the innermost quadrangle of all, are there visible a few yards of building which just hint at the antiquity of the foundation.

With this exception, there is nothing in the place that might not, for novelty of design and of appearance, have been constructed in the last two years.

Continue your stroll through the university town, and you will find other surprises, other contrasts with your old impressions of the place, almost as great. New College, one of the most ancient of Oxford societies, does, from its appearance in parts, almost justify its name. Christ Church-walk is flanked, by an erection whose architecture might be that of a warehouse or a penitentiary just completed. Even nature has been compelled to submit to the innovating hand. New paths have been cut through the meadows, new roads have been made, new bridges have been built across Faber's Cherwell. Only the great trees, faultless in shape and superbly rich in foliage, which over-arch Christ Church Broad-walk, and under whose shadows the first Charles strolled with his courtiers—these are unchanged. Unchanged, also, are the graceful proportions of Magdalen Tower, standing out clear and peaceful as ever against the dark blue sky; unchanged, too, at least in some respects, must be the nature of the undergraduate, if the tumult of conflicting cheers, a faint murmur of which reaches you from the bank of the river, on which races are being rowed, can be taken as a sign.

The Oxford undergraduate, indeed, is still the boat-loving, cricket-playing creature which he has always been. But as the times have altered, so has he altered too. In the course of twenty years the number of those in statu pupillari on the Isis has more than doubled. A considerable proportion of those who represent this numerical increase come from a section of the English nation, to whom Oxford was till recently quite closed. They have nothing in their appearance or tastes suggestive of our jeunesse dorée. They are fair specimens of the average middle-class young Englishman, and differ in no important respect from the students whom, at one o'clock every day, you may notice pouring forth from the gates of King's College into the Strand. Many of them are not, in the strict sense of the word, collegians at all. They belong to the university in general, but to no college in particular. They are in fact unattached students; free to live where and how they please, so long as they do not violate the laws of academic discipline;

free to prepare how and as they will for the examination of the university, and for whichever of those examinations they choose to select. Others again of this new contingent of Oxford undergraduates are members of the big new college, which has been built and endowed in honour of the blameless author of the Christian Year, and which has introduced into the university a social element quite as new and necessary, if Oxford is to be really a national place of teaching and learning, as the unattached student system itself. In this way has Oxford University come to include among its undergraduate and graduate members, in full and fitting proportions, representatives of every phase and variety of English life, whatever their condition and degree. The typical undergraduate of the period resembles in no respect the type accepted and portrayed in fiction. The horse-dealer, the livery-stable keeper, the dog-fancier, may not find all their occupation gone; but young Oxford of to-day has little or nothing in common with the horse-loving, terrier-breeding, reckless, extravagant creation of novelists. He is, on the contrary, for the most part a prudent, thrifty, fairly studious, and industrious youth. If he is not addicted to thinking of a very high order, he lives plainly and cleanly. If he has a weakness, it is for elegances and ornaments of an æsthetic description. He pulls a good oar, is a tolerable cricketer, and is fond of jumping and running, racing in sacks, throwing the hammer and putting the stone. If he does not hunt much, he is a great bicycle rider. He is a trifle priggish—he believes a little in himself and a great deal in his college and his contemporaries, and regards you with a sort of puzzled scorn, if you have never heard of Willowby, who “won the sculls,” or Supton, who was *proximé* for the Ireland, who “ought to have got it,” and who is “quite one of the cleverest men going.” These are but trifling blemishes after all, and the average Oxford undergraduate of to-day is a healthy specimen enough of the average young Englishman.

A little enquiry into the facts of the case will reveal the existence of two or three chief reasons for this gradual change in the tone and temper of the ingenuous youth who study upon the banks of Isis. Some allusion has been made to the athletic pastimes of the undergraduate; and the promotion of athletics, as a species of amusement distinct from boating or cricket,

to a recognised place in the physical curriculum of the university is an event which has exercised much influence. It has given lads, not qualified perhaps by nature to excel with the bat or the oar, the opportunity of exhibiting their strength, or pluck, or skill, in other departments of bodily prowess. It has introduced a new variety, or rather several new varieties, of physical competition. It is cheap, it gratifies the desire both for exercise and fame. Eminence on the running or jumping ground is as much a recognised distinction as eminence on the cricket-field or the river. It commands as valuable prizes, and as much popular applause. The result is that athletics, as an institution, have dealt a deadly blow at “loafing,” at hanging about billiard-rooms, lounging in tobacconists’, in picture-shops, doing nothing but spending money, or rather contracting to pay it; and that it has probably not improved such businesses as those of Mr. Charles Symond, in Holywell, or Mr. Tollit, in High-street. While there has been this gradual and important extension in the limits of Oxford amusements, so there has been a more significant enlargement of the area of Oxford studies. Classics and mathematics, philosophy, ancient history, theology, no longer make up the sum of Oxford learning or Oxford teaching. A faint smattering of the first two of these branches of knowledge the undergraduate must have, but it is nothing more than should be possessed by every well-taught schoolboy—we speak not of Macaulay’s prodigy—*ætat* fifteen. The student may, for all practical purposes, leave classics and mathematics alone after his freshman’s year has expired, and obtain, so far as the mere sound of titles goes, the very highest honours which the university can offer in several schools. If he is destined to be a civil engineer or a doctor, or a lawyer, he has his career of professional study marked out for him, and he may win a first-class in physical science, or medical jurisprudence, or law. Or, if he wishes to develop into a marvellous modern linguist, what better preparation can he have than the Oxford philological schools? In Oxford University there will be found laboratories, museums, libraries of modern continental literature, teachers and lecturers; in each of these, too, the educational machinery which has been added to the place in the space of twenty years is as essentially new as the new buildings of Balliol College, or the

modes of thought which are inculcated upon undergraduates within the walls of Keble.

But the new varieties of, and appliances for studying, the new pastimes and sports would have been insufficient to work the great and healthy revolution which Oxford has experienced without the co-operation of those who administer the affairs, and who regulate the teaching of the university. The Oxford don, fellow, and tutor of his college, has changed of late years not less completely than the Oxford undergraduate. The pilgrim to Oxford will look in vain for the academic Dryasdust, the university troglodyte, who knows little or nothing of the outside world, whose whole thoughts are given to the study of particles, texts, and grammatical formulæ, who regards all that is modern with distrust or contempt, who believes in port-wine, who carries a somewhat rubicund nose, who has grown gray in the service of his college, and in the instruction of successive generations of undergraduates. The Oxford don of to-day is very little older than the Oxford undergraduate, and the most important business of the university is vested in the hands of young men between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. Fellowships and tutorships are no longer the permanencies which they used to be. Young men fill them for a while after taking their degree, and then, quitting the university, start upon the business of professional life. As they have the years, so have they energy and industry, and perhaps some of the new-fangled enthusiasm of youth. During six or eight months of the year the modern don is away from his university, moving in the general society of the outer world, to be met with in the clubs and dining-rooms of London, at continental watering-places, smoking pipes with German savants, or scaling Alpine heights. He is frequently a connoisseur of art, and not unfrequently of light wines. He has read and written on the various aspects of the Renaissance; he has studied the technical minutiae of architecture; very likely he knows something about the theory and practice of music. In a word, the Oxford fellow and tutor of to-day is what is called accomplished, is more out of Oxford really than he is in it, and is exposed as much to the popular influences and ideas around him as any other young Englishman.

Traces of this are not wanting when

one visits the Oxford don, at his college, and in his rooms. The latter are probably decorated in the approved style of Pre-Raphaelitism. Perhaps they may suggest a resemblance rather to a Belgravian boudoir than to a monastic cell. This merely shows that the artistic fashion of the day has made itself felt at Oxford. None the less are these daintily-furnished apartments the places in which much honest, sterling work is done. The young man who is the typical Oxford fellow and tutor of the time, rises early and retires to rest late. He has pupils and lectures in the morning, and a short constitutional, on foot or on horseback, in the afternoon; he has university business to attend to; he sits down to a well-served yet modest dinner, in the college-hall, at six or seven, according as the season is summer or winter. Oxford common rooms are often thought to be—they once were—places where stout, red-nosed dons drank much port and played whist till midnight. Moderate potations of light claret, a cup of coffee after an interval of three-quarters of an hour occupied with this harmless wine-bibbing, then pupils or papers to talk over, and stiff reading to get through; such is the nature and such the order of the post-prandial dissipation of the Oxford don in the present year of grace.

Hitherto the Oxford teacher has been regarded as so far living and being in accordance with the old traditions, that he is a bachelor. In the present age of liberality and enlightenment, celibacy is by no means indispensable. The married fellow is the creation of latter-day academic reformers, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Oxford there has sprung up a colony of these gentlemen and their households. If it be said that the society constituted by the new academic growth is somewhat stiff, the simple explanation is that the transition from the new order to the old has not yet been made completely; that perambulators and nursemaids involve a rather sudden break in the continuity of Oxford traditions, and that the cradle in the cloister, or under the shadow of the cloister, must be by degrees acclimatised. It has been already said that it is only the other day that Oxford was purely mediæval. Modern in all essential characteristics she has already become, but it would be too much to expect that there should be no trace of strangeness in the presence of the new régime.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER V. JULIA.

I ASKED for time to consider Mr. Hooton's proposal; eventually I accepted it. I obtained thirty pounds by selling the ring Mr. Leveridge had given me. This money I resolved to devote to the expenses attending my first appearance on the stage:

I was unwilling, I must say, to part with the ring, and I did not at all like paying Mr. Hooton the twenty pounds he demanded. But I felt that I had really no alternative. I consoled myself with the hope that I might achieve success, and presently earn a large salary by my exertions as an actress. In that case my extravagance would be justified; the sacrifice of my ring would not have been in vain. All the same I was thoroughly satisfied that I could ill afford to expend so much money on what might prove to be a wholly unprofitable undertaking.

I resolved to eschew Shakespeare for the present. Not that I was too diffident to attempt the part of Juliet, but I felt that, theatrically speaking, Juliet must be very dependent upon her Romeo, and I dreaded lest Mr. Hooton should assign that part to himself. I was convinced that in such case I could not do myself justice, and that the whole representation would be imperilled. In fairness, however, I should mention that, as I learned subsequently, Mr. Hooton had for some seasons resigned the character of Romeo to younger performers, and now usually appeared either as Mercutio or Friar Lawrence.

I chose for my *début* the part of Julia in *The Hunchback*. The play had enjoyed extraordinary popularity, and I esteemed it highly for its pathos, its lively scenes of comedy, and for the character of the heroine, which seemed to me a noble and subtle creation, worthy even of the old golden age of the drama. I shared indeed the prevalent opinion of the time, which lifted the author of *The Hunchback* to a very high place among the poets. I must own, however, that, with the rest of the world, I now incline to a less laudatory judgment. I still think the work rich in theatrical effect and sentimental qualities, but I must admit its wordiness and its

windiness, the confused nature of the story, the crabbed and involved language with its affected Elizabethan air, and the surprising unreality of the dramatic personæ. Still Julia had been impersonated by actresses of great distinction, whose exertions in the part had won enthusiastic applause; that was reason sufficient for me and for many more to assume the character. Might there not be fame and fortune in store for us also?

A well-thumbed copy of *The Hunchback* was my constant companion for many days. The book was always in my hand or in my pocket, to be referred to upon the lightest occasion. I was to be found attending in front of the looking-glass, studying the effect of my frowns and smiles, my glances and gesticulations, and reciting the more striking passages of my part. I did not trouble myself about the scene in which Julia did not appear. I did not understand—but then I made no effort to understand—why Master Walter concealed the fact that he was Julia's father, or how he came to be recognised at last as the rightful Earl of Rochdale, to the discomfiture of the gentleman who had until then possessed that title; nor was it clear to me why Clifford should be a baronet in scene one; a mere clerk, the bearer of a letter, in another; and yet in the end appear as a real baronet again, and be greeted as Sir Thomas on all sides. If I noted these obscurities at all it was only to decide that they were of no moment as far as the part of Julia was concerned. It was of much more consequence to me that I should be sufficiently emphatic in exclaiming to Master Walter, "Do it, no leave the task to me;" that I should be plaintive enough in demanding, "Clifford why don't you speak to me?" that I should generally have my emotions well under control, and yet be enabled to give them the reins, and let them have free expression, when the fitting times arrived for startling exhibitions of agitation and passion. And then I was perplexing myself with the question, which no doubt had perplexed many players before me: How far must I permit myself to be natural, how far must I be artificial? Was I free? Might I think for myself in any particular? or was I bound hand and foot by precedent and the example of earlier performers?

Mr. Hooton was devoted to the traditions of the theatre. To his thinking acting was not so much imitation of nature as a close following of previous

actors. If there had been any nature in the matter at the outset, it was to come down to us filtered through many performances—blended with a variety of artifices. At every turn I was opposed by reference to the “original Julia.” I must not do this—the “original Julia” had never done it. I must do that—the “original Julia” had done it. I must not stand on the right hand of the stage—the “original Julia” had always stood on the left. I was to lift up my hand here, to let it fall there; now to look up, now down; to raise my voice at this point, to lower it at that: in every respect I was to be imitative, wholly imitative, and nothing but imitative, of the “original Julia.”

“You’ve got your words, I’m glad to find,” said Mr. Hooton. I had been to his lodgings for my lessons in elocution, and had been bidden to recite certain of the longer speeches of Julia. “And it is not usual with amateurs to get their words so completely. You’ll excuse my speaking of you at present as an amateur? By-and-by, of course, you will take rank as a professional lady. You are quite what we call ‘letter-perfect’ in the part. But of course it’s a different thing speaking it here, and going through with it on the stage. That you will soon discover. Somehow the footlights have a wonderful effect upon the memory. I’ve often known the mere sight of the audience drive an actor’s part clean out of his head, and miles and miles away from him. If he’d been blown up with gunpowder, he could not have been more astonished. And it’s not the set speeches that are so difficult to remember; it’s the broken sentences—the short dialogues—when you’ve only got to say, ‘indeed,’ or ‘proceed,’ or ‘truly,’ or ‘’tis well,’ at distinct intervals—like minute-guns—to break up and relieve the long speeches of the others, and give them breathing time;—all that’s really trying to the performer, as you’ll find out for yourself. But we shall make an actresses of you in time, my dear.” He had begun to address me as “my dear,” not meaning to be rude, or by way of expressing affection for me, but simply because of professional habit and custom. “The first thing is to know how to speak on the stage. The next thing is to know how to be silent and still; seeming to attend to what the others are saying, without having the air of watching for your cue, or saying to yourself, over and over again, your next speech. But you’ll acquire all this in

time. One advantage is, you take things coolly—you’re self-possessed—you’ve all your senses about you. The perturbations and the perspirations in which some amateurs indulge! You’d think all the world was looking at them, and that the fate of nations depended upon their exertions. Now, it’s to be said for you that you have not made up your mind to set the Thames on fire. And what a comfort that is to think of!”

The encouragement Mr. Hooton tendered me was not of the most cordial sort, perhaps; nevertheless I was most grateful for it. And to his services a positive value attached; he really took pains with me, and instructed me worthily and to the best of his abilities. Of course he had his own interests to serve, and having received my twenty pounds, was perhaps looking forward to future pecuniary advantages.

Otherwise, little sympathy attended my undertaking. Nick remained in ignorance concerning it. Basil was full of doubts and misgivings, and unexpressed objections; while Paul surveyed my proceedings with an air of amused and surprised incredulity. His opinion of The Hunchback was not very favourable; but as I have said, he held our English stage altogether in contempt. Shakespeare, to his thinking, was a barbarian, although a great and noble barbarian; but for the little barbarians—his followers and imitators—and among these he counted the author of The Hunchback—he declined to show them any favour. He had read the play, however, and, holding the book, had heard me recite my more important speeches.

“You must forgive me,” he said, “but I fail to comprehend the admiration and the applause bestowed upon this production by your English public. The story does not interest me. Your Julia is an hysterical English Miss, who gives herself very great airs, and screams and storms like a little vixen when she cannot have her own way. Whether she marries the Earl of Rochdale, who turns out not to be the Earl of Rochdale, or Clifford, who is and who is not Sir Thomas Clifford, I confess I do not care a rush. She’s what you call a bad bargain, whoever gets her. As for Clifford, he’s a clown, and Master Walter, he’s a mere crétin.”

And then he recited a long tirade from Racine, which I in my turn did not admire particularly.

I had considerable trouble with the costumes I was to wear as Julia, and

found myself involved in further expense. I was obliged to dispose of some other of the few valuables I possessed. It was considered essential that I should dress precisely as "the original Julia" had dressed. I was constrained to wear, therefore, a towering black velvet hat and feathers, and a long train of purple velvet over a pink satin skirt, sprinkled with imitation pearls, and confined at the waist by a golden cord with tasselled ends. It seemed to me rather a tragedy-queen or royal-dowager sort of costume for a youthful heroine of romance; but I was silenced by further reference to the "original Julia." Fortunately the dress was thoroughly of the conventional theatrical fashion, so that I was enabled to hire its more important parts from a dealer in masquerade and stage costumes. Certain laces and cambrics, flowers, gloves, and other details I had of course to provide myself with. I was dismayed to note how speedily my purse diminished.

It was decided for me—I am surprised now when I think how very little I was permitted to decide for myself—that I should appear as Miss Helen Delamere.

"It's removed from the commoner sort of names, without being too pretentious," said Mr. Hooton, "while it has, I think, a certain air of elegance, romance, and sentiment. Miss Helen Delamere might be a real person, while certain names assumed by actors and amateurs convey the notion of altogether impossible creatures, unless we are to suppose that the stage is intimately connected with the House of Lords, and that scions of the aristocracy are included in every cast of characters."

When a proof of the playbill was shown to me, with the name of Miss Helen Delamere, in large letters, running across it, I had certainly a difficulty in crediting that I was the actress in question.

How soon the room wore the look of an actress's lodgings! The table was strewn with scraps of finery. My workbox was open; it supported my copy of the play, at which I glanced intermittently while busy affixing rosettes to a pair of white satin sandals, adding fringes to my gloves, or stitching sham pearl beads on to a black velvet neck-ribbon. The better to remember my part I had written it out, with the cues and a variety of directions as to the by-play and business of the scene. Here I was to cross and change places with certain other of the characters. Mr. Hooton was very partial to these puss-in-the-

corner movements of the players; there I was to stand still; here advance, there retire. I was to weep at certain points, to speak with suppressed emotion, now to be violently agitated, and now to be struggling to recover myself. All this had been duly registered in my copy of the part. There was even a pot of rouge upon the table with a hare's foot beside it; and, above all, a bill of the play.

The door opened suddenly. Miss Leveridge entered. I could not repress a cry of surprise. She was panting for breath, and she looked very pale and faint. Yet it was clear that she was very angry; there was a fierce red sparkle in her eyes, and she seemed trembling with passion.

"You call yourself Madame Riel now, I think," she said shrilly.

"That's my name, Miss Leveridge."

She took from her pocket a small parcel, and dashed it on the table.

"You had better open it and see that it is quite correct."

"Won't you take a seat, Miss Leveridge?"

"Not on any account."

I opened the parcel. It contained the merest rubbish, things which had belonged to me, and which I had from time to time put from me as altogether done with; old gloves, soiled ribbons, odd buttons, scraps of tape and braid; a curious miscellany, of the value of a few halfpence.

"Count and examine them," said Miss Leveridge. "I am anxious that nothing of yours should be left in my house. I don't want to be reminded of you, ever. I want to forget you, to sweep the place clean and clear of you, and of everything that ever belonged to you. I am trying to think that you were never there at all, that I don't know you, that I never saw you. I sent before all I could find of yours. These have been found since. They are the last scraps, I think; but you had better see for yourself; and if there is anything else of yours that you can recollect left in my house, or hidden away in any old corner of it, you've only to mention it. I pledge myself that whatever it is it shall be sent after you as soon as possible—as soon as possible."

She was hoarse with passion, and shook her clenched hand at me in a menacing way, contrasting strangely with her feebleness of appearance and her timid shrinking manner as I remembered it.

"Surely this violence is unnecessary, Miss Leveridge," I ventured to remark;

"and for these things, they are valueless to me—they might really have been burned."

"I heard that you were poor," she said bitterly, "and I know that rubbish of all sorts is often valued by the poor." She glanced at the litter upon the table. "Certainly you seem well supplied with rubbish." She perceived the playbill; either she had been previously informed, or she rushed at once to a conclusion upon the subject. "An actress, too! It has come to that, has it? How are the mighty fallen! So you've to work for your bread, now, at last. Why nothing was good enough for you in my humble abode; and poor Dick's wasn't good enough for you. But you're punished, I can see that, and your punishment isn't over yet. You've been dragged down nicely to your proper level. Oh, you bad, worthless, wicked woman, you!"

"Miss Leveridge!" I interposed. There seemed something of insanity in her manner. I moved towards the fireplace to ring the bell.

"Don't trouble yourself," she said more calmly. "I'm going. I've said my say, and I'm going. I was determined to tell you my opinion of you, and I've told it. I despise and loathe you. I distrusted you from the first—only Dick would not listen to me—and now you've broken his heart. Still there's one thing I thank you for—you didn't become his wife. You spared him that cruelty. That's something. I hope I may never set eyes on you again. I hate you, and I find it hard to keep myself from doing you mischief. You wicked, heartless, cruel creature, you!"

STRANGE HANDS AT CARDS [POSTSCRIPT].—One of her Majesty's consuls has kindly forwarded to us a little information confirmatory of the occasional turning-up of strange hands at cards, such as those which were noticed in our article, under this title, inserted in the number for October 7th, 1876. Mr. L., during many voyages and journeys connected with the diplomatic service, was, in 1867, travelling with a friend from Swellerdam to Cape Town in Cape Colony. They halted for a night at a Dutch farmhouse; and, after an early supper, the farmer, his two buxom daughters, and Mr. L.'s friend sat down to a rubber at whist, to which game the Dutch families in South Africa are very prone. The farmer being called temporarily out of the room, Mr. L. was requested to take up and play his cards. When his turn came to play in the first round, he played a small trump on the trick. "You must follow suit," said one of the girls. "Or trump if I can't," re-

sponded Mr. L. He, as *locum tenens* for the farmer, had all the thirteen trumps in his hand.

One evening in the present year Mr. and Mrs. L., playing cribbage, experienced a singular repetition of similar groups of cards. A four was responded to by a seven, then an ace by a three, then a knave by a six, and, lastly, another knave by a five. This good score of seven for Mrs. L., induced her husband to impress on his memory the particular cards held. After playing an hour or so, a game commenced in which a four was again followed by a seven, an ace by a three, a knave by a six, and another knave by a five. In other words, in the later game as well as the earlier, the husband held an ace, two knaves, and a four; while the wife held in each game a three, a five, a six, and a seven. No imperfect shuffling could have brought about this singular result, seeing that many other deals intervened between the two here noticed. Mr. L. states that in his own hands the suits as well as the values were identically the same; but we are not clearly informed whether this was also the case in regard to his antagonist.

About the same period, at *béziq*ue, Mr. L. exchanged a small trump for the turned-up ace, then declared royal marriage, then sequence, then single *béziq*ue, then another royal marriage, and then double *béziq*ue—scoring no less than eight hundred and eighty with six cards. It can only be with extreme rarity that cards happen to be grouped together in such a way as to render this play possible.

On another occasion, at *picquet*, after drawing, Mrs. L. had the whole of two suits, and her antagonist the whole of the other two.

One more curiosity in card-playing is mentioned by our obliging correspondent. While going up the *Amazon* from Para in a mail steamer, he engaged one evening in a game at three-handed cribbage. In one round, after putting out to crib and turning up a trump, each of the three hands was found to count sixteen, and the crib seventeen. It is a very neat problem for a cribbage-player to solve, what combination or combinations of cards would lead to this singular result.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. II. LINDENHEIM.

CHAPTER VII. CELIA'S FIRST HOLIDAY.

THE party had arrived at a large coffee-garden in a small village, in a pleasant country. Walter Gordon made Celia a little bow and left her; and she felt as those do from whom, in the middle of their first swimming lesson, the corks are suddenly withdrawn. All her shyness, which she had half forgotten, rushed back upon her doubly and trebly. She watched her only protector moving about from one to another, while the whole party broke up into new groups, and scattered itself over the gardens. In a few minutes the oldest professors and the youngest pupils—that is to say those who, being nearest to one of the ends of life, had most in common—were deep in the noisiest games they could think of. The middle-aged people of twenty either joined them after a while, or lounged about in knots, or set out for a longer ramble in twos, threes, and fours. Celia felt she also ought to do something, and not stand there awkwardly all by herself as if she were stupid or sullen; but what could she do? If she could have had her will, she would have flown straight back from all this life and merriment into the dark, prison-like room at home, where her music-stool must be missing her sorely. The warmth of the foreign sunshine brought the tears to her eyes; and, at that moment, a flock of rooks above her began to caw—she heard the very voice of home.

"What frivolity!" said a young man near her—a very young man in spectacles, with yellow hair at least two-and-a-half feet long, which might, possibly, have dreamed wildly of a comb once, and of a brush never. "Life is short—art is long. Every moment," he added solemnly, emphatically, and gutturally, "every moment that passes, passes and never comes back again. You, mademoiselle," he said, turning to Celia, "you, I see, have something better to think of than these follies."

The solemnity of the young man should have suited her mood better than the airiness of Walter Gordon. But it certainly did not; and before she could turn the little German her father had taught her into an answer—

"True," said the ubiquitous Walter himself, with equal solemnity. He was certainly a remarkable young man, thought Celia; he seemed to have the art of being foremost in everything that was going on, all at once; and a quick feeling of relief came over her to find him, after all, so unexpectedly near. "True, Fritz; these things are only fit for professors and babies. Why are we here?"

"That is precisely the question, Herr Gordon. Kant says—"

"I know, and I don't agree with him. You needn't trouble yourself to argue; I know everything you're going to say. You are going to mislead Miss March here into dissipation, and to prove to her out of Kant, which in our country we spell with a C, that all amusements are waste of time except flirtation with a philosopher. I know you're a regular Don Juan, Meyer, but it's unfair of you to a girl that doesn't know what flirtation

means. Let her find it out for herself, there's a good fellow, and come and blow the organ while I play. We'll get the church keys, and I'll show you a grand idea that came into my head a minute ago. Will you come, Miss March? I was telling Meyer that you don't know German yet, so he must keep his metaphysics to himself for a little. What—you do know German after all?" he said, suddenly reading her face and colouring—a graceful awkwardness that became him quite as well as his smile. "You know what I really said to Meyer? Never mind; I only wanted to save you from a bore, and I promised to protect you from the wild beasts, you know. Meyer is a genius—whatever you do, keep clear of geniuses."

"Really?" she asked, opening her eyes to their largest, and with interest. She had not understood his remarks on flirtation so well as he imagined, and somehow his blush had made her less shy of him than ever. "A real genius? He—he doesn't look like one."

"Yes, a real genius. He never heard of soap, and he composes like Mendelssohn; and no wonder, for he doesn't spoil his cribbing by changing a note here and there, as timid people do. He'll be a success, that man. People who wear spectacles and copy Mendelssohn always are. Ah, here are Lambert and Miss Ida. Come all of you to the church and have a treat; you shall hear Fritz Meyer blow the bellows. Come, Meyer, you blow for me, and then I'll blow for you—blow for blow."

They made their way to the plain old village church, which Celia alone entered reverently. Walter Gordon scrambled to the organ; Meyer, on the principle of "Tickle me and I'll tickle thee," set himself to slave at the bellows in order to secure his turn at the keys. Suddenly the church was filled with strains that assuredly it had never heard before. A peal of laughter rose from Lambert and Miss Ida as an outrageous medley of student songs, gathered no doubt from Jena at midnight, made the genius stop blowing in a rage of insulted dignity. But Lambert took his place with a will, and the fun went on furiously—very small fun indeed, but brilliant for a Lindenheim country party, where new and original jokes were woefully few and far between.

But Celia did not laugh. To the

daughter of John March a church-organ was a sacred thing, apart from the place where it was being turned into ridicule. Every chord in her whole life was roughly jarred by every note; unimaginative as she was, she could fancy herself at a veritable witches' sabbath, and was ashamed for her own unintentional presence in such revelry. She sympathised with the un-kempt genius, and felt inclined to hate Walter Gordon.

Meyer saw her expression through the indignant gleam of his spectacles. "This comes of following apes and blowing for buffoons, mein Fräulein!" he said, as he strode away, followed by a blaze of triumph from the organ. When Walter Gordon had had enough of it, and looked round for Celia, she also had gone.

She did not wish to see Walter Gordon again. That performance of his on the organ was her first real sorrow—the loss of an illusion. The thing was a trifle; but there are trifles of which it is impossible to speak too strongly. A day like this in a new world, where every word was an event, and every step was new, had already been as long as a lifetime—as long as her whole existence at Deepweald put together. And, since it had been made up of trifles, trifles had become important things. Whatever Walter Gordon might think of her, or whether he thought of her at all, he had been a great deal to her; the only friend of the long lifetime of that day. By giving her long respites from the pain of shyness, he had made her now and then quite happy enough to be able to feel unhappy, instead of merely timid and dull. And now what was she to think of him? She did not know; but she felt she had lost a friend, and the sunshine that had just begun to peep out went in again. At Deepweald she had almost grown up into womanhood; and now she seemed to have been thrown back towards childhood by years and years. She sat down again at the edge of the lawn again and looked at the games, pulling up blades of grass for pastime, and looking very like a child who has been sent to Coventry for ill-temper.

"A fine cavalier is Herr Walter!" said Lotte, forgetting Celia's supposed ignorance of German. "What's the good of being chaperon to a girl that can't even make Herr Walter flirt with her? Anybody can do that, so long as he never saw her before. Why, his walking with you

all the way to Waaren gave you more enemies for life than you can count on your fingers. That's a wonderful success, I can tell you, for a girl who has never been heard sing. Aren't you glad? Why I was here a whole week before I made three deadly enemies, though I tried hard; but Herr Walter wasn't here then, and it's wonderful what lots of girls hate each other since he came. I'm desperately in love with Herr Walter myself, you know; and I do so want you to be too, so that I can have somebody to compare emotions with, now that my favourite rival's gone, and I don't like Ilma. Do fall in love with Herr Walter, Miss March, to oblige me! It is so delightful to talk about what one feels. Come and eat—at this minute I feel starving."

Celia opened her eyes at her and followed; and presently was sitting at a long table made of planks and tressels, feasting on milk, black bread, and ham, and thinking that this vestibule of the temple of music was a very strange place. The talk round her was mostly about music indeed, but to her it was all Greek and Hebrew. At home, she would as soon have thought of talking about music as about the air she breathed; and to gush or jest over it, as her new companions did, was too incomprehensible to seem like sacrilege. It seemed more like lunacy. After the meal the quiet-looking professor, who had hummed the tune to the pretty girl in the courtyard, struck up a waltz on the violin, with no more air of condescension than if he had been a wandering fiddler.

"Pray give me a turn," said Walter Gordon, who had seen her from the far end of the table.

"I can't dance," she said, coldly. "I never tried."

"Never tried to dance! Impossible! But you'll find sitting still awfully slow, and it's so easy to dance, with such music. Let me give you a lesson; in one turn you shall feel as if dancing were the only thing worth living for."

"No, thank you, please! I shall learn much better by looking on."

"But it goes to my heart to see you sitting there all alone."

"It need not. I would rather not dance, indeed! Please let me see you dance, Mr. Gordon."

"Well, if you will, you shall," he said, with his ever-ready laugh, as if the whole world were made of joy; and, in less than

a second, he was whirling round the room with Lotte, and making her laugh too.

Not only had Celia never danced, but she had never heard a dance tune played except on a barrel-organ. To her this rough-and-ready improvisation of a ball was like a child's first pantomime. And then the dance music she now heard was the nearest possible approach to that of the magic fiddle in the story, that made judge, jury, and hangman dance madly together under the gallows-tree. It did not only help people to dance; it inspired. Her own ignorant feet began to burn and tingle till she, too, longed to swim with the rest upon the waves of sound. This, also, was surely music, in spite of what her father might say—her father, who had condemned Clari unheard. The waltz whirled on with but few pauses, and Celia's own grave eyes laughed and sparkled with sympathy, as the revel grew under the grave professor's bow. She no longer felt alone; her heart was dancing, though her feet were still.

Is there need to tell how young people walk home on a moonlight night—when they have such a chance—after such a day? In that regard, Saxony resembles the rest of the world. Some very young men, of course, kept together and boasted of having long and long ago found flirtation vanity, like all things save tobacco-smoke and themselves. But it is only fair to Celia's new fellow-students to say that such cases of idiocy were fewer among them than in most companies. In general, they straggled off into small parties, mostly of two, and compressed into that hour's moonlight walk more wholesome and unaffected nonsense than had been spread over the whole of the day. And somehow, she knew not how, Celia once more found herself by the side of Walter Gordon.

"Well?" he asked, "how have you enjoyed yourself? Not very much, I'm afraid."

"I have, though, indeed—that is, all but one thing." She coloured at her own boldness as she spoke; but it was in truth anything but boldness, the slip into frankness of a tongue that had never had a chance of learning even conventional hypocrisies.

"And what was that? The fireworks? They were a failure, I own. Well, better luck next time. It is very

odd, but the fireworks are invariably damp at Waaren."

"No; I did not like hearing the organ played in that way. And I did not like Herr Meyer——"

"I should think not, indeed!"

"I did not like Herr Meyer to be laughed at for being angry. I was angry too."

"Why, Miss March? What is so laughable as anger—not yours, of course, but Meyer's—any solemn prig's, I mean? He deserves it, for his wet blanket, damp firework philosophy. Fancy bringing in Kant at a country-party! As to the organ—I do hope you are not a prim English girl who thinks everything wrong that she hasn't been used to. That's the phrase, I believe. You can't be like that, I'm sure, with those Italian eyes that are now regarding me so tragically under the moon. But if it really vexed you, I am really sorry; I wouldn't have done that for the world."

"It's not vexing me that I mind. But you see I've always lived in an organ——"

He looked as if some very obvious comment on the discomfort of such a residence were on the tip of his tongue; but he changed his mind. "I see," he said, "you are the Organ-spirit. That accounts for a great many things. But spirits are never called 'Miss,' nor have they surnames. Nobody ever says 'Miss Titania,' or rather 'Mrs. Oberon.' What is your real name? Your christian-name, as mortals say?"

"Celia."

"Celia—almost Cecilia, but prettier—all vowel and liquid, with just a little piquant hiss at the beginning, to give it character; a sort of a sigh melting into a song. I never knew a Celia, except the young person who kept an arbour, or Whitehead's Celia—'Celia altogether.' But what were we saying? Oh, I know; that music is a serious thing. And so it is, but it is also a joyful thing; and why shouldn't an organ be allowed to have a good laugh as well as a fiddle? Art that fears a jest is pedantry, and ought to be killed by what it fears as soon as possible. I wouldn't give a fig for a man who's afraid to laugh at what he believes in. It would only show that he's afraid he doesn't quite believe. I will teach you to laugh, and you shall teach me to be grave; for I agree with you that there's a time for all things, even for a Pan-pipe to cry, and for a solemn old organ to shake

its sides. What would art, or life, or love, or anything be worth if it did not mean joy?"

Celia thought of her father, and of the little joy that art seemed to mean or bring to him. As for herself, she knew that there was such a word as "joy" in some very old-fashioned and forgotten songs, but nothing more. But Walter's genial enthusiasm, half humorous, half sincere, touched the new chord in her heart, that had been first wakened by the dance she had been unable to share.

Assuredly there were more worlds in the world than one. She must have thought so half aloud, for Walter answered it as if he had heard her thinking.

"True; so sensible people make the whole round, find out the pleasantest, and build their houses there, only making excursions to the others when they want change of air. I am one of those sensible people, and now you know me just as well as I know you. Ah, here are——"

He became stiff and silent for a moment as they were overtaken by a larger group, containing Lotte and a tall, dark, exceedingly handsome girl, who looked Celia all over from head to heel—in fact, gave her an uncompromising, cold-eyed stare.

"So now, Miss Lotte and Miss Celia," said Walter, "I will see you both safe home. Hasn't it been a glorious day?"

"You seem to have found it so," said the dark girl, again making Celia redden under her stare. "And so have I. Haven't we, Herr Rosen?"

"I'm glad you've enjoyed yourself, Miss Ilma," said Walter, raising his cap. "Good night. Good night, Rosen. Lambert, I'll see you again presently, when I've seen these young ladies home."

"Well, Miss March," said Lotte, as she joined Celia and Walter, "I must say that, for a timid English girl, you have begun your career well. You have made at least fifty girls wild with envy and one mad with jealousy. It's lucky you lodge at the chemist's, so that you can keep your eye on what poisons are bought there during the next day or two. I don't mind giving you food for vanity, Herr Walter, because your capacity for swallowing it all and thriving on it is well known. But I am ashamed of you. What is it the English say? 'Be off with the old loaf,' namely, Ilma, 'before you——'"

"Nonsense, Miss Lotte; can't you wait till Miss March gets into our ways? She'll think she's mistaken a madhouse for a

music-school. Never mind her, Miss March. It's she is the one who is mad with jealousy, and is thinking of giving, or taking, a dose of elixir mortis."

"I, Herr Walter? I haven't been jealous for six weeks, not of anybody. I only wish I could be: what is life worth without emotions? I thought you were jealous when Ilma went over to the enemy. You certainly frowned like thunder; I never knew you could frown before."

"Did I? I have no enemy but Mendelssohn. Good night, Miss Lotte: here is your door. Good night, and sleep well."

"Good night, Herr Walter," said Lotte, with her good-natured smile. "Good night, Miss March. Mind, we are to be friends. So mind and bring me a new emotion or two when we meet again. I am so tired of all the old ones. Good night, and sleep well. I shall, anyhow."

If Celia had already heard Greek and Hebrew, she now heard Aztec and Japanese.

"Tell me one thing, Miss Celia," said Walter, suddenly. "Don't you think we're all a pack of babies, and that I'm the babyest of all?"

"I don't know anything; my head is in a whirl."

"But, when it unwhirls, please don't think me quite as mad as I seem. Lotte is an excellent girl, and we have made a sort of silent bargain to tease one another as much as we can, that's all. You must take whatever she says of me or to me as part of the game, and nothing more. But here's the Golden Lion. Good night, Miss Celia. Will you honour these violets by taking them? They're not too fresh, I'm afraid, but they seem to me to have the perfume of a delightful day. If you don't think so, throw them away."

"But I do think so," said Celia. "It has been my first holiday."

"If I didn't think so!" said Walter. "I knew it as soon as I saw you. Never mind, you'll be able to make up for it here. Good night, Miss Celia, and au revoir."

'Twas not her face, for sure in that
Is nothing more than common;
And all her sense is only chat
Like any other woman.

Her voice, her touch, might give the alarm,
It might be both or neither;
In short, 'twas the provoking charm
Of Celia altogether,

sang Walter Gordon to himself, as he went his way to the haunt where a crowd of

university students and others met nightly to smoke knaster and drink Bavaria beer.

Celia said her prayers, went to bed, and dreamed that she was Mademoiselle Clari.

THE FORTUNES OF NARA.

AN OLD JAPANESE STORY. IN TWO CHAPTERS.
CHAPTER I.

IN the old days of fœdal Japan, power was ever built on treacherous foundations. A man waking in the morning to find himself famous, could not anticipate with an degree of certainty that his fame would endure till evening; families long accustomed to govern and dictate with almost more than imperial power, might at a moment's notice be disgraced by the whim of a captious, jealous government, and without prelude or warning, be reduced to the level of the very people hitherto treated by them as slaves. Thus it was with the great house of Nara. Possessor of one of the vastest yashikis, or palaces, in the capital, holding the unbounded confidence of the emperor, blessed with untold wealth, and worshipped by the masses as one of the great fœdal pillars of the State, the family had for centuries governed with princely rule in the land. Suddenly the political wind veered. The chief of the family was accused and found guilty of dangerous plotting, rightly or wrongly history does not state; the family was disgraced; its chief committed "seppuku," that is, disembowelled himself according to custom; the palace with its green gates and acres of park confiscated, and the place of the family blotted out from the political history of the day.

So Bisjamon, the young heir of Nara, found himself thrown on the world. He was, when the blow fell, in the full vigour of youth—fearless, chivalrous, addicted perhaps to the overbearing contempt for all beneath him in the social scale, a characteristic of the Japanese nobles of all times, but withal generous, open hearted, and accomplished. He was accomplished; that is to say, he could read and write the Chinese characters; could ride his horse without flinching up the steps of the Atago-yama; was a good fencer; could compose fair love doggerel; and, above all, was a skilful performer of the samisen or national guitar. But, in the rude race for life, accomplishments pass for very little; and, in his present forlorn condition, a knowledge of carpen-

tering would have stood him in better stead than all his acquaintance with the Chinese classics, and he would have exchanged all his skill in handling a hard-mouthed Japanese pony for the less chivalrous accomplishment of using an adze.

It was hard for him to leave the comforts and luxuries of his courtly home, but it was a keener pang still to part with his love, Kaimiri. Side by side with the fair-skinned beauties of a Belgravian drawing-room of these days, Kaimiri would appear "chetive" and mean. Yet there were charms in her dark sparkling eyes, with their arched brows; in her small ruddy mouth, through which glistened the perfect rows of white teeth; in her rounded figure, and her delicate hands and feet, which ranked her high amongst the beauties of the day, and which had completely won the heart of the young prince of Nara at a river-party.

She was a sort of kinswoman of his, and the aristocratic world of Yedo had looked upon their union as an arranged affair, when the cloud burst over the fortunes of his house, and he was forced to depart without even the privilege of bidding her farewell. However, by a faithful servant he sent her a letter—tied in a knot of cherry stems, emblems of undying fidelity—acquainting her with his fate, and praying her to think of him and hope for better times. Then with a satchel of necessaries, and clad in plebeian garb, he set forth to combat the world.

For some months he joined a band of Rônins or wandering adventurers—frequently men of good family or who had seen better days, dashing, careless fellows who owned but little law and not very much religion—but their unscrupulous modes of dealing disgusted him, so he had recourse of his old accomplishment, and gained a precarious living by singing, from door to door, old Japanese romances and songs of war to the chords of his guitar. By degrees his skill as a minstrel began to be spread abroad amongst the pleasant little villages which form the suburbs of the capital; and within two years after the fall of his house he found himself a necessary part of every festival within a five-mile radius from the Nihon Bashi, or Bridge of Japan. At times the old haughty spirit would make the blood rush to his brow, and he would curse the fate which had brought him—a scion of the great house of Nara—to be a paid purveyor of amusement to

half-educated boors and petty rural land-owners; his hand would involuntarily clutch the hilt of the Muramasa sword—a family heirloom—which he always carried half concealed beneath the folds of his garment; he would think of the fair Kaimiri, wonder where she was, and build up all sorts of castles in the air; and then his eye would rest on his humble wallet, on his coarse blue clothes, on his well-worn straw sandals—he would be reminded that, although there was the will to bring his dreams to pass, for the present there was wanting the way.

For three years he pursued his wanderings. Fortune had dealt lightly with him, and he had contrived to save a few hundred riyos; his living for the present was secure, but his future remained blank, and his mind would often wander back to the happy day when he met Kaimiri in a gondola at the great festival of the blessing of the River Sumida—when beneath the moon they exchanged their first love vows, and no cloud was yet perceptible on the horizon to dim their future happiness. Was she still thinking of him as he was of her, or with the fall of his prosperity had her heart changed?

Yet he had always trusted her, and it was so foreign to him to deem that she was other than true, that he would shudder at his own suspicions.

It was early summer, and there was a festival in honour of the rustic deity Inara Sama at the village of Yoji, about three miles from the city. Even now, when most remains of old romantic Japan have either been swept away, or spoilt in the path of modern improvement, Yoji is a beautiful village. At the period of our tale, at the loveliest season of the year, and invested with all the attributes of a Japanese pleasure making, it was especially beautiful. Groves of many tinted trees hide the village from the traveller's view until he is within a few yards of it; but on festive occasions, inkings of great "goings on" may be gathered, not only from the crowds of people which animate the narrow, winding road leading to the village, but from the stalls which enterprising hucksters set up on either side of the way for a full half-mile before reaching it. On three sides of the village rise masses of deeply-wooded hills, jumbled together in the confusion peculiar to the hand of nature in Japan; a panorama of the city of Yedo and the surrounding country, bounded in the distance by the Oyama range of mountains with the

monarch Fuji, forms the fourth side. The village itself is small and unpretending, but during the festival of Inari is as gay and animated as a town.

Hither the young Prince of Nara wandered in his usual guise of a strolling player; after having paid his devotions to the shrine of the god, he strolled amongst the tea-houses and booths, tuning the strings of his guitar to the songs of romance and heroism so dear to Japanese ears. From some parties he got a handful of cash, at more than one he was invited to partake of rice, fish, and wine as a reward for his minstrelsy, now he would be stopped by a jovial citizen to sing again some favourite ballad, now at the request of a love-lorn maid he would rehearse the latest song of gallantry from Yedo. Yet his thoughts were ever far from the scene around him; long custom had enabled him to sing and play more than correctly, but the feeling with which he inspired his verses was artificial, and amongst the gay, laughing faces around him, he was ever seeking the features of his darling Kaimiri.

Wearied at length, having tramped and sung for some hours beneath the relentless sun, which his broad-brimmed bamboo hat barely kept off his throbbing head, he sank down on the bench of a more remote tea-booth, called for some wine, and gazed on the scene. Fatigued and dazed he soon dropped off into a light sleep; his day thoughts moulded themselves into his dreams, and he beheld Kaimiri, as she was when he wooed her, young, beautiful, and gay, not alone, but seated at a banquet side by side with a man who treated her with the formal respect of a newly-wedded husband. In the dream effort which in his rage he made to cleave the intruder to the ground, he awoke. It was but a dream, but it had left the vivid impressions of actuality upon him, and he resolved more firmly than ever to discover his old love, or to die in the attempt. He sat up, dazed, and hovering between the two worlds of dreamland and of truth, as men do who have been suddenly awakened from sleep. It was evening, and the majority of the folk had left the scene of the festival for home, here and there a merry party still laughed and sang round the wine-cups, whilst pairs of lovers scattered about declared vows and exchanged embraces beneath the bright, cold rays of the moon. Suddenly the faint notes of a well-known air fell on his ears,

an air which called back vivid recollections of the happiest part of his old life, an air which he had never heard but from the lips of one person—Kaimiri. It was the quaint, pathetic Lament of the Princess of Sendai; he could not mistake the touch of the guitar, and the voice, though more tremulous than of old, was that of Kaimiri. At intervals the song stopped, thus telling Benjamin that the singer was one of his own profession, wandering from tea-house to tea-house, and gathering here and there reward in one shape or another. Eagerly he strained his eyes to catch a glimpse of the performer, and when at length he discerned the veritable Kaimiri of old, disguised in the common blue gown and broad-brimmed hat of the minstrel class, his heart beat as though it would burst. As she passed, still mechanically playing the old Lament, he would have leaped forward to embrace her, but he checked himself and resolved to follow her, and declare himself in a less frequented place. One by one the lights in the tea-houses disappeared, the sounds of revelry grew fainter and fainter, and at last ceased altogether, the pairs of lovers had wandered away, and he was alone, within a few yards of her upon whom for the last three years his every thought had been centred. He watched her sadly and slowly take her solitary road towards the shrine of Inari. There she fell on her knees, and throwing aside the bamboo hat and guitar, buried her face in her hands, and sobbed, as only women can sob in keen, deep agony. Then she raised herself and prayed—it was for him—and in the clear moonlight he could trace every well-known feature, but how sadly altered! There were the tresses of raven hair, escaped from their bonds at the unloosening of the hat, the graceful form, the white hands and feet; but the sadness of the face, the great brilliancy of the eyes, the sharpness of the features, betokened that the woman he saw before him was not the Kaimiri of old, happy days.

He could withstand no longer, and as she turned to depart, issued from his ambush behind a huge carved bronze lantern, and stood before her.

Seeing a strange form, at so weird a time and at so desolate a place, she started back, and pulled the bamboo hat over her eyes, then she recognised her love, and sprang towards him with a great cry; in a moment they were locked in each other's embrace.

"Kaimiri, my own old love," were the first words that Bisjamon could utter after the emotion of this sudden meeting; "the darling of long past days, is it indeed thee whom I embrace after these years of sadness and wandering?" But she was silent; he could hear her sobs, and feel the hot tears falling on his hand. "Speak, Kaimiri, speak. Art thou still true to me, and have the gods designed that we should thus meet never to part again?" Still she answered not for some moments, then she raised her head and gazed into his face, and said, "Bisjamon, thou art indeed in my heart the true love of old times, but——" and he trembled as she paused. "I thought thee dead, or departed to a far-distant land, and in an evil hour I yielded to the soft words of one whom I call husband, and who should acknowledge me as wife. The gods alone know what I have suffered at his hands; how, after the first gush of his affection was over, he began to treat me as worse than a slave, and has now cast me off altogether, to gain my livelihood as best I can in the hard, unsympathetic world. Still I am by law his wife, and as we have met here, so must we part. Yet think not that Kaimiri hath deceived thee. The gods are ever kind to those who carry into their worldly actions true hearts and honest consciences. Farewell, Bisjamon, think not of me, but strive to be worthy of a better and nobler woman." Ere he could embrace her for the last time, she had disappeared into the blackness of the night.

Long time he stood entranced by the swiftness and suddenness of the vision, for vision it seemed yet to him, and no real event. Then sighing deeply, he wandered away, he knew not whither.

CHAPTER II.

A YEAR after the events narrated in the last chapter, the political world of Japan again underwent one of its periodical convulsions, and the house of Nara was restored to its ancient affluence and power. So long had Bisjamon led a lowly but independent life, and so little attraction did court life in Yedo hold out to him, now that he had lost Kaimiri, that he preferred to continue his wandering life, and still strolled from village to village disguised as a ballad-singer. Yet hope for the future never entirely deserted him; he felt that Kaimiri was indeed his by right, and could not believe that the cloud now hanging over their fortunes was never to be dispelled.

He was praying one day at a little village temple, with his eyes bent on the ground, when he spied amongst the dust and weeds at his feet a golden hair-pin, such as are worn by ladies of quality in Japan. He picked it up, and examining it, saw engraved thereon, in minute Chinese characters, the name Kaimiri. It was a mere coincidence, for Kaimiri is a common Japanese female name, and the Kaimiri of his heart he knew well would scarcely follow her wandering profession, with her locks bound together by a pin of gold. But, like a true Japanese, he was superstitious, and regarded this discovery as a good omen; so, placing the pin in his wallet, he prayed fervently for the grace and help of the gods, and set forth with a cheerful heart on his way. At evening, as was his wont, he halted at a little wayside tea-house, and sat amongst the countrymen who were drinking, smoking, and gossiping after the labours of the day. It was rarely that he joined in or even listened to the conversation of those with whom he was brought in contact during his journeys, but the talk now buzzing around him interested him, inasmuch as it was about the revival of the Nara family. Said one sturdy tiller of the ground, with his hoe in one hand and a square wooden measure of wine in the other: "These are indeed strange times. This month last year, the Nara palace was deserted, and the name never mentioned. Denk'chi, the fish-seller, told me this morning that he passed by the gates, that the guards were mounted as in the olden time, and that the bustle and animation within the courtyard were just as if the family had never fallen, that the workmen were busy in all directions repairing and patching up the broken walls and roofs, which had been suffered to fall into decay since the disgrace of the family." "That is very true," remarked the village mason, who, powdered with professional dust, had just joined the group. "But they say there is some difficulty. The old prince committed Hara Kiri at the news of the family disgrace, and the property in due course fell to his only son and heir, the young Bisjamon, but he cannot be found. After the news of his father's death and of the family disgrace, he went away and has since not been heard of; consequently, although the family is by right in possession, there is no one in person to claim the chieftainship." "Ah, but," added a third bystander, "I hear that he has turned up, and that

to-morrow he will be invested with possession." At these words, Bisjamon started so suddenly, that the notice of the host was attracted, and he said: "From your emotion, sir, it would appear that you are interested in the matter. Pray, have you heard anything about it?" "No," stammered Bisjamon, "I know nothing about it, except that the young prince is said to have died some years since, and that the present claimant cannot possibly be he." "And how do you assert that?" said the trio at once. "I was in the service of the young prince," replied Bisjamon, "and I helped him to escape in disguise. If he had indeed returned to power, he would have surely remembered me, for I was his most constant attendant, and, saving his position, I may say that we were brought up together." "But," rejoined the host, "men who have received benefits when in need of them, too often forget their benefactors when they rise above the necessity of receiving them."

Startled by the news, and fearing to commit himself by joining further in the discussion, Bisjamon withdrew to the screened compartment allotted to him as a sleeping-place. As he enveloped himself in the quilts, he resolved that he would take immediate action, for, preferring as he might his humble wandering life to the glittering existence of a court, he felt that it would ill become him, as rightful prince of Nara, to allow an usurper to wield the sovereignty of the house, and to occupy the seat honoured through centuries by the great and noble men his ancestors.

As the dawn broke through the open casements on the next day, he rose, left the tea-house, and was soon well on his road to the capital. At midday he entered the great Shinagawa Gate, the stones of which still remain, although the gate itself with its towers and walls have long since gone the way of most relics of feudal Japan. The bustle and animation of Yedo was very much greater than at present; wheeled vehicles there were none, but palanquins, litters, and sedan-chairs blocked up all room that was not occupied by the throngs of laughing, chattering, howling, gesticulating pedestrians. So long was it since Bisjamon had edged his way and pushed amongst the crowds of a great city, that amidst this scene of confusion he soon lost himself, and stood gaping and wondering in the very centre of the street, jostled and sworn at by passers-by, chaffed by palanquin-bearers for an ignorant

rustic, and fairly at his wits' end as to which road he should take. At length he ventured to a common wine-house, at the door of which stood the customary group of loafers and idlers, and asked the road to the Nara palace. "The Nara palace?" said a huge square-shouldered fellow, girt with two swords, and having the appearance of a man-at-arms, "what on earth carries you there, young man?" Then scanning the athletic frame and aristocratic bearing of Bisjamon, he added, "in search of a place, no doubt? Well, the new prince is beating up recruits and as I am a retainer," showing the crest of chequers which was the Nara badge, "for a cup of wine I will guide you there myself." So the wine was ordered, consumed, and paid for, and Bisjamon found himself humbly following to his own property a man who, in days gone by, would have grovelled in the dust at his approach. Short cuts soon brought them to the main gate, Bisjamon told his errand, and ere evening found himself once more settled under the family roof, not as a lord, but as a sworn fighting-man.

The next morning he was formally presented to his new master, and so great was his anxiety to see the upstart who had dared to claim headship of the great house, that he could scarcely buckle on the girths of his armour. As he knelt before the stunted, low-browed, ill-faced man, in whose keeping were the time hallowed honour and glory of the house he could scarcely refrain from proclaiming himself and denouncing the impostor, not only by word but by sword. But he remembered his position; he saw that amongst the band of retainers standing round there were but two or three who had served in the old days; and he resolved to bide his time, and received the customary charge and address with as much good grace as he could summon.

For three months he served his new lord, and performed his duties with regularity and precision which gained for him the esteem even of the usurper himself. He had, meanwhile, won golden opinions from all his fellow-retainers by his easy, pleasant manner, and his various accomplishments; and not a few remarked that the lowly clansman seemed to have been born and bred above his station. Meanwhile, the acting prince of Nara secure, as he thought, in his newly-gotten gain, began to display his character in it

true light. He was peevish, passionate, and overbearing. He was a debauchee in the worst sense of the word, even in an age when morality was at a very heavy discount in Japan, and when it was not a reproach to men of high station to hold orgies night after night, and to neglect business in the pursuit of pleasure. Moreover, he had no redeeming qualities to set in the balance against these faults. "There is nothing of the Nara character in him," growled an old retainer, who yet remembered the chivalrous court of the old lord. "He thinks and acts as the lowest of the people. The old lord never kicked a freeborn Samourai, as did this mushroom noble yesterday; nor did he suffer the precincts of the palace to be polluted by the crowds of profligate revellers who nightly disturb the whole quarter around with their drunken orgies." "No," added another; "and the court is no more like the court of old times than is Kiyoto-like Yedo. It is true that the new prince gave an assault of arms when he came into power; but he did it merely because it was the custom, and not that he had any liking for it; and what with the women and the mountebanks he gathers here, the place resembles rather a huge fair than a school of chivalry and honour. He a Nara! Not a bit of it." "As for taking an interest in his followers," said a third, "he treats us like dogs; and, if we were all to be palsied tomorrow, would merely give orders for fresh men to be enrolled, without so much as enquiring after our welfare."

So they growled, and Bisjamon saw that the seeds of disaffection thus deeply sown would not need much fostering to ripen into open revolt; and already dreamt that the happy omen of the finding of the hair-pin was on the point of being fulfilled.

One bitter winter night, when all was wrapped in the silence of sleep, Bisjamon lay thinking of schemes, and turning over projects in his mind. The oil-lamp shed a flickering glare over the apartment, revealing the forms of his sleeping comrades, and glancing brightly against the armour suspended on the walls. It was midnight, and not a sound could be heard but the steps of the sentinel on guard and the baying of a distant dog. He was dozing off, when he heard the sliding screen of his apartment gently pushed aside; starting up, he seized his sword and stood ready for what might occur, but espied through the opening a hand holding a piece of paper; he could see that the hand was small and feminine,

but no more, for the paper was dropped, the hand immediately withdrawn, and the door shut as gently as it was opened. Opening the paper he read as follows: "Bisjamon, in two hours the dreams of the last five years of your life will be realised. Be on the alert and watch." There was no signature nor clue whatever to the authorship of the epistle; the writing was that of an educated woman, but from whom he was at a loss to conjecture, for the women in the palace were either favourites of the prince, or wives of the retainers, with none of whom was he even on speaking acquaintance. However, he dressed himself and waited, deeming it best not to awaken his companions, but to trust to chance. Anxiously he waited, for he knew not how, or by whom, the happy omen of the hair-pin was to have a fulfilment, or in what manner his hopes and dreams were to be realised.

The night, which till now had been serene and calm, began to change to a rough, tempestuous day, the wind howled around and through the old buildings, shaking the frail shutters as though they were pine branches, and driving the snow against them with tremendous force. Suddenly, above the roar of the elements, he heard the deep boom of the fire-bell, and opening the outer shutters, he saw that the main building of the yashiki was in flames. Soon other fire-bells took up the warning note, everyone was aroused, the great gates of the castle thrown open, and the city learnt that the Nara castle was on fire. Through the gates poured the fire brigade with their ensigns, engines, battering-rams, ladders and hooks, headed by gorgeously-arrayed captains on horseback, followed by a howling, shouting crowd, who would not have dreamed of leaving their warm coverlets for a fire of less importance. Bisjamon's first impulse was to rush into the burning building and attempt to save the life of his lord, for, although the man was a usurper and his enemy, he had bound himself by the strongest oaths which feudalism could frame to serve him truly. With this object in view, therefore, he ran towards the already half-consumed block, and would have forced his way in, but a strong hand was laid on his shoulder, and a deep voice said: "Stay, young man, this is the vengeance of the gods, beware how you anger them in attempting to frustrate it." He looked and beheld one of the ancient servants of the Nara household, and at the

same time observed that the other retainers, clad in full war costume, were standing watching the progress of the flames, but neither attempting to aid in the work of extinguishing them, nor preventing the firemen from doing so if they could. Bisjamon saw the situation at a glance. This was the solution of the mysterious letter. The fire was not accidental but the work of a band of desperate men, driven by constant bullying and goading to assert their independence, in a way not considered fiendish in those rough-and-ready days.

Then he reflected that amongst the retainers there were many who were still faithful, and who would have fought for their lord against the disaffected few. These had been decoyed away, he learnt; and, in their absence amongst the tea-houses and pleasure-haunts of the city, where they were probably at this moment helplessly intoxicated, the old retainers had carried out their dreadful scheme of revenge.

So the fire progressed; and although the firemen worked as Japanese firemen always do—with a pluck resembling fool-hardiness, dashing into the hottest corners, staving in doors and casements with their hooks and axes, and battering down whole sides of the building with their huge rams—in an hour's time a mass of smouldering ruins marked the site of the central building of the Nara castle. All inside must have perished, for so rapid had been the course of the fire that not a soul could have found time to escape.

As the first faint glimmer of dawn appeared, Bisjamon saw the firemen gradually withdraw, and the rabble, surfeited with excitement, disperse. Suddenly a woman rushed from the midst of the band of armour-clad warriors, and he clasped to his breast Kaimiri!

The story was soon told. Hers was the hand that had thrust the paper into his room on the preceding night: she had lived as a dependent of the ill-fated usurper since his accession to power, and not as a wife. She had watched her old love re-enlist under the old banner, and had noted his progress. Still firm and unalterable in her affection for him, she had fomented the feelings of the retainers, had fanned them into a flame, and had planned and carried into execution herself the design of destroying the usurper—her husband. Now she came to claim Bisjamon as her own. Proofs of his identity were not wanting, for during her long, bitter union

she had carefully treasured up all the letters and presents which had passed between them in the old days. So Bisjamon was proclaimed rightful prince of Nara, and entered immediately into possession. On the ruins of the old palace was reared a new and magnificent edifice, and the opening festival therein was to celebrate the union of Bisjamon to his true love Kaimiri.

Such is the old-world story which yet delights thousands of Japanese playgoers. It may not be commended from a moral point of view, but allowance must be made for the country and the age, and it seeks to point a moral after all; for of all virtues, that of fidelity to relations, to lovers, and to ancestors, is the most strictly enjoined by all masters of oriental philosophy; and it is the fidelity which Kaimiri owed to Bisjamon, which under a misapprehension she gave to another, and to which she returned, that the old writer dwells upon as being so worthy of reverence and imitation.

UBIQUE.

EVERYWHERE round England

The blue seas break in foam.

Everywhere on the coast-line lie—

'Neath the changeful hue of the English sky,
While the great tides ebb and the seasons change—
Hut, and cottage, and hall, and grange,

Where Englishmen make "home."

Everywhere round England

The ceaseless thunder rolls,

Where the wavelets whisper on western shores,
Where the surf on the Yorkshires sea-board roars,
Where the breakers crash on the cliffs of Wales,
Where the long heave rises to Cornish gales,
Or on Lincoln's perilous shoals.

Everywhere in England,

On the black December nights,

By quiet inland hearths we say,

"God guard the mariners" as we pray;

For scarce is a homestead but has one

To serve the sea with his manhood gone,

Our "girdle" claims its rights.

Everywhere in England,

In the core of our love and pride,

As first of the glorious gifts we have,

We hold our empire of the wave,

And better than steel of serried hosts,

Is the glittering guard of the virgin coasts,

Where our flags triumphant ride.

TOURNAMENTS AND TEA.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

AN advertisement, which appeared about the commencement of the present London season, proposed the revival of an ancient custom, or rather of several ancient customs, for the amusement of the large class of persons who have nothing to do. The employment of the idle is

not an object at which the writer is disposed to hurl withering thunderbolts of scorn. Far from it—for the manufacture of new pleasures for the happy rich is a purpose to which much genius has been devoted, both in the old time and the new. The proverbial potentate who offered a prize to the inventor of a new pleasure must have fallen upon an unimaginative generation, for, in this department of human industry, the supply has for the most part kept pace with the demand. Of course there are amusements and amusements—but the entire catalogue may be referred to a very few classes. There are the primeval, and, under certain circumstances, innocent delights of eating, drinking, and love-making, set forth as the whole duty of man by the sage of Nineveh. There is the pleasure of hunting beasts and men, the old fighting element, which, when it cannot find vent in hand-to-hand combat, simmers gently in the form of pamphlets, platform orations, and those debates in parliament, which certain otherwise rational beings take infinite pleasure in studying as reported in the columns of the daily press. And there are pleasures of the æsthetic kind: the solemn joy experienced in contemplating the intense blue of a fine specimen of Nankin china of the choice hawthorn pattern; the rapture produced by the metallic reflections of a Gubbio dish, by the dull sea-green hue of a bit of old glass, by the quaint form of a Queen Anne candlestick, by a black-letter volume, by the study of that very early Italian school of painting—so early, that it existed before men could either draw or paint—by a profound knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture and ecclesiastical millinery, by an acquaintance with art, so conventional that the Mosaic law is obeyed to the very letter, by a revival of antique styles of tapestry and needlework in general, by the sight of a Roman brick or the fragment of an amphora, by the discovery of a “Vinegar” or a “Breeches” Bible on the bookstall of a remote country town, or a punch-bowl of genuine Japanese ware in the bar-parlour of a country inn, by the possession of a choice water-colour in which a few apparently random dashes and splashes are held to represent a hayfield with haymakers at work under a southerly wind and a cloudy sky, by the perusal of poetry entirely beyond comprehension, and by the study of the last novel in three or more volumes. All these are sources of happiness to many excellent

people, but it would seem that, despite the enthusiasm of collectors and people endowed with mind, there is at the bottom of human nature a solid substratum of savagery. It may be overlaid by art and science. We may talk about Botticelli and Luca Signorelli, we may rave about Lucca della Robbia and Wedgwood, we may believe that the future of the world depends on the adoption of Herr Wagner’s theory of music, and may imagine that the noble savage is so wrapped and lapped within artistic coverings, that he is hidden, abolished, and done away with; but there are facts which prove that personal courage, muscular power, and manual dexterity will yet contrive to extort from mankind and eke from womankind a large meed of admiration. Our boat-races, horse-races, cricket-matches, and athletic sports generally, our love of fox-hunting and grouse-shooting, all prove that the original Adam dies very hard; and what is more curious still, that the great modern æsthetic development has happened concurrently with a passion for muscle and for physical exercise of every kind. In place of the pale student with the hectic flush, we have stalwart antiquaries who walk miles to inspect the possible site of a Roman villa; wiry geologists who ascend Alp on Alp without the agonies of palpitation; painters, poets, and philosophers who ride and row, play tennis and cricket; statesmen who shoot and fish, ride the bicycle, glide on roller skates, tramp enormous distances, cultivate gardens, plant trees, and chop them down. Almost every source of amusement, mental and physical, has been laid under contribution. All this, however, was apparently not enough for the great stomach of those who crave for incessant amusement or occupation. Neither polo nor lawn tennis, football nor tent-pegging, will supply our present requirements, at least in the opinion of the writer of the advertisement referred to, who suggests that we should go back to tournaments and jousts—that the knightly joys of tilting, running at the ring and the quintain, should again be brought into fashion with modern improvements, like old armour with a surface polish of electrotype. It was pleasant to all persons of proper feeling to note that the honorary secretary of the Tournament Club—whoever that shadowy and impalpable person may be, if yet extant anywhere between earth and sky—had, or has, due regard for the privileges of rank.

He began by stating that, in accordance with precedent, only ladies, noblemen, and gentlemen can participate in the proposed revival of chivalric sports. Meetings are (or were, for the Tournament Club has left off advertising)—to be held from time to time in the club-grounds, where “tilting at the ring, tournaments, and falconry will form the chief features; and prizes will be awarded by a ‘Queen of Beauty,’ who will preside.” It may be as well to remark that running at the ring is not, and never was, called “tilting;” but probably the secretary of the T.C. would be much puzzled to define the difference between a tournament, a tilt, and a joust. It also occurs to the writer that the practice of falconry in the “club-grounds, situated within easy driving distance of London,” would be attended with some difficulty. Admitting that herons and cranes could be brought to the spot in a birdcage, they would have to be let loose before the sport could begin; and as the heron is a long-winged bird, the pleasure so rarely suited to the delicate refinement of the female—I beg pardon, lady-like—mind, of seeing a bird of prey pounce upon the creature straining every nerve to escape, or the still greater joy of seeing the falcon impaled upon the heron’s bill, would frequently be lost to the amiable members of the club. Perhaps, however, it was not intended to fly at any such noble quarry as the heron, and the very mild, gentle, and humane entertainment of flying short-winged hawks at pigeons was intended. It is hardly fair to call this pastime “falconry,” but why should a gentleman or a lady—for the sex of the secretary is doubtful—who does not know the difference between “running at the ring” and tilting, stick at such trifles as that between a hawk and a falcon, or for that matter between a hawk and a handsaw? The fun, such as it is, would go on just the same, and would afford more subtle pleasure to the female bosom than the well-designated “Tournament of Doves” at Hurlingham. In the one case the feathered victim is shot down and flutters bleeding and struggling to the earth, in the other there would be a race for life, and the stroke of the hawk’s talons, if watched carefully through a Voigtländer, would excite more emotion than the commonplace bang of a gun. In addition to the chivalrous amusements enumerated, garden-parties, afternoon dances, and other entertainments

were to be given, and another house was to be established “in town, situated in close proximity to the park, where tea will be supplied to the ladies in the drawing-room from three to half-past six o’clock during the season.” As there was, or is, a ladies’ committee, and a list of lady patronesses appeared on one occasion, it may be assumed that the entries for the prize of “Queen of Beauty” would be tolerably numerous. There is in fact a feminine ring about the whole affair—the music of the “kettledrum” as it were.

In plain English, the scheme of the Tournament Club is another invasion of the very few rights and privileges remaining to the male Briton. By degrees, soft and yielding man has allowed the unwarrantable intrusion known as “walking with the guns” to be forced upon him; by no manner of means can he get away hunting or fishing by himself. For a while he had his club. Now his flank is being adroitly turned in this direction. He shall have his club most certainly, “I like to think of my husband at his club; I am sure he enjoys it,” murmurs Belinda. Here is no opposition, no vulgar impatience, no greedy jealousy at the expense of clubs and club life. Not a bit of it. This has been tried and has failed, failed miserably. Belinda is a cleverer woman than her mother. She knows that Mirabel would not quarrel about the matter, that he would not swell up suddenly and turn purple as poor dear papa used to do when mamma, who had an aggravating way—but no matter. Mirabel would certainly not disturb himself in the slightest degree at any remonstrance from Belinda, touching his club hours and his club habits. He would answer her politely, if not kindly; if she were looking her very best when appealing to him, with flashing eyes and pouting lips, he would very likely go the length of kissing her and calling her his “most awfully prettiest darling,” and would then go off to the club as if nothing had happened. The “Mrs. Caudle” system would never do. Mirabel would be monster enough to sleep at his club, if home were haunted by the terror of a certain lecture. How then is this imperturbable young man of the period to be circumvented? Belinda is equal to the occasion. Clubs are the most delightful places. Let us have as many as possible. Let us have London clubs and country clubs, Orleans clubs at Twickenham, where Mirabel can

play at eloping with his own Belinda, and also tournament clubs at which that aspiring athlete can show off his skill and dexterity, and appear in gorgeous suits of armour on his "drestrier" right bravely caparisoned. And Belinda—kind Belinda—will sit looking on, perhaps as Queen of Beauty. And then when the joys of the tournament are over, and the falconry is done, there is one other little matter on which Belinda has set her confiding heart. It is the branch establishment "in close proximity to the park." Her club in town in fact, whither she can go at first of course with dearest Mirabel, but if he in time discovers that clubs unembellished by the sweet presence of women are quieter than the Tournament (town branch), then without him, for there will be plenty of goodly company, Sir Harry Wildair, and Captain Belhamour, and certainly that most entertaining of men, who speaks English like a native, the Vicomte de Château-Escroc. This is the real outcome of the tournament revival—a house in the proximity of the park, where the chivalric exercises of tea-drinking and scandal-mongering can be carried on from three to half-past six past meridian. This is the strong part of the programme, a club-house for the Queen of Beauty and her train, to which the tilt-yard within driving distance, and the falcons and herons, and the rest of it, would be entirely subsidiary.

It would be difficult indeed to conjure up the spirit of the ancient tournament, the earliest known introduction of the system of competitive examination. The tilt-yard must have been the abode of the much-talked-of spirit of chivalry, for it is vain to search for it anywhere else. Beyond the barrier no such thing as fair play was dreamt of. A man slew his enemy when and where he could; and as for women, neither the tyrannical suzerain, who became their legal guardian, nor the daring abductor ever stopped to consider their opinion. It was not in ordinary life, but simply at a meeting of one of the Courts of Love in which golden-footed Eleanor took so much delight, or at a great tournament, that the laws of courtesy were, after a fashion, observed; and I am by no means certain that a narrative of the proceedings at either of these celebrations would be edifying to a modern reader. The honour of inventing the tournament may be given either to France or Germany, according to the nationality or fancy of

the reader. It was instituted, according to some learned authorities, by Henry the Fowler, according to others by Charles the Bald, but evidently grew from a species of drill or full-dress rehearsal of war into a strange entertainment, in which love and murder, music and hard knocks, were curiously mingled. Yet, in spite of their theatrical character, the tournaments of the middle ages were very real, as at them the fame of a good knight could be quite as well acquired as in actual warfare, the conditions of which are rarely so favourable to the display of personal courage and address as the joust. Indeed, the prowess displayed in the lists must have produced for the moment a greater sensation than exploits in the field, which are rarely witnessed by admiring sympathisers. The spectators consisted not alone of the wondering multitude, but of princes and, chief of all, of ladies who awarded honours and distinctions. Tournaments too were not merely interesting for their festivities and merry entertainments, but also as affording the nobles an eligible opportunity of deliberating on military or political undertakings. Advantage was taken of such an assemblage by Falk of Neuilly to preach the crusade which led to the conquest of Constantinople—by the Latins from the Greeks, be it well understood. Important celebrations, such as these, were regulated by laws which prevailed with slight variations throughout Western Christendom. Perhaps the most successful effort at codifying tournament law is that of King René, entitled "Les Tournois du Roi René." A tournament could only be proclaimed by a prince, a high baron, or a baronet. In Germany the knights of the empire (of Franconia, Suabia, Bavaria, and the Elzine) were authorised to proclaim tournaments. The announcement was made in the way of a challenge. He who proposed the tournament despatched a herald with a tilting sword, which was delivered to the party challenged. The terms of appellant and defendant were applied to the knights who took the lead of the contending parties. The tourney being accepted by the defendant, he had to select four judges out of a list of eight knights and four squires. He had also to present the herald-at-arms with a costly garment, embroidered with gold or made of scarlet satin. The herald received a large sheet of parchment containing the effigies of the appellant and the defendant, who were portrayed in the act of tourney-

ing. The four corners contained the armorial bearings of the judges. The herald, placing this picture on his shoulders, and being followed by his pursuivants, appeared with his authorisation before the judges, who determined at what time and place the festival should be celebrated. The intended sport was now publicly announced by the herald, and parchment rolls with the armorial devices of the judges were distributed among the bystanders. The ordinary weapons of offence consisted of a lance, a club, and a sword; the first-named terminating in a coronet or small crown instead of a point, the shaft being gaily decorated in a spiral pattern, in fact exactly like a barber's pole. The swords and clubs were duly measured and weighed, approved and stamped by the judges. Of defensive armour, that worn by the Germans in the fifteenth century was very heavy and massive, and worn over thickly-padded underclothing. Although a certain measure of safety was obtained by the use of very heavy armour, it met with less favour in England and France, where the knights could move with greater ease under their comparatively slight covering. The tilting helmet was, however, very heavy in all cases, frequently weighing sixteen or more pounds, and coming completely down to the shoulder. The best work to give a correct idea of the appearance of knights in tilting gear of the fifteenth century—the great century for plate-armour—is that of Dr. F. Kottenkamp. It is profusely illustrated with coloured engravings, not constructed from bits of old armour by an imaginative draughtsman, but simply copied from contemporary illuminated MSS. in the libraries of Dresden and of Gotha. The originals are painted on parchment, and contain marginal explanations, "which, however," adds the wary Doctor, "are not always to be relied upon." Specimens of the *Turnierbuch* and the *Fechtbuch* are not very rare in Germany, whence it is quite possible that King René drew some of the materials for his compilation. Somewhat before the commencement of the fifteenth century, the ancient chain-mail had been pushed aside, piece by piece, in favour of the more efficient plate-armour. Metal plates were first attached to the limbs, and by slow degrees extended to the trunk. In this mixed armour, well shown in the monumental figure of Bernabo Visconti at Milan (one of the employers of that famous freelance, Sir John Hawk-

wood), were fought the great battles between our Edwards and the armies of France for the sovereignty of that country. So long as mail was chiefly worn, tournaments were exceedingly dangerous amusements, frequently causing the death of a large number of combatants; and even when both horse and man were encased in plates of steel, accidents were far from uncommon. Looking at some of the figures reproduced by Dr. Kottenkamp, the spectator refuses to believe that they can have come to grief. When the horse was not actually clad in steel, his flanks were guarded by bands of straw, which were drawn together with strings and attached to the pommel. A crescent-shaped bag, stuffed with straw, protected the breast of the war-horse; these protecting buffers being entirely concealed by trappings, which generally bore the heraldic device of the knight. These housings in some cases are very magnificent, but help to give a curious hobby-horse look to the noble chargers, who must have been "up to twenty stone" at least. Sometimes the horse-armour was entirely dispensed with, hardly with common fairness, as it seems to the modern reader.

Having appointed the time and place of the encounter, the judges next superintended the erection of the lists. The space enclosed was oblong, the length exceeding the breadth by one-fourth; the richly-decorated platforms for the sovereign, the non-combatant nobles, and the ladies occupied one side of the arena. The other sides were left to ordinary spectators. The barriers were erected in double lines, between which was left a space of four steps for the attendants to keep off the crowd.

Four days before the festivity, both appellant and defendant made their appearance with an army of combatants, squires, heralds, pursuivants, trumpeters, and the rest, and proceeded, as would be said in the United States, to "organise the meeting." So far from its being possible, as novelists appear to suppose, for an unknown knight to enter the lists, every person present was compelled to show his credentials and make good his quarterings, to the satisfaction of the judges and heralds. If any nobleman were suspected of heinous offence, such as lending money at usury, marrying the daughter of a plebeian, or producing a doubtful pedigree, his claim was challenged and his case duly investigated before he

was allowed to compete. A solemn oath was next taken to abide by the conditions of the tournament, and the fun commenced. Various kinds of combat were in fashion in the fifteenth century. There was generally a "mêlée," or "Behord," as it was called in Germany; but the joust, or single combat with lances, was the favourite exercise. This is too well known to need description. It was not uncommon for both lances to be shivered fairly and squarely against the shield or the body; a blow on the helmet, however, often brought a knight to mother-earth. Before engaging in combat, it was usual for the knights to ask ladies for scarves, favours, gloves, streamers, &c., and in return they not unfrequently presented their dames with the prize won under their auspices. The prizes given were very costly—rich suits of armour, horses, and gems of rare size and quality. In fact the entertainment was conducted on sublimely extravagant principles; and the leaders of a tournament not unfrequently ruined themselves for life by a single act of thoughtless profusion. Regarding the institution of the tournament from afar, I am inclined to think it was mainly kept up for the advantage of the heralds and pursuivants, who received heavy fees from everybody—leaders and competitors, victors and vanquished. After blooming for several hundreds of years, the joust disappeared very suddenly, owing in part to three causes—the disuse of complete armour in war, the ruinous expense of tournaments, and the fatal accidents which, in spite of all precautions, were constantly occurring. Ecclesiastical thunders had long been levelled at them, but in vain. Jousting went on merrily, in spite of accidents, till Henri the Second fell by the lance of Montgomery. Despite this catastrophe, there was still great love for the ancient sport, and another great tournament was given at Orleans, in 1561; when Henri de Bourbon-Montpensier, Prince de Beauprean, a prince of the blood royal, was killed. Probably these two serious accidents would not have stopped the practice, had not real fighting set in for the next thirty odd eventful years. When there was so much genuine slaughter to be had, it was not likely that men would care to play at combat. They veered to the opinion of our own Henry the Fifth, who, when asked on his wedding-day when the jousts in honour of that event would take place, answered simply, "To-morrow morning I

am going to the siege of Sens. Anyone who likes jousting in earnest can come with me, and he shall be satisfied."

As we have seen, jousting was not originally a mere amusement. It was the highest expression of warlike training and knightly skill. Sometimes—as is evident from the very stringency of the regulations by which it was guided—it was apt to degenerate into savagery, and it was doubtless attended with a certain amount of licentiousness. But it was a genuine outgrowth of an age of war, and despite its grotesque trappings, can hardly appear in a ridiculous light.

So much for the tournaments of old. In the next chapter I purpose to describe the events of a modern tournament—a revival of the ancient chivalric custom in the early days of Queen Victoria's reign, when Alfred Count d'Orsay was "the fashion," and the man of Sedan was a quiet, thoughtful young gentleman, much given to books, and also to the manly sports then in vogue.

MINISTERIAL LETTER-BAGS.

WHO can compute by the standard of solid pounds, aye, or hundredweights, the bulk of the daily postal delivery in Downing-street and its neighbourhood, or who can estimate in figures the host of communications of which that delivery consists? Ye industrious, all-trustworthy employés of the Post-office, to whom is specially assigned the duty of conveying to Whitehall the letters, official and non-official, destined for the perusal of the powers that be, groaning in the accomplishment of your task beneath the accustomed burden, make conjectural answer, based upon the facts of your stern experience! Answer, too, ye myrmidons of State, ye legions of secretaries, under-secretaries, private secretaries, and by whatever other name ye be called, for upon you devolves the labour of bringing that vast miscellany of epistles under the immediate notice of the great men themselves, and of deciding what may be kept back from them, what must be brought forward, what may be perused by deputy, what dismissed with the response of silence! Doubtless, there are statistics extant, which would supply all the information now desiderated on each of these heads. Never mind; we will not laboriously ransack them now, or attempt to gratify the curiosity which each one of

the above-suggested enquiries is calculated to provoke. Our immediate investigation has to do not with quantity, but quality; not with the avoirdupois ponderosity of what may be comprehensively called ministerial letter-bags, but with the character and the variety of their contents.

The life of a State official, be he cabinet minister or under-secretary, is one of incessant strain, endless anxiety, continuous toil. Scant leisure, holidays marred by the perpetual irruptions of despatches, telegrams, and other documents, does the parliamentary vacation bring. While Parliament is sitting, that is during nearly six months of the year, he is condemned systematically to burn the candle at both ends. Happy is he if he be fairly asleep by two A.M.; at eleven, or by noon at the latest, he will be at his office in Whitehall, Downing-street, or Pall-mall, busy with the reports of his private secretaries, his letters, and much amorphous material, which, if the fates be propitious, will some day or other be reduced to order in blue-books, or perhaps be embodied in some measure introduced to Parliament; and, it may be, specially commended in the gracious speech from the throne. The chances are that our secretary or under-secretary for, say, the Sealing-wax or Wind-bag Department, has been already up since eight or nine, after barely five hours' feverish sleep. He has been, in all probability, as a sequel to a hasty and unsubstantial breakfast, endeavouring to brace himself for the toils of the day with a canter in Rotten-row. But just as that equestrian promenade begins to grow populous and gay with many riders and loungers, our official consults his watch, or, admonished by the chimes of Big Ben, turns his horse's head, and makes his way towards Westminster.

Let those who sometimes complain of the inaccessibility of the gentlemen responsible for the conduct of her Majesty's Government—who denounce as a pompous and needless piece of pedantry, that etiquette which interposes between them and the outside world, and makes them invisible, unless some special previous arrangement has been made, to the casual caller—reflect how closely packed are the occupations of the official day, how short the time for the performance of how many things. There is a deputation to be received, which will absorb at least an hour; there is the daily conference between Secretary of State and under-secretary; there are business interviews with other members of the

Government. In addition to this, there is the preparation for the night's work in Parliament. Notice has been given of questions, pabulum for whose reply has to be diligently searched out. A debate is expected, which will draw special attention to the department, and the hon. or right hon. gentleman who represents it must, by dint of much official cramming, furnish himself with all the facts and figures requisite for a complete exposition of the case. A bill which the Government is bent on "carrying," and which is being opposed at every clause—not so much on broad grounds of principle as on the specific objections to the prepared machinery—is making its way through committee; and our statesman, to whom it is chiefly entrusted, must prove himself an encyclopædia of practical arguments, each one of which is a conclusive refutation of censures and criticisms. Four o'clock comes, and the minister has to be in the House. Who shall blame him, if he has economised to the utmost the four preceding hours; or who would remove the mysterious inaccessibility with which he endeavours to hedge himself round.

But the great man is with his letters: let us examine the table on which they are spread, and see what is the purport of some of them. There are piles of correspondence which the post has brought; there are baskets full of loose papers of ominously business-like appearance; there are documents of about the size of half a sheet of foolscap, neatly tied together, with a piece of coloured paper—red, yellow, or green—placed upon their surface, to indicate the degree of urgency of the documents which it accompanies. These documents relate to the conduct of that branch of public business connected with the department, in different parts of the world. If red is the hue of their covering, the minister understands that they will wait; if yellow, he knows that the sooner he looks at them the better; if green, his spirit gives way within him, for he sees that the pile which that colour distinguishes is of the size of a small mountain, and he knows that green is the signal of immediate and critical importance. But the great man turns from these papers, and betakes himself to his correspondence. We are now truly with a very great man indeed—a cabinet minister—nay, shall we say with the First Lord of the Treasury himself? Let not the most superstitious worshipper of the forms and personages of

the Constitution be alarmed. There shall be no flippant revelation of State secrets, nothing in the nature of an approach to familiar personality. Our First Lord is a pure abstraction; he may be the Right Honourable the Earl of Beaconsfield, the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone, or any other Right Honourable, past or future, whom the reader likes to imagine. It matters not who the individual is, what are his views on public affairs, whether he be Whig or Tory, Radical or Conservative—his official duties are in the same groove whatever his political faith, whatever his identity. Administrative dynasties come and go, and in policy, principles, and popularity are wide asunder as the poles; but whatever the principles, the practical details of the work to be done are always much the same; there is a close correspondence of technical responsibilities, and an entire similarity of official routine. The head of the Government, for the time being, gets on an average the same number of letters from his worshippers or his monitors, on nearly the same class of subject, and giving evidence of much the same qualities in their writers.

Very roughly speaking, the contents of the ministerial letter-bag may be divided into parliamentary and extra-parliamentary. Those epistles which come under the former head are concerned with the relations existing between their illustrious recipient and those who profess to be of the party, or who are opposed to it, in either Chamber of the Legislature. In the accumulation of correspondence at which we are now looking, there are quite sure to be some letters from the generals of the Opposition forces, proposing some plan for the conduct of a certain debate; or suggesting some compromise on a particular bill which may happen to be in committee; or showing how, if the right honourable gentleman would but adopt such-and-such a course, he might disarm some of his most formidable critics, and count at the same time upon satisfying all his more reasonable and moderate partisans. Happily for us, the strife of the "ins" and the "outs" is conducted with an amenity in England unknown elsewhere, and this portion of the ministerial correspondence conclusively proves the fact. Indeed, our imaginary First Lord or ideal Secretary of State very often finds, that the communications of his professed friends are a good deal more troublesome than those of his professed foes. A follower who is an inveterate

crotcheteer is not more unmanageable than an antagonist who is irreconcilable. As the statesman, to whom it has pleased her Majesty to give her confidence, looks at his letters, there are certain hand-writings which he contemplates with profound weariness. He recognises at a glance the envelopes which he knows contain absolutely impracticable hints and recommendations, utterly groundless protests, and quite impossible requests from his most orthodox but most importunate supporters. That little sheaf of letters which he puts on one side is a collection of communications, the respective authors of which express a hope that the right honourable gentleman will so arrange that they shall have a day for introducing a bill much desired by themselves or their constituents; or respectfully point out that if a ministerial measure be marked by the presence or the absence of a certain clause, such-and-such an industry will be menaced, or such-and-such an interest injured; or assure the minister that it will be highly desirable if, for the purpose of reassuring some of the more weak-kneed of his followers, he will take an early opportunity of declaring what points or principles of it are indispensable. It must be understood that these epistles only come from the older members of the party, and those who are entitled personally to approach the minister. What does the minister do? Some he answers in a few lines at once; others he puts aside for consideration; all have his attention. He will confer with his private secretary on some; on some he will communicate with the whip of the party, the patronage secretary of the Treasury as he is officially called, and will ascertain from that functionary whether the discontent to which such letters point can be said to contain any of the elements of danger.

Putting aside the mass of correspondence which the minister receives from his brother members of the elective Legislature, we will glance at some of the most salient characteristics of that countless multitude of epistles, whose writers are members of the extra-parliamentary public, which daily is poured forth into Downing-street. Many there are of precisely the same character as might be found on the breakfast-table of any private and non-official senator—applications from friends and constituents for berths in Government offices; letters particularly drawing attention to the neglect of local welfare by the

Imperial Parliament; appeals to charity; and expostulations, varying in tone from the cringing entreaty to the peremptory demand on the subject of projected legislation, which will be seriously detrimental to the commerce of particular boroughs, or the traditional rights of counties. A cabinet minister is, of course, assailed with applications from old personal friends, on behalf of their sons or other members of their family, for whom they wish to secure nomination for offices in the Civil Service. There are, also, lengthy communications from the accredited agents of the party in the provinces, despatched, in the first instance, to the head whip, and by that officer laid before his chief. Some of these are troublesome enough. The minister hears that the great Tin-tack interest is united as one man against the measure which the Government has introduced for regulating afresh that particular industry; or that an agitation, which may become formidable, is being organised for the remission of the present impost on velveteens and smock-frocks. Others are written apropos of a vacancy, actual or impending, in a parliamentary seat, which has been hitherto occupied by a supporter of the Administration, or which it is hoped to wrest from the Opposition. These are documents which require the closest attention on the part of the ministerial mind. Composed with great skill and local knowledge, they place before the official eye precisely the qualifications which are required in the forthcoming candidate. Then comes the exercise of the official choice. The local agent waits with anxiety to know what the selection is. The gentleman on whom the lot has fallen may be a stranger to him, or known only by distant rumour. But as soon as the aspirant member for the borough has set his foot within the town, and has been closeted with one or two of its leading inhabitants, so soon does that astute agent know whether the politician despatched by the "party" is or is not the right man for the right place.

Even as the Imperial Parliament sitting at Westminster is, in a manner, a national High Court of Grievances, so is every cabinet minister stationed at his desk in his office the daily recipient of epistles complaining of wrongs inflicted and injustices sustained, either by an accidental mishap in the machine of Government, or by the operation of some law, vicious in principle and mistaken in practice. The number of letters of this character varies in the

different departments of State. Be sure that the most ponderous pile of all is that which is deposited within handy reach of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for War. Are not soldiers chartered and inveterate grumblers? are they ever without a grievance? is it not as certain that an officer in her Majesty's army will not be engaged in confidential chat with you a quarter of an hour before he waxes eloquent on the scandal of the new regulations, as that he will without an instant's hesitation, when the time comes, lead the forlorn hope, or fling himself foremost into the breach? But what shall be said of the countless wails, pitched in every key of discontent, from that of the supplicating and newly-left widow to that of the peppery liverless veteran, who has grown bald and bronzed in his country's service, under a tropical sky, which that other right honourable gentleman or nobleman, the Secretary of State for our oriental empire, is condemned to receive? Sometime these documents contain the threat of an action at law; sometimes they are piteous protests against the rate of exchange, and the depreciation of the rupee; sometimes they are entreaties from a mother, whose husband has died a hero's death, that a berth of some sort may be found for her son. The outside communications chiefly received by the head of the Colonial Office are of a different character. Colonists being their own masters, and carrying with them wherever they go the representative institutions of the mother-country, have for the most part no troubles for which they seek redress at the capital of the empire. Yet are they not uncommunicative, and sometimes their communicativeness lapses into importunate garrulity. They have much information to give, and they give it freely without being solicited, on the character and wants of the various parts of the colonial dominions. Much more often than might be supposed, the correspondents of the Colonial Secretary suggest fresh annexations of those dominions; there are even cases in which unemployed gentlemen, their hearts burning for adventure, apply for a charter for a filibustering expedition, whose object it is that the British standard may float over realms now held by the noble savage, while applications for concessions from companies and individuals are of course exceedingly common.

Let our enquiries once more range into

a very august sphere. We are again in the sanctum of the First Lord of the Treasury, the Prime Minister for the time being, whatever the personality of that illustrious individual. The great man looks, with as much of a smile as his features can wear, over a sheet of post letter-paper, written in a large clear hand, or listens while his secretary tells him something of the contents of an epistle much interlined and underscored. What is the purport of the document? Let it be understood, that all the eccentric letter-writers of the United Kingdom seem to select Downing-street, as the point at which to discharge their missives. That the head of her Majesty's Government should receive applications from some two or three gentlemen a week, who are anxious to edit his speeches, with possibly a brief introductory memoir; that he should be assailed by mysterious correspondents, who assure him that they have intelligence of the most vital moment to the realm, which they would communicate to him personally, since they fear to entrust it to paper; that he should be pestered by prayers for small places from obscure partisans and ecclesiastical preferment from hungry divines; that a considerable portion of the contents of his letter-bag should be the impudent petitions of pure mendicity—in all these things the statesman shares the common lot of exceptional eminence. Nor, perhaps, may it seem surprising that in this age of universal knowledge, the Prime Minister should reckon amongst the most prolific authors of this egotistic correspondence, gentlemen who appear to think that he leads the existence of a troglodyte, and that he is uninformed in the rudimentary facts of statesmanship. Others are more ambitious in the instruction which they would impart, and in the influence which they essay to exercise. They will thus sketch out a policy, in a little matter of six sheets of foolscap; or show how a crisis may be surmounted, in a communication which would make in print a decent-sized volume. Assuredly if our British Capitol were ever in danger, and the cackling of geese could save it, we need not despair. What shall be said of the remonstrances, exhortations, and general hints with which the statesman who happens to be foremost in the confidence of his sovereign is favoured from his countrymen? There is but one further class of communication which need be specially indicated, and these are

of a semi-religious and prophetic character. Such a document the writer of these lines has seen. It consisted of twelve ordinary sheets of letter-paper, written in a loose straggling hand, and it was manifestly the work of one whom much religion and little learning had driven mad—in truth, of a devout lunatic. All the predictions in Holy Scripture which could by any ingenuity be construed as referring, however remotely, to the present signs of the times were set forth in extenso. Then came a brief summary and exposition of the concluding chapters of the Apocalypse; a famous English statesman was demonstrated to have the number of the beast graven on his forehead; a compendious account of the disasters which would eventually occur, if certain things were not done, followed; and finally a series of vague political and theological counsels. The odd thing is that the letter was not only not unprecedented, but that letters of this character, the obvious effusions of well-meaning maniacs, are by no means uncommon.

Of all her Majesty's principal ministers of State, none are so much solicited by requests to receive deputations, and by general correspondence of an indescribably miscellaneous character, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of the Home Department. Among those letters are some of the most useful and suggestive received in Downing-street. The departments and legislation of which those two ministers have charge render it desirable and necessary, that they should have the minutest acquaintance with special demands and local requirements. A comparatively trivial alteration in the incidence of a tax may make all the difference between the imposition and the removal of a burden of discontent. Is it a licensing bill on which the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department is engaged? Of course, the most exhaustive investigation, which official machinery can command, into the wants and wishes of the people has been made before the measure was drafted. But the official eye is sure to neglect something. There are certain facts, certain exceptional conditions prevailing in particular districts, which have somehow been ignored. These are formally communicated to the department which takes cognisance of them, are duly enquired into, and very frequently have the effect of considerably modifying the ministerial

measure. Per contra, neither at the Home Office nor the Treasury are the letters of impracticable crotcheteers and vain and pragmatic hobbyists unknown. If preposterous proposals and utterly impracticable plans could have contributed to such a result, an efficient alternative to capital punishment would long since have been discovered, nay, crime itself would have probably become extinct in this realm; while as for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would have paid off the national debt at least five times over.

That which forms the most romantic portion of the ministerial letter-bag has still to be noticed. Diplomacy, as it is conventionally represented to us, is a darkly-mysterious science; and not a few of the letters which find their way to the office—that is, the head-quarters of British diplomacy—are of a corresponding character. If the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs were to believe all that his correspondents tell him, we should have had him living for a quarter of a century past on the brink of a volcano, whose eruption would have long since desolated the kingdom with the scoriac rivers of revolution kindled by foreign hands. But suit-seeking adventurers and applicants for employment are among the most copious contributors to the Foreign Office letter-bag. Not merely at a time of European stress like the present, but in the piping times of peace, there are scores and hundreds of ladies, as well as gentlemen, who profess themselves ready and able to reveal the clandestine designs of foreign governments, and to act as secret agents generally, for a modest honorarium. There is a conspiracy brewing in some obscure portion of the world which must sooner or later assume disastrous dimensions, and of which only the particular applicant can, by proceeding to the spot at the charge of the public, give accurate intelligence; or it is highly desirable that the Government should send, *sub rosa*, the writer on a mission to Bithynia; or their correspondent, A, B, or C, has had experience and possesses linguistic attainments which would make him invaluable in the employment of the Crown. Lastly, the diplomatic service is aristocratic, and the Foreign Office is fashionable; and, as to the fashionable and aristocratic suitors for places and nomination who approach the Foreign Secretary with every kind of letter, is not their name legion?

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DOBIE.
CHAPTER VI. NICK GIVES ME UP.

MUCH more Miss Leveridge said to the same effect, denouncing and defaming me because of my treatment of her brother. I was certainly startled and even alarmed, she seemed to have lost self-control so completely, and yielded herself to such paroxysms of rage. And I had deemed her so meek and inanimate and timid, always! But the wrong done to her brother had kindled within her a curious wrath. It was not on her own account, but on his, that she so stormed at me, proved herself so vindictive and malignant. The white rabbit had been transformed into a wild cat. And yet I could not help respecting her in some measure for her violence. Indeed I think I liked her better for reviling me, even though she did frighten me somewhat. Anything was preferable to the tremulous, vapid, wearisome submissiveness of her manner of life in Powis-place.

I found myself considerably moved by the conduct and the speech of Miss Leveridge. Her reproaches rang in my ears. In part, perhaps, I felt that I had merited her hatred and contempt. I was blameworthy in regard to "poor Dick." Of his forgiveness I felt assured, however; but I could not expect magnanimity of his sister. Was I so odious as she represented me to be: so worthless and contemptible? And I allowed myself to be, perhaps, unduly depressed by thought of the punishment she had promised me; implying the advent of misfortune. Then she had spoken scornfully of my poverty, of my working for my bread, of my being an actress. It was hard to be so despised by Miss Leveridge.

My nervous system seemed still to be fretting and jarring from conflict with Miss Leveridge, when I received another visitor, whose absence, all things considered, would have better pleased me. Nick entered the room. We had not met since my marriage. At any other time I should have been rejoiced at seeing him; but just then Nick and I appeared to be out of tune with each other, so to speak. I noted, as he entered, that his face was clouded with discontent, that there was a decided scowl upon his forehead, and that

his expression was wholly unsympathetic. I was in the mood, perhaps, for observing small matters, and permitting them to vex me. He kept his hat on for a minute or two, much longer than there was any necessity for; and his boots were very muddy. I remember deciding that he might easily have shown more regard for propriety of appearance.

"Well, Doris," he said, as he kissed me coldly, yet rather roughly, "it's a long time since we've met."

"Well, Nick, I'm glad you've come to see me at last."

"Where's M. Riel?" He seemed to take pains to say "Mounseer," as though priding himself upon a Britannic grossness of mispronunciation.

"My husband is not at home just now, but I expect him back shortly."

"Oh, it doesn't matter. I didn't come to call upon *him*."

"Paul will be sorry that he's missed you."

"I daresay. But he'll get over it."

"At any rate he would have shown politeness to you, as my brother."

"You mean that I am wanting in politeness to him, as your husband?"

"That is very much what I mean, Nick."

"I did not intend to be rude. But we need hardly discuss that question now. You married to please yourself. You could not expect that everybody would be equally pleased. I own, for one, that I was not so very well pleased. I think you might have done better, have been happier if you had married someone else. For all that, I am sure I hope you may be happy with your Frenchman."

"Thank you," I said with much tartness, and conscious that I was irritated.

"You're very welcome," he observed, simply. "Now I'll go on to say what I came to say. And perhaps, to begin with, it's quite as well that your husband isn't here. I can speak more frankly."

"Well?" He had paused, as though expecting me to say something; or because he was uncertain how to express himself.

"I hope it isn't true, what I've heard; and yet I fear it is, when I look at all that rubbish on the table."

"What have you heard, Nick?"

"That you intend to come out on the stage as an actress."

"It's perfectly true, Nick."

"Well, a little time ago I certainly would not have believed such a thing of you."

"And now you are prepared to believe anything of me?"

"Well, almost anything. But is it possible that your husband approves of your doing this thing?"

"Can't you understand, Nick, that I should not do this thing, or any other thing, except with my husband's approval?"

"It's all very well saying that, Doris, but of course Frenchmen can't be expected to understand English ways of thinking."

"You would have him forbid my going on the stage?"

"Of course. That's what he would do, if he knew what English people think of actresses."

"What do they think of them?"

"Surely, you know just as well as I do. To speak plainly, they think them a low lot. There, now you've got it."

"I'm not going to discuss with you the prejudices entertained by silly people."

"Of course. I know that you're very obstinate, Doris, and won't listen to reason, and won't allow yourself to be persuaded, even to your own advantage."

"Well, then, don't let us talk any more upon this subject, Nick."

"It's easy to say that. But I've a duty to do in the matter, and I mean to go through with it. It's right that you should know what I think of your going on the stage. Now, I entirely disapprove of it. I dislike the notion of it extremely."

"Do you remember what you were often saying to me some time ago—beggars cannot be choosers?"

"Yes, I remember saying that; and you mean that you act not from choice, but from necessity? However, that need not have been the case. You were not obliged to marry this poor Frenchman. I begged you to have nothing to say to him. You might have married very well if you'd chosen, and then there would have been no occasion for your turning actress."

"I suppose love is to count for nothing in these cases, Nick?"

His cheeks flushed rather as he answered: "It need not count for everything, I suppose. I don't see why there should not be reason and common sense, even as regards such matters as love and marriage."

"Have you never been in love yourself, Nick, in rather an unreasonable way?"

"Never you mind."

"With Catalina, for instance?"

"Now I'm not going to discuss that subject, Doris," he said, rather angrily. "Whether I did, or did not, love Catalina, reasonably or unreasonably, isn't now the question. I know what you want to do; you want to turn off the conversation, and you think to get a laugh at me. But I'm not going to stand that. If I'd fallen over head and ears in love with a poor Frenchwoman, then you might have had a sort of an argument against me, especially if I was letting her go on the stage to earn her living. But, as it happens, I haven't done anything of that kind, and I'm not going to. Depend upon it, you're doing wrong, Doris. I don't want to say anything unpleasant about your husband."

"No, Nick, don't trouble yourself to do that."

"I won't. On the contrary, I'm disposed to make excuses for him, because of his being a foreigner, and to my thinking foreigners are always rather half-witted sort of people. I'll leave him out of the question altogether."

"Yes, that will be best, Nick."

"I'll only say that if he were an Englishman he wouldn't let you do this thing—he'd rather work his fingers to the bone than allow you to work for him in this degrading way."

"I see nothing degrading in it."

"That's your perverseness. You're not a judge of these questions, Doris; you don't understand them, and you ought to be content to act upon the advice of others more competent to form an opinion."

"Yourself, for instance?"

"Yes, myself, for instance. I tell you that actresses are thought very little of in England. What they may be thought of by Frenchmen and others in foreign countries I don't know, and I don't care, and it doesn't really signify in the least. We are dealing with the question of actresses in England; and they're not respected here, indeed they are thought very little of. How could it be otherwise? Women who paint their faces and display their pink silk stockings on a public stage to anyone who's got sixpence to pay for admission to the show!"

"I'm not going to exhibit my pink silk stockings, for that matter. To hear you talk, anyone would think I was going to dance on the tight-rope, or to stand on a horse, and jump over ribbons, in a circus."

"No, I don't think you are clever enough to do that," he said, with a thoughtful air. "I've seen the riders do that at Astley's, and I always wondered

how they managed it all without hurting themselves."

How stupid he was! It was no use talking to him. It really seemed that he would have respected me more if I had performed in the ring at Astley's. I held my tongue, resolved that he might now say his worst, and that I would not answer.

"It seems to me that you are taken up with Basil's notions. He thought it perfectly respectable thing to sit in the orchestra at Sadler's Wells and play the flute; it's just a mercy he didn't go playing about the streets, trying to pick up stray halfpence as an itinerant musician. However, you have gone beyond him. He was satisfied with the orchestra; you're going to step on to the stage. It's marvelous to me how you can even think of such a thing without feeling ashamed, because you know, Doris, you come of respectable people, and you were carefully brought up. Those old aunts of ours at Bath held up their heads pretty high and counted themselves rather fine ladies. And though it's true our family has undergone misfortune, and things are not so prosperous as once they were, still, so far as I know, the Doubledays have never as yet done anything they need be ashamed of. We ought to have kept together, we three—you and Basil and I—that's what I've always said."

"Yes, Nick; I know. You've said so good many times; too often, perhaps," I interrupted, impatiently.

"Not often enough, I am afraid, to judge by the result. If you and Basil had but stuck close to me, we might have been spared all this trouble."

"Yes, we should have kept together and remained little children always; and submitted to you because you were the eldest, and allowed you to domineer over us because you were the strongest, and we couldn't well help ourselves, and so have gone on unto the end of the chapter; that's what you'd have liked. But of course it's nonsense to talk in that way."

"I think you are certainly talking nonsense, if you ask my opinion."

"Pray say no more, Nick; you've said too much already, and nothing you can say will affect my resolution. I've chosen my own path. I am not to be turned from it. I fully intend to try my fortune as an actress. I have great hopes that I shall succeed."

"Don't provoke me to go and hiss you off the stage, Doris. I suppose, as one of the public, I may pay my money at the

doors, and take my seat and see the performance, and frankly express my opinion about it?"

"No doubt; if you are too proud to accept an order."

"I think I'd sooner pay my money at the door."

"You wouldn't like to hiss, if you went with an order? Well, you must please yourself. I don't know why you should be so proud, Nick; why you should set up for being so very superior. After all, you know you are only a clerk in a bank in Whitechapel."

"At any rate I'm respectable. That's more than can be said of all your actresses."

I did not answer him. It seemed better to let him have his own way. Finding me dumb, he rose to depart.

"Well, Doris," he said, with a sigh, "I suppose there's no changing you?"

"Nothing you can say, Nick, will change me."

"There's only this to be considered. You become an actress, as you say, because of your poverty. You're driven to it by necessity; it's not a matter of choice with you. Now, I'm poor enough myself, as I need not tell you. I never seem to have had a penny to call my own that I have not worked for, and worked hard for, and I want all the money I earn for—for another purpose. But I tell you what I'll do, Doris. Promise me faithfully that you won't bring this disgrace upon us, that you won't go upon the stage, and I'll pay you down ten pounds in hard cash. Now, what do you say? Will that suit you?"

"No, Nick, you can keep your money."

"Come. I'll say twelve pounds ten shillings. Won't that tempt you?"

"No, Nick."

"Well, that's as far as I can go; and such a payment would pinch me a good deal until next quarter-day."

"Nick, I can be just as obstinate as you; and though you were to offer me a thousand pounds in bank-notes, I'd have my own way in this matter."

"Well, I do think you are the most ill-natured, disagreeable, aggravating girl I know. But even as a child you had a nasty temper; and now——. It's waste of words talking to you. Good-bye. I give you up as a bad job."

"Good-bye, Nick."

"I hope the day will come, and come soon, when you'll feel ashamed of yourself, Doris; and I hope the wretched Frenchman—your husband—will also feel some shame for remaining idle, while you work; for letting you turn actress, while he does nothing."

With that parting blow at me and at Paul, Nick went his way; his cheeks red, and his eyes blazing with anger.

It was late at night when the lodging-house servant brought me up a small sealed parcel, which she said had been left at the street door by someone she did not know. The handwriting of the address was altogether strange to me.

The ring Mr. Leveridge had given me, which I had sold to defray the expenses of my lessons in elocution, was returned to me!

By whom? I could not discover. No letter accompanied the ring. It was sent back to me anonymously.

I wearied myself with fruitless conjectures on the subject.

Had Paul done me this kindness? He had not the means, and there was no reason for any mystery on his part in the matter.

Had the ring come to me again from Mr. Leveridge?

That was possible. And yet how could he know that I had sold it? Altogether I was certainly puzzled.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. II. LINDENHEIM.

CHAPTER VIII. CELIA'S FIRST OFFER.

CELIA woke next morning with a strange sense of dissipation. Three times over she had to say to herself, "I am in Lindenheim, I am in Lindenheim, I am in Lindenheim," before she could realise the sufficiently extraordinary fact that she was no longer in the close at Deepweald, that it was foreign sunshine shining through the window into a foreign room. But the first thing her eyes fell upon when she woke was the little bunch of violets, standing in the glass of water where she had placed them overnight; and, though they had gone through a great deal of withering since they were first gathered, they still had a little sweetness left in them. They, too, looked dissipated, and very much indeed as if they had been carried away from their home in some sleepy, floral Deepweald. But they were working hard to give out their sweetness to the last, and to adapt themselves no less to a tumbler of strange water than to their native moss; and so, to Celia, each violet was a sympathy.

She lay awake in the sunshine for many minutes, letting her thoughts run about for a little while, before facing another wonderful day. Naturally they ran towards the most remarkable of all her experiences hitherto, and that was Herr Walter. Her knowledge of young men had been hitherto confined to Mrs. Swann's drawing-room, where the Reverend Reginald Gaveston was, beyond all rivalry, the

most interesting specimen among the few who found recreation in reading poetry to a large circle of amateur seamstresses, on hot afternoons. She tried to picture Herr Walter in such a frame, and could not make his portrait fit it in any way. She was quite sure he would be even more on of his element at a Deepweald Dorca meeting than she herself had been at Lindenheim picnic. She did not approve of him, and he had managed to offend her a hundred times; and she wondered what he thought of her in return.

After shyly taking her coffee in company with the apothecary's family—worth people, ruled by a hospitable desire to make everybody comfortable, and a hopeless ignorance of how to do it—she set down to write a letter to her father. It is to be hoped there are few who have realised at once what that meant to Celia. She had seen letters from her father's pupils, but she had never written one since she was born. Her spelling was by no means a fixed principle, and if it had been, what in the world was she to spell. Ever since that never-to-be-forgotten concert, the distance between her father and herself, never of the closest, had widened and widened; she felt that her presence in Lindenheim was a banishment for her mysterious sins, and that unless she sent him a non-existent chronicle of work he would care nothing for anything she had to say. Is there such a thing as impulsive reticence as well as impulsive out-speaking? At any rate, even her poor powers of imagination could very easily picture her father's eyebrows, as they frowned over an account of a picnic and its frivolities. What would he care about Herr Walter and Fräulein Lotte? It was a strange feeling that such

very real existences were still to him the unknown names that till yesterday they had been to her also; that she already had a life in which he had no part, though it had lasted but a night and a day. But though this was the relation between a father and his only child, it must not for a moment be thought that it gave her any sort of positive pain. She knew nothing of what is commonly meant by such relations, and was not made by nature to guess anything she did not know. She was far too well-drilled a machine for such unmechanical business as guess-work, or to take a conscious view of life as being anything but a mill-horse round of crotchets and semiquavers.

However, she laid open her sheet of letter-paper before her, dipped her pen into her ink-bottle, and wrote, "Lindenheim, Friday." At the end of twenty minutes she had advanced no farther. And, before she could nibble inspiration from the end of her pen, the beaming presence of Fräulein Lotte was in the room.

"Good morning!" said the German girl brightly, and with her constant smile of observant but good-natured amusement at the world and all its ways. She seemed quite like an old acquaintance, so very long ago yesterday seemed to be. Celia coloured, but not without pleasure; she had been getting to feel very helpless all alone over her unwritten letter at the Golden Lion, and very much at sea; and the sight of somebody between whom and herself the ice had already been broken was a sort of relief to her.

"I came to see if I could be of any use to you," went on Lotte. "You seem to be such a wonderfully lonely young person; you put me just in mind of a kitten before it's nine days old, and hasn't learned to see. I wonder why? Your eyes are a great deal too large to be blind. You are writing a letter? Yes, you are just the sort of girl that would sit down and write a letter the first thing. And you will tell everything. Ah, I wonder now what you are going to say! I know there will be something in it about me and Herr Walter, and I should so much like to know, particularly what you are going to say about me. Don't put us together for the love of heaven: of course I'm passionately in love with Herr Walter, as you know, but you needn't tell it to all the world. I am so glad he gave you the violets yesterday. I've quite set my heart on having you for a rival, and not that horrid Ilma. I don't

like rivals who turn up their noses and say nasty things. And one must have a rival, of course; love, Fräulein Celia, is nothing without jealousy and all that sort of thing—nothing at all. I should like to know what you're going to say about us all—about me. Will you show me? I've got it into my head you're one of those unpleasant people who always tell everything and always tell the truth, which would account for your talking so little. They say you English people never do talk, but I've never found it so. Herr Walter is an Englishman. Ah, that's the worst of keeping to truth; it leaves one so little to say, and makes one seem so dull. All the same, I should like to see the truth about myself for once in a way, for the sake of the sensation. Write me down, please, just exactly as I am. But don't, please, say that my tongue runs faster than my wit. Everybody says that, so of course it can't possibly be true. As for Herr Walter, well, you may say what you please. I hope you'll abuse him well, that will show you're going to be in love with him. When you've finished your letter I'll go out with you, and put you in the way of things. I had to learn them myself once. You wouldn't think what a shy girl I was when I first came to Lindenheim; yes, as shy as can be, for nearly two whole days. But I didn't like that sensation, and soon made up my mind not to be shy any more. But there, dash off your letter; I'm keeping you from beginning, and I want you to end."

Celia's difficulties were by no means lessened by having a pair of eyes to watch her, however good-humouredly, as she nibbled her obstinate pen.

"It seems a difficult thing, that letter of yours," said Lotte. "Can I help you? Whom is it to?"

"I'm writing to my father," said Celia.

"Oh, that all! Say you are just going out with a delightful friend named Lotte, and that you'll write more to-morrow. I've been going to write a real long letter to-morrow for—ah, two years now. What an old woman I am getting, to be sure. Ah well! There, write that down; that will do for now."

But Celia's pen did not move, though it had been inspired by ink full three times.

"Herr Walter," said Lotte, "has taught me a great deal of English. I know what 'awful fix' means. It's what you seem to be in now. Come, you might as well get as far as 'My dear governor;'

there's some more of my English for you."

"Oh no," said Celia, aghast at the thought, "that would never do!"

"Isn't 'governor' English for father? What do you call yours? Papa?"

"No."

"What then?"

"I—I don't know what to call him," said Celia, hot with despair.

"Not know what to call your own father? What an idea! What do you call him when you talk to him?"

"I never called him anything."

"Well, that is the oddest thing! Not even when you were a baby?"

"Never at all."

"But, how do you manage, then, when other people are by, and you want to say something to him?"

"Other people are never by. We are always alone whenever I am with him."

"Is he in bad health, perhaps—your Herr Governor?"

"He is never ill. He is the cathedral organist at Deepweald. But he never sees anybody but when he is obliged."

"Gott in Himmel! What a man! You had better write to your mother then."

"I have no mother."

"Ah! Well, to your sister then, or somebody that has got a name."

"I have nobody to write to but my father, mein Fräulein——"

"Lotte, if you please."

"And I have never written to him, and I don't know how."

"Well, that does complicate matters terribly, to be sure. It is an 'awful fix' indeed—and how to help you out of it, I'm sure I don't know. I must ask Herr Walter; he has been at Jena and studied philosophy. But you needn't post your letter for some hours yet, any way. You can write the rest of it, and leave a blank for 'My dear.' I must see your portrait of me. Come, you will never get your pen to go by biting. Give it to me; I will see what I can do. 'My dear'—we're going to leave a place for that, you know. You say you have never written to him before? Then I needn't say anything about the handwriting. 'I write in German to make you read me very attentively. I am very well, and enjoying myself. I have made a charming friend; her name is Lotte. She is as beautiful as an angel, and plays the piano like a demon. I wish you knew her—or rather I don't, for I don't want a stepmother. Otherwise she

would suit you perfectly, for she hates company, and her only fault is that she is so silent and shy. Her hair is golden and her eyes are blue. I have also made the acquaintance of a young Englishman—Herr Walter Gordon, out of England. He is the handsomest and most amiable young man I ever saw, and we shall be great friends. He, too, plays the piano, though not so well as Lotte. I can't write any more now, for I am going out; but will write a real long letter next time. I send you lots of kisses, and am your loving daughter Celia.' There; that's done in no time. Now we'll go to the Conservatorium, and will post it as we go. And there—I have got the truth about myself at last, any way."

Celia looked with all her eyes at Lotte; but there was no longer a twinkle in her new friend's sudden judge-like gravity to show whether this was a joke, or a serious attempt to help her out of her difficulties. But even she could not fail to catch the horror of writing such a letter to such a man. If Lotte had known him she could not have made the discord more discordant; only the word 'governor' was wanted to bring the letter to perfection. If humour—as is said—lies in incongruity of ideas, no better joke had ever been made. Celia, whose sense of humour was very far from being her strong point, and to whom Lotte's peculiar style of talk as yet was Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldee, felt aghast at the thought of such a letter's falling into her father's hands.

"What? Won't it do?" asked Lotte. "We'll show it to Herr Walter, and ask him. He can write letters, I know—that is to say I'm told he can."

"Oh, Fräulein Lotte; no——"

"I'm not Fräulein Lotte; I'm Lotte, and you are a little goose, Celia. As if I'd show Herr Walter anything that would make him vainer than he is already. For he'd swallow the part about himself as easily as an oyster. He's a man, Celia; and a woman's vanity is nothing to a man's. Vanity is sentiment with us, but it's passion with them. We're vain of being admired, but they're vain of admiring themselves. But come, as you won't have my letter, you must write it for yourself, only not to-day."

"Please give me that letter, Lotte."

"Not I. It shan't be wasted. I'll turn 'Lotte' into 'Celia,' and 'plays the piano' into 'sings,' and 'gold and blue' into 'black and brown,' and it'll do for my mother in

Halle just as well as for your father in England. I hate waste, Celia, and letter-paper is dear."

I have said that Herr Walter's most remarkable gift was that of ubiquity. It would therefore have been natural enough that the two girls should meet him on their way from the Golden Lion to the Conservatorium—so foreign singing-schools are called, presumably because they are for the most part such intensely Conservative institutions. But, as it happened, they did not meet Herr Walter.

Helped and guided by Lotte, Celia made her first acquaintance with the inside of her new world. The courtyard that had been the general rendezvous yesterday was still busy in a quiet way; a group of girls sat talking on the rude stone bench by the low, old-fashioned doorway, and other groups were standing or moving about on their way out or in. Many eyes fell upon Celia without the grown-up affectation of not looking, and she was glad of Lotte's company—it took off the rough edge of the stares.

Herr Von Brillen, who was to take her up where her father had left her, was in his class-room smoking a very bad cigar, which he did not remove from his mouth when the girls entered. He was a middle-aged, strongly-developed German, with an imperfectly-shaved face, a full lymphatic figure, and a mass of colourless hair pushed as far back as possible and hiding his coat-collar. His manner was also colourless, and his speech almost painfully laboured and slow.

"Miss March, out from England?" he asked in German English. "I know England. I have gezung there. They bay beautiful—oh, beautiful—but they are behind. Never mind, they will go on. They believe in Mendelssohn; that is the great thing. Who has taught you in England?"

Celia felt half relieved, half sorry, that Lotte had left her alone. She knew her voice would have to be tried, and the presence of an audience of one would have been intolerable; but, all the same, these constant efforts to face stranger after stranger were becoming greater and greater every time. And she had never tried to sing a note except to her father; her voice had never been heard even by Deepweald.

"My father," she said, in a half whisper, and with an awkward tightening in her

throat that augured ill for the success of her début.

"Your father? I have not heard of him. Is he a professor?"

"He is an organist."

"And so he has taught you to zing. Very good. Now we will zee. . . . Good morning. There is enough to-day."

It was not at last; she looked round and saw Lotte, who must have come in unseen, and was waiting for her own turn. Lotte nodded to her a smiling an revoir, and she crept out homewards, feeling that all her father's life had been thrown away so far as she was concerned. Never in all her life had she sung so ill.

She made a bold dash, and got quickly through the courtyard. But she was not to escape so easily. Half-way to the Golden Lion she heard Herr Walter's voice behind her.

"Good morning, Miss Celia. Well, and what do you think of us all now?"

That was just the question, what did she think of it all? What does a child think when it first becomes conscious that its cradle is not the whole of the universe? As nobody can remember, nobody can say.

"I think I shall like Lindenheim very much," said Celia, in a tone that meant, "I don't think I shall like it at all; but, after all, what has liking to do with things?"

"Of course you will. I mean you to. I've had pretty well enough of it all myself, but I fancy I get all the fun out of a place quicker than you will. You will work hard, and as there are exactly three hundred and sixty-five ideas in Lindenheim, you will be a whole year travelling from one end of the groove to another. I ran through them all like a spendthrift long ago. I know what everybody will do and what everybody will say. I can tell to a hair's breadth how many sheets of paper the Herr Director will lay on the music-stool to regulate his height to his humour when he plays. You have been with Von Brillen? I can go through your lesson with you note by note, and word by word. When you went into his room he was smoking, and his cigar was exactly an inch and a quarter long—that is the only mystery that keeps me at Lindenheim now, how it is that Von Brillen manages always to keep his cigar at exactly that length, without ever lighting a fresh one or throwing a stump away. Then he laid it down on the highest F in the piano, gave his hair a shake, and said, 'Now, mein Fräulein.' You—let me

see—you felt as if your career had turned to a precipice, and you were standing on one leg on the edge of it, and somebody told you to jump down. Tell me truly—didn't you feel a terrible awe of Von Brillen? Then there goes the first of your three hundred and sixty-five ideas; I assure you you will never feel it again. Then he tried your voice up and down and all over, and when he had done with you he took up his cigar, which had never gone out, and said 'So.' Is not that a photograph for you?"

"Well, I did feel afraid. But he did not say 'So.' He said——"

"Impossible! Von Brillen never finished a first lesson without 'So'—except once, by-the-way, and then he said nothing at all."

"He did say nothing at all."

"But that was to a girl who could sing better than he could teach her. And he said nothing to you? Miss Celia, I must hear you sing. Why, for Von Brillen to say nothing at a first lesson is higher praise than you will ever get if you turn into another Malibran. Yes; I somehow thought you were different from other girls."

That is the most terrible accusation that can be brought against the shy—it is the very secret of their shame.

"You seem getting great friends with Lotte," Walter went on, without noticing the wound he had given her—which, indeed, he was unlikely enough to comprehend. "I am glad of it; she is a wonderfully kind-hearted girl, and as good as gold. Her nonsense doesn't go deeper than her chatter. One gets to know something about girls, you see, in the mixed-up sort of way we live here. I'm glad I met you to-day, Miss Celia, for I'm going to make you an offer. Yes—don't stare like that, or you'll put me out—I mean what I say; a real offer. You have got the right sort of friend, who will keep you alive and won't lead you into mischief, and now you must be kept from drifting into any. There are all sorts of people here, I can tell you. You must have a regular flirtation, one that all the world can see. I've been thinking a great deal about you; you're all at sea in strange waters, and I don't see what else is to be done. So I offer you my services. You must have somebody to give you flowers, and talk to you at concerts, and look after you on holidays; if you don't, you'll be talked about, and if you let everybody flirt with

you all round, that would never do. Ask Lotte if it isn't so. And then, while you and I are together in Lindenheim we will be the most model and faithful pair ever known—and after that we will go our own ways, you to glory and I—well, down the next turning."

Celia had heard of flirtation. The word was not altogether unknown in Mrs Swann's drawing-room, nor unheard of even at Dorcas meetings. But she had never heard it spoken of as an article of prudence, especially by Miss Hayward. She did not know what to think. Could this brilliant young man—for such he was in her eyes—want in earnest to devote himself to her, Celia March, as the Reverend Reginald Gaveston devoted himself to Bessy Swann? The thought made even her ignorant heart beat. She was not sure she even liked him, and was certainly half afraid of him; but there was sweetness in the thought that she would after all cease to be so utterly unlike all other girls, and that somebody, no matter who, would be at her side to protect her. It was the most infinitely delicate feeling, not even so much as the first faint breath of a possible love-dream. She did not even mistake his offer, as he called it, for anything more than the mere outcome of kind-heartedness that it professed to be. It made her indeed flush and flutter with a new sensation, as one may suppose a copse does on the last day of winter; for, as a mere piece of kind-heartedness, it was a new thing. Whatever it was not, it was a gleam of real sunshine.

"That is a bargain, then," said Herr Walter, a little less lightly and a little more warmly. "I, Walter Gordon, take thee, Celia March, for better, for worse, so long as—we are both in Lindenheim. You shall receive flowers from nobody but me, and I will take care you are never without them. If you ever want advice or don't know what to do, you must come to me or Lotte. You needn't talk more than you like; Lotte and I will take that off your hands. But you haven't said 'yes' yet. Is it a bargain—a match, I should say? Very well—let silence be assent, then," he said with a smile not altogether free from a young man's natural vanity who finds himself, however slightly, a woman's master; he was not yet old enough for the sensation to have lost its rarity, if indeed such a thing ever happens. That feeling in a man's heart

never fails to beautify the plainest girl, and in fact and in truth Celia at that moment looked almost pretty. Spring had touched her, though with the most delicate and airy of wands.

EARLY WORKERS.

AT SORTING.

"WANTED, Girls for Sorting Paper. Apply immediately."

The fog-coloured canal intersected the district where this notice was affixed; low barges weighed upon the heavy water; poor houses hedged it in thickly; the side that was not muddy towing-path was wharf-ground, and wharf-ground thereabouts being highly rented, expenses were lessened by the lessees underletting standing-places upon it for town cabs, for broken-down omnibuses, for carts, for removing-vans, and so forth. Lime was a substance that barges brought up the canal freely. Hay arrived by the same method; so did corn; so did coal, timber, gravel, and other matters similar. Where there were buildings upon this particular section of the canal-side, too, for storage or for working, the ground-floors of these buildings were used as stables; following upon which came stable sights and sounds, the "swish" of horse-washing, the champing of horses' bits, the kick of hoofs, the scatter of cocks and hens and oats.

Those Early Workers, girls, who were wanted for sorting paper, found it necessary to tread through all or some of this; and found it necessary—since the place or workshop where they were to do the sorting was, like all the rest, the top floor of a stable—to mount a steep wooden, and open, outside stable-stair. Awkward, certainly; primitive, unceremonious; but there was no other difficulty. Admittance was permitted us, kindly and pleasantly; and when the long loft used as the work-shed had been safely reached, the little settlement of sorters was free to be looked at, and all the circumstances, implements, and incidents of their sorting were ready there to the hand. These were rough and simple, just as the surroundings were rough and simple; and the business in hand proved easy enough of comprehension.

The first feature noticeable was the pile of immense tight-full and dirty old sacks; heaped up, one on another, till they mounted nearly to the ridge of the high and open timber roof. This roof, in its big beams and battens, its cobwebs and

crooked nails, was stained and ragged and utterly unpolished and raw; these sacks, or gunny-bags, in their loose, flimsy, much-worn material, were stained and ragged and utterly unpolished and raw; the Early Workers, as they stood at their sorting, could only have been painted in the same grim tints and colours. A rugged picture, consequently, with its "tone" rusty, and with so much of the mellow gloom (or ugliness) of poverty upon it, its greater part was magnificently obscure. It was; yet there was wide space for breathing, for seeing, for doing; and as the girls were not restricted from talking as they worked, the gloom softened after a minute or two, the rustiness paled, there sprang up two or three strokes of colour to vary it. The work-shed, indeed, was so large that it would have done excellently for an initiatory town-hall, or a temporary church; and from its windows there was a capital sweep of air and sky, there was a sight of the canal, with a glimpse, ever and again, of a passing boat. As for the sacks, they were very giants. Each one was vast enough to hold sufficient ground bones to satisfy an ogre, being five or six feet in length, and three feet possibly in diameter, or eight or nine feet in the big stuffed bulk. Then, inside of each was from a hundred to a hundred and twenty pounds of the "sweepings" from the floors of milliners' workrooms and drapers' shops; these were the "papers" to be sorted; and as there were scores of these sacks this made the weight of "sweepings" stored up for the Early Workers amount, in the gross total, to several tons. Truly, if the heart of a little girl of twelve or thirteen years of age quailed, when set down before one of these bundles of rubbish and dust and mystery and conglomeration, the quailing could scarcely be seen with surprise. As the bag's neck was untied, and as its contents tumbled out under the hand, there would come to view (crumpled up, and otherwise deteriorated from prime value) bits of white paper, brown paper, blue paper, other coloured paper; bits of all these papers with the further subdivision of being soft, hard, ruled, written on; bits of that fine foreign "tissue," that is mere phantom, yet tough enough, seemingly, to be bishop's lawn etheralised, and that is used for crumpling into odd corners as handy padding. There would come to view bits of cardboard, straw-board, grayish pulpy oatmeal-like board, and the thin wood-board that, when whole, is curved round

into handboxes. There would come to view crusts of bread, lost, after much sucking, by a customer's baby; parts of toys dropped by customers' children; tufts of wadding; clips of straw-plait; ends of window-rubbers; emptied cotton-reels; lengths of tape, binding, gimp, ribbon; coils of string; gnawed bones (left upon the floors possibly by a cat or dog); bottoms of wine-glasses; corks; crockery pieces; bent circles and strips of metal (off ink-bottles and the like); tangles of wire; buttons; chips and cuttings of flannel, silk, buckram, velvet, satin, crêpe, tulle, muslin, lace, net, sarcenet, cuttings of every article, indeed, that millinery hearts delight in, and that millinery genius can transmogrify and devise. Will it not be thought that a sackful of such "sweepings" is a marvellous sackful, with quite enough heterogeneity in one pound's weight of it, without going on till it has reached to a hundred pounds or a hundred and twenty? Yet girls, who shall have been polished up to ordinary skill in sorting, can get through three of these sack-loads daily; and others, again, who shall have been polished up to extraordinary skill in sorting, and who shall possess the genius of energy and application, can work with so much briskness and method that they can undertake four sacks, handling every item in every sack of them, from brim to bottom. It will perhaps be thought these figures are exaggerated. But it is not so; they are true. Even in the humble task of paper-sorting, the Worker's good qualities can affect it; and there can be applied to it that excellent method that makes all tasks go smoothly and easily, that exists in each business, sprung out of its own requirements and experience, and that is always the best source of profit, and wholesome and pleasant for lookers-on to see. In the matter under inspection, the tools are necessarily simple enough, and the arrangement matching. Each Early Worker is furnished with an immense sieve or screen, that might absolutely have been the front of a vast cage, unhinged and laid flat down, an actual yet delusive table; and each Early Worker is furnished with a pretty wide surrounding of coarse brown hampers. That is all. Under the sieve is hung a sack to catch all the dust, and chips, and bits of hay and straw, that fall through; by the side of the sieve is the hundred-weight of sweepings the Worker is to sort; upon the sieve the girl places, from time to time, quantities of the mass she has to sort

out; and from the sieve she picks up each item, and throws it into the particular hamper that is its right receptacle. There are not so many hampers as items, it is evident. For instance, all sorts of millinery and dress-making "cuttings," such as ends of calico, merino, blonde, fringe, and others that have been indicated, would come under the one head of "rags;" and would only have two hampers put for the whole of them, since they would require only the broad distinction of whether they were mixed or white. For another instance, any such items as dry bread, broken china, sucked orange-skins, apple-rinds and cores, and so on, would be massed together as rubbish, and put amongst the dirt and refuse filtering through the screens, to be carted away at convenient seasons and thrown upon a dust-heap. Again, an occasional oinder; a chance stick of fire-wood; a smashed wooden match-box; other smashed wooden boxes that have contained toys, scent, chignons, Paris bonnets, and the like; cotton-reels; useless parts of broken wooden toys; any splinters of any wood, indeed, all come under the one denomination of fuel, and are heaped up together in a common hamper, and kept upon the premises for their proper purpose of lighting fires. On the other hand, minuter differences are made amongst some other of the "sweepings" than might have been thought possible, or of any beneficial service. Red tape, for example, is treated with the distinction—historically and patriotically—due to it. It is carefully sorted off by itself, and has its special set of buyers. These are the poor women who hawk cheap mottled boxes about the streets. They use a very short knot of red tape to tie the lids of their paper-boxes handily behind; they use red tape for side-pieces to their paper-boxes, to hold their lids up handily at one angle in front; they further put a trellis-work of red tape on their box-trays, and up against the inside of their box-lids, to make light and handy division among the property to be stowed away there; and as the profits of the poor women are small and their poverty great, the cash item saved by buying second-hand red tape of a paper-sorter out of "sweepings," is one they cannot afford to overlook. Mention shall be made, also, of mites of paper, no bigger than a shilling or a halfpenny. These have two distinctive hampers of their own; those that are white simply, irrespective of whether they are hard, soft, glazed, or

so on, being dropped into one hamper, and those that are brown or brownish, or that have been written on or printed on, such as scraps of torn letters or circulars, being dropped quite separate and apart into the other. One more example that shall be given is the paper that is brought into the sorting-shed as waste-paper, on that straightforward and solid footing of its own. This is known technically as B, the short for bundle; it is old ledgers, old books, old magazines, old catalogues, old newspapers; it is clean and straight, and in good bulk; and is itself sold, just as it is, for shop purposes, with that public and troublous second life to go through before it becomes "sweepings."

Altogether, the varieties to be on the alert about in paper-sorting are unexpected and interesting. Besides the hampers containing the divisions that have just now had special allusion, each Early Worker has to master those distinguishing characteristics in paper itself that make the sorts known as White Waste, Hard Waste; as Hard Brown, Glazed Brown, Soft Brown, Mixed Brown; and as Mill-board and Straw-board. Mill-board is otherwise called English-board, known in the outer world as card-board, and is the best. The light bright boxes in drapers' and hosiers' shops are made of it; the boxes hold gloves, ribbons, feathers, flowers, tarlatan dresses, some scores of things that can be at once suggested; the boxes split at the corners, the lids can no longer act as lids, and an orderly hand tears the whole thing into four or five fragments, and it is thrown away. When the Early Worker comes to handle these fragments, though, strewn about as they are on her screen or sieve after drawing them out of the gunny-bag, her action cannot be so circumscribed. It has to be doubled; all these boxes, as can be recollected, have neat white-paper flaps, or side-pieces, pasted into them, in order that the delicate goods inside may be protected from the dust; and the Early Worker must strip off this white paper, or she would not be doing her sorting, and the Early Worker must put her box-piece into one hamper, and her paper-strip into another, marking the two varieties of mill-board and white waste. Straw-board covers the exact purpose of mill-board; but being made literally of straw, with only a thin veneer of paper to make it slightly, it is produced cheaper, and is used for cheaper boxes, to hold cheaper commodities. Straw-board boxes have the paper

for flaps, however, on the same method as the dearer goods, and have equally to be stripped of it by the sorter. Of the other sorts of papers we have mentioned, it is only necessary to add that Glazed Brown is the soft, pliable paper for wrapping light goods in, known to the uninitiated as "cap." For the rest the name Hard Paper makes known its qualities; so does Soft; so does Mixed; and it is hardly necessary to say that a distinct line is kept within each, because, when they all reach the paper-mills, each has a distinct purpose, and can be at once carried to its distinct department. "What is the use of being so particular?" is the question on the lips of a good many people; and "What is the use of such rubbish as this?" very quickly follows. In answer, it shall be said that the value of the most careful division is seen, and felt, the moment there is watching of Early Workers at sorting. Further, that the word "rubbish" seems to vanish from the vocabulary, so manifest is it that "rubbish" does not exist, since every item under hand is absolutely wanted, and since there are merchants absolutely waiting to buy up all, and to pay for all, at proper market price. It is the science of adjustment, grown to a good height; rising far superior to that lavish waste that fancies itself so wealthy and so generous, and that is always so full of scorn for what it delights to call the meanness of taking care. And so it comes to pass that when there is seen the collection of metal for metal-melters; the collection of bones for bone-grinders; the collection of string (it is called Mill-string) for poor manufacturers; the collection of red-tape for homely box-makers; the collection of fuel for fire; of rag for rag-merchants; and so forth, it is at once understood that this is development of resources, and not deterioration; that this—being impossible without combination, without cheap transit and exact knowledge—is one of the results rendered possible by civilisation, is one of the results that renders rich reward to civilisation in return, since, by means of it, material is gathered and re-gathered, is used and re-used, requiring therefore much less real replenishment, and leaving no chance either for that prohibiting price that would follow upon scarcity, or for that famine otherwise inevitable.

The wages earned by Early Workers at sorting are sixpence a hundredweight. Those young and untrained girls, wanted at the canal-side, were only getting about

four shillings by the week's end, just because they were young, and untrained, and because there was so much novelty to them in the scraps and shreds they pulled out of the gunny-bags, they could only hold them in their hands, enquiringly and amazed.

"Why! here's a piece of ribbon!" was the cry, as a piece was extricated, and held up to view. "And it's brown! It will do for my hair!" And the announcement startled all the feminine ears within hearing, and caused a look round from everybody, and a piece of general feminine forecast, or imagination. Each girl, it was evident, was mentally decking herself with the discovered treasure, and deciding whether it would be likely to become her.

Another girl shivered, and left off her work that she might shiver better, whilst she wrapped herself up as well as she could in her young arms. "U-u-u-ugh! I'm so cold!" she cried, for she had come to nothing, let it be supposed, but Hard Waste, Small Letter Waste, White Waste, Mill-board slices, Blue, and she had found no attraction in any of it, and no incident.

"Master—isn't it—twelve o'clock—yet?" drawled out a third girl; hungry as well as cold, poor child, over her dead weight of sweepings; and being far ahead of time in her enervating ennui.

For, that the girls should have no interest in their work, was just as retarding as if their interest were too much. Say that they yawned, and lolled, and lounged over crunched paper, trodden box bits, ravelled galloon, and tangled silk; say that they still yawned, and lolled, and lounged through straw-end and gauze-piece, through smashed thimble and discarded nib; as a result, there was the same sloth as if they were absorbed by a remnant of finery. On the other hand, let the girls chase after buttons, and hold the buttons on to their poor shabby frocks to judge of the probable effect; let the girls pounce upon the parings of a bonnet-shape, and stop to wonder what the cut-out size of the bonnet-crown could have been; and they might just as well be losing time by languor and inertness. The conclusion from which is, that the real best Early Workers at sorting are those who have satisfied their curiosity at laces and silk shreds, who are pretty well used to fashionable colours and materials, and are familiar with the series of smooth engravings on

fancy box-lids and spoilt packages. Arrived at this, they have overcome astonishment; and consequently, with regard to the less interesting items of which they have the handling, they can see a piece of string and put it amongst the string, they can see a mutton-chop bone, and fling it amongst the bones, and they have become so magically acquainted with the various descriptions of Glazed, Mixed, Straw, and so on, that they can decide into, which hamper the specimens are to be thrown, every bit as rapidly as they can pick them off the screen. To such girls, wages at sorting become a great deal more like what it is pleasant for girls' wages to be. The young people, as has been said, can reduce into order daily three or four hundred-weight of sweepings; the daily wages, therefore, rise to one shilling and sixpence or two shillings, just as the work rises, and the earnings reach from nine shillings to twelve shillings per week. A good prospect, too, have girls who sort. They can become employer-sorters; and can print inviting little handbills of their own, asking for girls to help them, affixing them on to rough and outlying gate-posts belonging to themselves. The "plant" is manageable; the outlay for it small. Given a shed, some sacks, some screens, and the business may begin. The routine, when these are secured, is simply to fetch the sweepings from the shops or ware-rooms, to get them sorted, to "bag" them, and to send them to the factories, where they are sure of sale. As for the warehouse-owners from whom the "sweepings" are obtained, some who, from the nature of things, do not find it desirable to have accumulation, let the employer-sorters call on them for "stuff," and receive the quantity of a gunny-bagful or two, as frequently as three times a week; other warehouse-owners—notably, one firm of envelope-makers—find it quite enough to clear their premises about twice a year, on which occasions they have as many gunny-bags, packed full and ready, as reach the weight of from twenty to thirty tons. In all cases, the sweepings are stored up "bagged," which leaves nothing to be done where they are bought, except to buy, and to cart them away, two tons forming a cart-load.

The stock of sacks, to do all this bagging and sorting properly, has to be a fairly large stock, it will be seen. So it has. And it is kept at the right available quantity by the constant purchase of old bacon-wraps

and teer-bags (derivation and import unknown), and by the constant transformation of these into the proper shape and size. Indeed, down at the canal-side, where the group of Early Workers were sorting in their shed, it was a curious feature to find this transforming work going on in one dark corner. And it was a no less curious feature, to find that whilst it was girls who were handling Mill-board, Hard Waste, and the rest, the person wielding needle and thread to sew was a man, their overlooker. Women's rights were in peril, surely, from this patent and egregiously audacious infringement. But no. The girls talked and gave their half-laughs, as they busied themselves with their screens, or yawned over them and loitered, and appeared quite indifferent to the subtle procedure undermining their fair prerogative; whilst the man—unconscious upheaver of heaven-born institutions—stood with old bacon-wraps hung above his head, with old bacon-wraps in a rich sepia-coloured heap at his feet, with particularly rich sepia-coloured old bacon-wraps under metamorphosis in his hand; and steadily went on with his work. He drew his stake-like packing-needle, followed by its tail of grimy twine, through the rough flimsy cloth, stitching two old bacon-wraps together to get size; he stitched the cloth up, when it was thus a largish square, to sack purpose and sack shape, taking no heed of small holes and tatters; and then he added his made sacks to his folded stock at his side, ready to be used when they were required. It was all as natural as if needles were the right chattels of men, and not of women; as if a certain word were altered in the dictionary, and in place of seamstress were written seamster. But sewing, after all, was only the overlooker's occupation in the intervals he had to spare between duties of a more overlooking character. It was for him to sling up a whole grove of full-length empty sacks to the roof-beams, and to be sure which of them was to hold, and was holding, G. B., H. B., L. B., M. B., H. W., O. W., &c., cabalistic technicalities for the varieties of papers we have mentioned; and it was for him to empty the hampers the Early Workers were filling into the right sacks, and to give the hampers back to the Early Workers to get them filled again. When, also, these slung sacks had had their rusty sides rounded to the utmost of their capacity, it was the overlooker's duty to cut them down, and to tuck them

in comfortably at the neck by spreading over the loose contents a piece of paper technically called a "topper." When the overlooker had passed his needle with its tail of string across and across the topper to make all things secure, the operation of bagging was complete, and the bag had only to be removed to that portion of the shed where other filled bags were reposing, there to wait patiently till it was convenient to have a grand carting off to the mill. Other items than paper had other treatment, as may be supposed, according to what they were; Mill-board, for example, being only tied up in a Brobdingnagian bundle of its great flat slices; but the overlooker, not the Early Workers, had this final doing, and was obliged to be smart at it; having a quick comprehension among other things of the odd names in use, which he admitted were "rummy," and which he reflectively considered were "done" that "all things might be made the most of." So there is a chevaux-de-frise of intentional mystification around paper-sorting, simple as the work is, and although the said work is carried on amidst such accessories as the clattering of horses' hoofs in the stalls below; as the storing of horses' harness the other side of a thin partition; as the further storing of horses' oats in the very midst of the bacon-wraps themselves. It can only be said to this that if, after all, mystification makes dignity, and dignity enhances self-respect and the desire to get honourably through honourable labour, then by all means let even paper-sorters have their trade mystifications like their betters.

PATIENT.

I WAS not patient in that olden time,
 When my unchastened heart began to long
 For bliss that lay beyond its reach; my prime
 Was wild, impulsive, passionate, and strong.
 I could not wait for happiness and love,
 Heaven-sent, to come and nestle in my breast;
 I could not realise how time might prove
 That patient waiting would avail me best.
 "Let me be happy now," my heart cried out,
 "In mine own way, and with my chosen lot,
 The future is too dark, and full of doubt,
 For me to tarry, and I trust it not.
 Take all my blessings, all I am and have,
 But give that glimpse of heaven before the grave!"

Ah me! God heard my wayward, selfish cry,
 And taking pity on my blinded heart,
 He bade the angel of strong grief draw nigh,
 Who pierced my bosom in its tenderest part.
 I drank wrath's wine-cup to the bitter lees,
 With strong amazement and a broken will;
 Then, humbled, straightway fell upon my knees,
 And God doth know my heart is kneeling still.

I have grown patient ; seeking not to choose
 Mine own blind lot, but take that God shall send,
 In which, if what I long for, I should lose,
 I know the loss will work some blessed end,
 Some better fate for mine and me, than I
 Could ever compass underneath the sky.

POOR LITTLE GEORGY.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

POOR little fellow! The first time I ever saw him was at Antwerp. We were staying—my wife and I—at that most comfortable of all comfortable hotels, the St. Antoine, on our way to our favourite little gambling-place, Sitzbad-bei-die-Saltzbrunnen, and there had encountered a very dashing young widow. Not absolutely pretty, perhaps; indeed, my wife, who is by no means so callous to female charms as most of her sex, would never allow her any share of good looks at all. Still, if not pretty, she was decidedly what you would call pretty-looking, and with a good share of that sort of fascination about her which, while it seems infallibly to arouse the hostility of her own sex, not unfrequently goes farther even than beauty itself in subduing ours. The former result it produced in the present instance with remarkable punctuality, and no less remarkable reciprocity. Mary and she were, I verily believe, sworn foes long before the first entrée made its appearance on M. Frédérique's well-furnished table-d'hôte, the very first day the fascinating widow made her appearance there as our vis-à-vis. How far, under other circumstances, the second might have followed, I cannot say; though certainly, for some two or three days, the fair foe showed every disposition to make the essay. Whether it was an instinctive desire to carry the war into the enemy's country, or whether it was simply that I happened to be the youngest and most flirtable man of the company, I cannot say; but there was no denying the fact, that the fascinating widow promptly responded to Mary's not very well-concealed hostility, by an altogether unconcealed attack on Mary's husband. Two things, however, combined to avert what might otherwise have been the issue of this interesting little struggle. In the first place, I happened to be very much in love with my own wife, and therefore not quite so susceptible to such attacks as under other circumstances I might have been. In the second, an event very shortly occurred which altogether changed the

enemy's tactics, and turned her arms in quite a different direction.

This event was no other than the appearance at the table-d'hôte of a tall Englishman, well-bearded, handsome, aristocratic-looking, and—alone. Alone, that is to say, in the sense of being unhampered by any feminine encumbrance. His one companion was a boy; a slight, delicate-looking lad about seven years old, evidently his son. Both were in deep mourning—it was easy enough to guess for whom—and the evident love of the two for each other; the perfect freedom and confidence of the child; the quaint mixture of masculine clumsiness and more than womanly tenderness with which the big, brown-bearded, sunburnt man watched over and tended his fragile little charge; above all, the wistful look which every now and then stole into the honest gray eyes if the boy's prattle ceased for awhile, or turned off suddenly in some direction in which for the moment he could not follow it, were inexpressibly touching. Mary fell in love with him on the spot. So apparently did the widow. For a time I almost feared that the conflict which had begun over my unworthy carcass would be continued over the body of the interesting new-comer, and I was by no means sorry when the next morning's mail brought the letters for which we had been waiting, and enabled us to continue our journey to Sitzbad-bei-die-Saltzbrunnen.

As fate would have it, however, it proved that we had by no means seen the last of our new acquaintance even then. When I had last had the doubtful and very unsought honour of a tête-à-tête with Mrs. Mortimer Windham, that fascinating personage had confided to me—not without a tender hint that I might, if thereto irresistibly impelled, avail myself of the information—that she herself was on her way to Baden-Baden. Apparently, something had since occurred to alter her destination.

We had been rather less than a week at Sitzbad, and were strolling one morning up and down the sunny terrace before the Kursaal, admiring the broad sweep of turf with its masses of brilliant bloom, set off by the dark foliage of the long row of orange-trees placed at regular intervals in their huge green tubs along the open balustrade, when suddenly I felt the tiny gray-gloved fingers close on my arm with a vicious little pinch, and looked down in astonishment for an explanation of the unexpected assault.

"Dick!" cried my wife, looking up in her turn with the nearest approach to a frown I have ever yet seen on her pretty face, "you told me a fib. If there isn't that horrid woman here again!"

I really believe it was a relief to her mind when Mrs. Mortimer Windham swept past us with something so very nearly approaching the "cut direct," as to make it pretty clear that, whatever might be the motive of that lady's change of route, it could at all events have been determined by no intended attack upon our domestic peace. In another minute she had disappeared up the steps of the Kursaal, and Mary's ruffled feathers settled down again. By-and-by, we too strolled into the play-room, and there was the widow sure enough, deep in the game; now pushing a little pile of florins on to the black or red, now raking them off again with the business-like nonchalance of your thorough-paced punter, or pricking off the result upon her card as her stake disappeared among the long rows of coin which waxed and waned each moment under the deft fingers of the employés; with as little outward manifestation of emotion as though florins and fredericks had been so many counters, just serving to mark the progress of the game. We stood watching her for half an hour at least, and by the end of it I could see that, as far as I was personally concerned, my little wife's mind was altogether at rest. And certainly there was little enough of fascination about the widow then. It must be a very lovely face indeed that can preserve much of its loveliness under the influence of the roulette.

Some what to my surprise, however, as the hands of the clock pointed to one, Mrs. Windham, who for some little time had been winning almost every coup, suddenly abandoned the game in the very height of her "veine," and sweeping up the little pile of gold and silver which had accumulated before her, turned her back resolutely on the table and glided swiftly from the room.

"What the deuce is up now?" I could not help exclaiming as again the little ball leaped rattling into a fresh cell, and the employé's monotonous cry, "Vingt-cinq—rouge, impair et passe," proclaimed, even as she passed the door, that rouge, on which the fair deserter had already won six times in succession, had again turned up for the seventh time.

"What is it, Dick?" asked Mary, a

little distrustfully again. "You are not wanting to follow that—"

"By Jove, pet, but I am though. She's too old a hand to break off in the middle of a series like that for nothing. Come; I'll bet you a dozen of gloves she either has an appointment or—"

"That poor nice man with the little boy!" broke in Mary, excitedly. "Of course it is, and that's why she's here."

And away we both went, to verify our suspicions; the last sounds that fell on our ears, as we left the room, being the "clickety, click-click" of the little ball, and the stereotyped cry, "Rien ne va plus! Douze—rouge, pair et manque," which told of a fresh sacrifice on the widow's part on the unknown altar of which we were in search.

We tried the terrace first, but she was not there; so we harked back to the reading-room. As we entered she looked up quickly from behind the paper she was to all appearance assiduously studying, and something very like an expression of annoyance passed over her face, as she instantly dropped her eyes again and went on with her reading. You may be sure that Mary's quick eyes caught the look in a moment, and, with a little squeeze of my arm, she too dropped into a chair, and, taking up the first magazine that came to hand, set herself quietly to watch the dénouement.

We had not long to wait. Before ten minutes were out, the door opened again and a couple of visitors entered, loudly discussing the extraordinary run upon rouge, which even yet, it appeared, had not come to an end; and again the expression of annoyance crossed the widow's face more strongly than before; and she half rose from her seat, as though unable to resist the temptation of returning to the table. But, even as she did so, the door opened for the third time, and she had but just time to sink once more into her seat and resume her unconscious studies as our tall friend of the St. Antoine strolled in, his little boy, of course, by his side.

I will give you a twelvemonth to find among your kinsfolk and acquaintance a little woman more ready than my Mary to hear reason, or more prompt to give up her own wishes in favour of those of her lord and master, even when unconvinced. But, for all that, I had no easy task, during the three remaining weeks of our stay at Sitzbad, to keep her from "exposing that abominable woman" in the eyes of that

poor nice man, whose wistful tenderness to his motherless boy had made such an impression on her soft little heart. The season, never very brilliant at Sitzbad, was that year unusually dull, and the few visitors who did put in an appearance were thrown more than commonly together. I am bound to admit that Mrs. Mortimer Windham's unceasing endeavours to keep us and the poor nice man apart were quite as earnestly, if not as ably, seconded by my own. As a mere male creature, however great my interest in Sir George and his boy—and I was very much interested in both—I was much less concerned with any scrape, matrimonial or otherwise, into which he might contrive to get himself, than with the keeping of my own warm-hearted little wife out of anything like "a row." I should have been quite as glad to get her away to Switzerland, or the Black Forest, or even that weary old Rhine, as the widow would have been to carry off her brown-bearded quarry to Homburg or Baden-Baden. But our holiday was pledged to be spent with an old friend, who was a fixture at Sitzbad for another six weeks at least, and, as for Sir George, a course of the salt baths had been prescribed for little Georgy, and nothing short of removing the salt-springs themselves could stir him from the spot, until that course should have been thoroughly carried through.

As for our remaining in the same place without becoming acquainted, Master Georgy himself settled that question very summarily. If, as he afterwards confided to me, Mary's eyes were exactly like his mamma's, I can only say that his mamma must have been, in that respect at all events, very fortunately endowed. But, like or unlike, they fascinated him with remarkable promptitude; and Mrs. Mortimer Windham had hardly found time to recover from her first bashful surprise at the unexpected meeting before he had sidled quietly up to Mary's chair and, happily independent of any previous ceremony of introduction, presented her with a whole handful of the very Gloire de Dijon, with regard to which she had only that morning been freely breaking the tenth commandment, if not even meditating a small infringement of the eighth.

"I didn't steal them," he explained, "the gardener gave them to me;" and then the young monkey caught en passant the merry glance which answered mine, and, after considering me gravely for a

moment, turned again to Mary with, "You may give him one if you like."

Well, as I have said, it was for once a real relief to me when the time came to leave Sitzbad. Not that anything went wrong. My old friend—that venerable relation to whom I introduced you when we visited Spielbad - super - Mare,* no long ago—was jogging on in his accustomed track, rather in luck just then and punishing the local Blanc to an extent which kept us in champagne luncheons, and picnics, and little trips to Frankfort and Homburg, and so forth without any need to trouble ourselves as to the question of cost. As usual, he insisted on furnishing the small capital necessary to enable me to follow his example, and, as usual also, I found myself, after the usual ups and downs, in ultimate possession of quite enough to cover all expenses of our journey and keep house for a week or two on our return. Yet with all this I have rarely been so glad to get away from any place as I was then to get away from Sitzbad. And happily we did get away without an explosion. We were terribly near it, however, several times.

Once in especial Mistress Mary must needs take advantage of my absence in Frankfort to spring a mine of a very deadly description. Sir George, thoroughly English in all things, was particularly so in his objection to gambling. Indeed the only point in which he was not thoroughly English was in his carrying that objection to the extent, not only of thinking it wrong in other people to yield to the seductions of the tables, but of actually resisting them himself. Now Mrs. Mortimer Windham was a gambler as ingrained as my good old friend himself, though of an altogether different type. The one played for amusement, risking no more than he could afford, and finding that one year with another his daily amusement with all its incidental little enjoyments cost him about a hundred and fifty pounds per annum. The other was, as Count Carambole would have said, an enragé and had it occurred to the proprietors of the table—as it no doubt would have occurred to those worthy gentlemen had there been any pecuniary possibility in it—to make souls a legal tender upon their tables, would no doubt have staked hers, with

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 16 p. 319, "Spielbad-super-Mare."

perfect equanimity, against whatever little sum in francs or gulden might have been assessed as its equivalent. As for going a whole month without playing, and that with money in her pocket, and actually within hearing of the never-ending injunction to "Faire le jeu," that of course would have been simply impossible. Happily for her, however, young Master Georgy's baths and walks and other regimen fully occupied the entire morning, and during that time, and for the last hour or two of the evening play, when Sir George was safe in his hotel, she was able to indulge without fear. It was this latter period that Mistress Mary fixed upon for her little exposé; and considerable was the effect produced as she and Sir George unexpectedly strolled in just as the presiding employé of the roulette announced "les trois derniers coups," and found madame hard at work. Had they arrived ten minutes earlier the effect would, as I afterwards learned, have been greater still. Almost to the very last Mrs. Windham had been in luck that night, and, a very short time before, Sir George would have found her at the head of a little battalion of louis, the methodical arrangement of which would have proclaimed the practised punter even more loudly than their number. Just at the last, however, her luck had left her, or rather had taken another form, for assuredly it was by no ill fortune of hers that Sir George arrived only in time to see the last pile of the battalion swept in by the rake of the remorseless employé, and to be easily cajoled by the pretty little confession of how she had been tempted just for once to try her luck and lost—with a moment's pause to recall the exact sum before her when Sir George entered—three whole napoleons.

So Mary, innocent little plotter that she was, and quite unskilled in that line of business, was simply hoist with her own petard. If Sir George had a weakness, it was perhaps that of a slight tendency to be didactic, and the widow's pretty penitence only drew him more closely towards her. I, as you may suppose, "put my foot down" very decidedly as to any further attempts; and Mary, though half disposed to look upon me as a monster of cold-blooded policy, was much too good a wife to think of acting in opposition to a plain wish. So for the rest of our stay the widow had the course pretty much to herself, and made running accordingly.

Even to the last, however, when we had all learned to look upon it as a settled thing—"it," of course, meaning the promotion of Mrs. Windham to the honours and emoluments of the late Lady Arlingham so soon as the second year of Sir George's widowhood should have come to a close—Sir George's own confidence in the fascinating widow seemed hardly to have made the same progress as his other feelings towards her.

It was the last evening of our stay, and I was in the very height of an argument with my good old friend as to the propriety or otherwise of cutting short my play, while still actually the winner of a good dozen of louis on that day's sitting, merely because I had for the time lost back again that other dozen of which an hour before I had also succeeded in mulcting the administration, when the discussion was brought to a close by the appearance of Sir George with a disturbed expression upon his face I had never before seen there. That evening's post, it appeared, had brought him letters which had troubled him greatly. Nothing indeed was as yet absolutely settled, but it seemed more than probable that within another week he would be called upon, in a manner which admitted of no honourable evasion, to undertake a task involving absence from Europe for at least many months.

"Oh, poor little Georgy!" cried Mary, with instinctive sympathy. And then it all came out. He was in terrible trouble about the boy, who, though to some extent benefited by the Sitabad "cure," was far too delicate to face such a journey, even had other considerations allowed Sir George to think of taking him. If any really trustworthy person could be found to take him in charge, the father would set off on his mission with a comparatively light heart. And he could afford to pay liberally for the service. He would willingly give at the rate of five hundred pounds a year, nay of one thousand pounds if that were all, could he but—Whereon Sir George, who in some ways was the shyest of men, began to stammer a little. Did Mrs. Felix think—. If such a thing could be made possible—. He hoped he might not be misunderstood—

And here my host, whose attention had returned to the table, struck in with:

"There, my boy, what did I tell you? Vingt-sept again! You'd have made a hundred louis by this time."

Whereon a slight frown gathered on Sir

George's face, and his stammering fit departed, and with it also departed the evident intention with which he had so far been possessed, of asking us to assume the care of little George. Poor man! he had quite forgotten for the moment, in his anxiety, that the husband of the dear little woman to whom the boy had taken so strongly, and whose eyes at times reminded him too of those of his dead wife, was a gambler.

"Dick!" cried Mary, suddenly, the next morning, stamping her little foot in as near an approach to downright anger as I have ever seen her achieve, "he'll leave him with that woman; see if he doesn't."

"Poor little fellow," I answered; "I hope not."

"Poor little fellow, indeed!" she said, and then sat silently looking out of the window all the way to Frankfort. She had grown very fond of little George, as indeed had I. And it must be owned that the prospect was not satisfactory.

But what could we do?

TOURNAMENTS AND TEA.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

As the name of Montgomerie is associated with the terribly real tournament of 1559, so is it with the gorgeous sham at Eglinton Castle two hundred and eighty years later. Gabriel Montgomerie, Captain of Lorges, killed Henry the Second and tilting together with one clumsy stroke of his shattered lance; and Archibald William Montgomerie, some time Earl of Eglinton and Winton, and of many other earldoms and lordships, tried hard to galvanise tournaments into life again. In organising the show and carrying out his plans, the hospitable and dashing owner of those high-mettled racers, Blue Bonnet and the Flying Dutchman, spent, it is said, no less than two years of anxious thought and forty thousand pounds sterling. It is difficult, at this distance of time, to realise the feelings which incited an active and popular nobleman to actually impoverish himself, for the sake of holding a week's merry-making at his castle in Ayrshire. Being of a hearty, jovial disposition, and the most popular young nobleman of his day, perhaps he did not count the cost. Possibly a long peace had inclined the human mind towards war. In a quarter of a century people have time to forget the realities of war—the loss of relations and friends, the dear

bread, the heavy taxation—and at the end of that period see only the glory, and the tattered flags and bruised arms hung up for monuments. My friend Professor Nebelwitz, who has a keen scent for the causes of things, declares that to him the great Eglinton tournament is sun-clear; that to the eye of the philosophic historian it appears as an aristocratic protest against the Chartist agitation; that it was a great gathering of nobles, a counter-demonstration to the public meetings, processions of trades, petitionings, and other paraphernalia of Chartism; that it must be read by the light of the duel between Lord Londonderry and Mr. Grattan, blustering and bloodless. This may be sound doctrine, but to the ordinary mind it is difficult to imagine any more connection between Mr. Frost's agitation and Lord Eglinton's show than between the latter and the murder of Mr. Westwood, the victory of Bloomsbury amid a snow storm on the Derby day, or the famous dead-heat for the St. Leger between Charles the Twelfth and Euclid. Perhaps the great Scottish novelist and the romantic school founded by him are responsible for the tournament of 1839; which appears to have been modelled very much on the programme set forth in *Ivanhoe*, revised and corrected by M. Champollion's version of *Les Tournois du Roi René*. There was a good deal of the quality now called "go" about the third decade of our century. It was the age not only of d'Orsay and Chesterfield, but of Waterford and M. P. Gully, and the amusing drama of Tom and Jerry had not ceased to represent life in London. The high spirits of the gilded youth had to find vent elsewhere than in the hunting-field, the steeple-chase, or that peculiar species of "mill" which, as Tom Hood humorously tells us, had Mendoza for a miller.

The idea of a modern tournament having taken possession of Lord Eglinton, that nobleman soon discovered that however much money he was prepared to disburse, he would require hearty co-operation from his brother nobles in order to secure a good attendance of combatants. It would be unfair to hint that many of the knights looked forward to the day of combat with some misgivings as to the safety of the exercise, but it is hard to see what other construction can be put upon the endless precautions adopted, and interminable rehearsals gone through, by the prospective tilters. Here at once

was established an important difference between the knights of ancient and modern times. The former merely practised at a tournament the warlike exercises to which they had been accustomed from their youth upward, while the latter had everything to learn, and knew as well how to manage a lance as a boomerang. To the end that the jousts might not end either in serious accident or ridiculous failure, it was deemed well to establish a practising-ground, near London, where the intending combatants might practise and flounder about, without the dread of bright eyes looking on and laughing at their blunders. The Eyre Arms, then described as at the top end of St. John's-wood, was a secluded spot, but not remote enough to escape the notice of the not yet fully-developed special correspondent. The wonderful being who, according to Hans Breitmann, astonished the gods of Valhalla—

A wondrous child who makes us shtare
For hop what may he's always dere—

was as yet only called a reporter, but his eyes were quite sharp enough to pierce the leafy screen which the embryo knights fondly thought would protect them. On Wednesday and Saturday afternoons regular rehearsals took place, thus commented on by the scribe of the period: "We believe next Saturday will be the last day of the exhibition of the mimic knights and esquires, at least it is so understood at present; though if these doughty men-at-arms are not a little more au fait when the tournament takes place, they will be miserably defective in their imitation of the knights of the olden times. Yesterday the tilting feats were performed by Lord Glenlyon, the Hon. Mr. Charteris, the Marquis of Waterford, the Hon. Captain Gage, the Earl of Eglinton, and the Earl of Craven, all of whom appeared in full suits of armour, very grand and almost as fierce as the men in armour which ride in the Lord Mayor's show. Lord Gage presided as Marshal of the Lists, and kept order among the jousters. The Marquis of Waterford was thrown from his horse, and rolled ignobly in the sand and sawdust of the course, but received no injury; indeed the armour is protection, to a certain degree, from broken bones, although it is said several accidents have already occurred from the awkwardness of the parties employed. Be that as it may, there were no serious accidents yesterday,

and the whole business went off as such things usually do, somewhat dull, and altogether silly. There was a group of attendants, dressed like the buffoons at St. Bartholomew fair, who were no doubt intended to represent the retainers of the jousting knights; these worthies held the horses, kept the doors, and, with the assistance of a policeman, were in that respect a very efficient force. The tilting consisted in each knight riding at half-speed at the figure of a knight in armour, a sort of iron scarecrow, mounted on a wooden horse, and placed on small truck wheels on an inclined plane. This 'dummy' knight, on being let loose, rattled along his railroad grooves for the length of fifty yards, whilst the real earnest knight-errant rode fiercely at him in his transit, and strove to knock him out of his saddle at the point of the lance. 'Dummy,' however, proved in the long run the best man of the lot, and sat with imperturbable patience while all the chivalry of the Eyre Arms attacked him in turn; he remained unscathed, and looked as much like a stalwart warrior as any of his antagonists."

Thus early, then, the arrows of scorn were levelled at the bogus chivalry of 1839, but this tone of persiflage was by no means universally adopted. As the session of Parliament approached its end, the ministerial, fashionable, and local newspapers became full of notifications of the tournament, set for the last days of August and the first of September. With an eye to the general effect, it was requested that ladies and gentlemen coming to the tournament would dress in costumes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—a wide margin for the display of taste and fancy—and that farmers and others would appear in Scotch bonnets and plaids. The Irvine Toxophilite Society and the Ayrshire Archers busied themselves in getting new uniforms, and Lord Glenlyon determined to appear at the head of a hundred of his men. The pages of the Morning Post became full of suggestions "How to dress for the tournament," for the most part recommending a study of Chaucer; one humorist quoting the costume of the wife of Bath, as most deserving of imitation. It is not recorded that anybody took advantage of the opportunity to appear as the wife of Bath, but a great many costumes did undoubtedly make their appearance. The guests of the Earl of Eglinton arrived at the castle in the last week of August, and preparations went on at a

furious rate. Immediately behind the castle was erected an enormous wooden pavilion, containing a banqueting-hall large enough to accommodate five hundred guests, and a ball-room of corresponding size. This supplementary building, covered in with canvas, was in all three hundred and twenty-five feet long; and was made absolutely necessary by the want of accommodation in the castle. Beyond this, and by a bridge over the Lugdon, wound the serpentine walk, laid off as the route of the knights and their following to the tilting-ground, a huge space enclosed by vast galleries. The space inside the lists was six hundred and fifty feet long by two hundred and fifty wide. The grand-stand is described as having been a most conspicuous object, carved and gilt in the Grecian style in front—many of the decorative gildings having been used at her Majesty's late coronation in Westminster Abbey. What would Mr. Ruskin say to this, I wonder? Heaven defend us! Greek decorations at a tournament of the fifteenth century, and not only there, but actually in Westminster Abbey as well! Verily the decorators of the early Victorian period have much to answer for. Beside the grand stand and numerous other stands, and at the end of the lists, were pitched the pavilions of the knights; and all Scotland, mindful that no such festival had been seen in Scotland since the visit of George the Fourth, is supposed to have prayed for fine weather. Still the voice of the scoffer was heard between whiles. It was gravely reported that the wild young Marquis of Waterford had not been lodged at Eglinton Castle, but billeted, as it were, at a young ladies' boarding-school. Moreover, the Sheriff of Ayrshire had been set on by some wicked wags to protest against the tournament, as dangerous to life and limb, and downright unlawful; in fact, as many degrees worse than bull-baiting, cock-fighting, prize-fighting, badger-drawing, and other manly amusements of our ancestors; and, moreover, as smacking of popery—not to say downright heathenism and devil-worship. Lord Eglinton was obliged to prove to the worthy sheriff that the sport was absolutely without danger, before he would allow it to proceed, and this demonstration provided the ribald with another sneer. Of course the keen, hard-headed Ayrshire peasantry determined to make a good thing of it. As streams of visitors poured towards Eglinton Castle, not only did that edifice

become full to the roof, but the towns and villages of Irvine, Saltcoats, Kilwinning, and the farms and out-houses adjoining, might have been compared to a beleaguered district, wherein hosts of mankind, compressed into the smallest possible space, were glad to find any corner in which to bestow themselves. Accommodation for man or beast rose from five hundred to a thousand per cent., houses were let for from ten to thirty pounds for the tournament week, and single beds in the second-best apartment of a weaver's domicile were retailed for ten shillings or a pound per night, while the master and mistress of the household, with their little ones, coiled themselves up in any out-of-the-way corner as best they might. Stables, byres, sheds, every inch of covered space was occupied. On the Monday preceding the 28th August, two very notable personages arrived at Eglinton Castle—to wit, Prince Louis Napoleon and Viscount Persigny; and the "Regulations for the Tilting" were at last issued. These appear to have been drawn up to satisfy the uneasy conscience of the sheriff of Ayrshire. They were as follows:

1st. No knight can be permitted to ride without having on the whole of his tilting pieces.

2nd. No knight to ride more than six courses with the same opponent. Particular attention is most earnestly requested to be paid to this injunction, for the general good and credit of the tournament.

3rd. It is expressly enjoined by the Earl of Eglinton, and must be distinctly understood by each knight, upon engaging to run a course, that he is to strike his opponent on no other part than his shield, and that an atteinte made elsewhere, or the lance broken across, will be judged foul, and advantages in former courses forfeited.

4th. Lances of equal length, substance, and quality, as far as can be seen, will be delivered to each knight, and none others will be allowed.

Next day came a deputation from Storr and Mortimer's with waggon-loads of plate for the great banquet, which was to conclude the first day's jousting, and the spirits of all rose as the weather, which had been fretful for some days past, suddenly became warm and bright. On the eventful morning, however, a few disquieting clouds made their appearance, but the immense numbers gathered in this

corner of Scotland were not to be deterred by weather. Before noon, the galleries in the lists were filled, mostly by guests in Scottish and mediæval costumes, and on the stands and around the lists were congregated at least thirty thousand spectators. Every eye was eagerly strained to catch the first glimpse of the procession, but just as it was about to set out from the castle the rain began to fall, not a summer shower, nor a Scotch mist, nor an Edinburgh "haar," "no stinted flood, no scanty tide," but a genuine straight, heavy downpour. The assembled thousands, albeit accustomed to humidity, were sorely disheartened. The comparatively small number of grandees shut in the stand were partially protected, but neither availed plaid, umbrella, nor overcoat aught to the hapless crowd of outsiders. Thousands were drenched to the skin, and went home wet and wroth, while others, less regardful of weather, crowded their bedraggled forms together, and wondered when the procession would set out. Dismal pleasantries were exchanged, and it was hinted that the men in armour were afraid of getting wet, lest they should be "rusted in." As the afternoon wore on the rain abated a little, and the cavalcade came in sight. All witnesses agree that this part of the show was excellently managed, and, bating the rain, a complete success. The line of march was kept by mounted men-at-arms at regular distances, assisted by the retainers and halberdiers of the Lord of the Tournament—the Earl of Eglinton—attired in his livery of blue and gold. First came men-at-arms in half-armour; musicians in particular coloured costumes of silk, like unto those in which a man looked as if "one half of him was burnt with St. Anthony his fire;" and trumpeters in full costume, brilliant with banners and trumpets; the Eglinton herald, his pursuivants and two deputy marshals, all duly attired in tabard and surcoat, all embroidered and emblazoned with the arms of Eglinton. From scores of banners and broad shoulders shone the golden fleur-de-lys of Montgomerie, the red annulets of Eglinton, and the figure of gentle Hope, apparently about to throw the head of a dead savage to a couple of those mysterious animals known to heraldic folk as wyverns. Far and near, those who ran could read the strange motto of a warlike race, "Gardez bien," more befitting the sheriff of Ayrshire than those who had borne it proudly through many

fighting generations. Next to the herald came the Judge of Peace, that good old soldier the late Earl Saltoun, on his horse, richly caparisoned; and then more retainers, halberdiers, heralds, and so forth. Then came the Knight Marshal of the Lists, Sir Charles Lamb, in a suit of black armour, and his esquires, Lord Chelsea and Major MacDowal, attended by retainers in his colours, blue, white, and gold, and more halberdiers, who preceded the lady visitors—Lady Montgomerie, Lady Jane Montgomerie, and others, on horses caparisoned in blue and white silk. Next rode a very gorgeous personage indeed, attired in a magnificent tunic of green velvet embroidered with gold, covered by a crimson velvet cloak trimmed with gold and ermine, having a crown covered in with crimson velvet, and mounted on a charger harnessed with crimson velvet. This radiant individual was a gallant soldier, the English analogue of Ney, for as Napoleon christened the latter the bravest of the brave, so did the Duke of Wellington declare Londonderry the "bravest man he ever saw." The last time the writer saw the gallant marquis was on the occasion of the visit of Ibrahim Pasha to this country, when, to attend an inspection in Hyde-park, the dashing old soldier thought fit to appear as a portly hussar of scarlet hue, like Zamiel on horseback. He was very deaf at that time, and he and Arthur Wellesley rode side by side, roaring in each other's ears, magnificent Londonderry blazing with jewels, and almost putting the modest F.M. costume out of countenance. I do not know whether the brave Stewart was as rotund in 1839 as on the occasion just now referred to, but if he were he must have cut an odd figure in green velvet. After the King of the Tournament rode (or rather was to have ridden) the Queen of Beauty—then Lady Seymour, now Duchess of Somerset—attired in a "robe of violet, with the Seymour crest embroidered in silver on blue velvet, the gorget or upper part of the dress ornamented by a mass of precious stones and gold; a cloak of cerise velvet trimmed with gold and ermine; headdress, a cap covering a part of the neck, barred with gold, each bar ornamented with a row of pearls; and riding on a horse superbly caparisoned, a draped canopy borne over her by attendants in costumes, attended by four petit pages in costly costumes." As a matter of fact, it came on to rain, so violently that only the

horses and attendants of the Queen of Beauty went through it, the lady herself very sensibly driving to the grand-stand in a carriage. Notwithstanding this serious drawback, the show was splendid enough so far as it could be seen through the rain. The Irvine Archers made a brave show in dripping Lincoln green, and the Lord of the Tournament himself, in a suit described as "richly damaaskined gilt armour"—whatever that may mean—bore his burden as sturdily as did the Knight of the Griffin, the late Earl Craven, in engraved Milanese armour; the Knight of the Dragon, the celebrated Marquis of Waterford, in polished steel armour of German make; the Knight of the Black Lion (there is an odd ring as of tavern signs about these titles), Lord Alford; the Knight of Gael, whatever that meant, Lord Glenlyon; the Knight of the Dolphin; the Knight of the Crane; the Knight of the Ram; the Knight of the Swan; the Knight of the Golden Lion; the Knight of the Stag's Head. Is it possible that the noble bearers of these dignities wore them in happy obliviousness that their titles were no longer associated with battles but with beer? Perhaps they did not see anything to laugh at, for humour is a quality which requires cultivation, and—it sounds as if of a period before the flood—there were no comic papers in those days. Oh that there had been! Imagine "our own artist" on the spot, and the "special" mixing his oil and vinegar deftly together, so as to leave the noble performers in doubt as to whether he is admiring or laughing at them. Able editors thirty-eight years ago did not allow much latitude to their scribes, and moreover the graphic style had only just been invented, and had not yet filtered into journalism. The scribe of the period merely gives the programme of the procession, adding that it entered the lists at three o'clock amidst a "deluging shower." As soon as it appeared, a cry against the umbrellas, which gave the assembled crowd the appearance of an army with overlapping shields, arose, and the last protection against the driving storm was lowered. The hearts of the damp spectators, perhaps owing to the sustaining properties of whisky, beat high as the knights paraded around; but spectators of thrifty mind bewailed the awful damage to the silk attire, the velvets, plumes, and other chivalric paraphernalia. The knights were supposed to be waterproof, and bore

themselves bravely in the various courses run during the moistest of all possible afternoons. At last the field became a swamp; the plumes of the knights were all bedraggled, the trappings of their horses were wet through, and clung dismally to those ill-used coursers, and the drier people in the grand-stand began to make bets as to whether certain knights yet abode in their armour, or had been washed out of it, leaving but the steel husk remaining. The ladies in the more exposed part of the galleries were almost as badly off. For a while they bore the pelting of the storm like heroines, but at last retired in pitiable plight, their hats washed out of shape, their ringlets flattened to their rougeless cheeks, and their dresses hanging on them like bathing-gowns. At last the awning over the grand-stand yielded and the water poured in, quickly putting the inmates to flight. To crown all this misery the dreadful news was announced that the banquet and ball, which should have concluded the proceedings of the first day, could not take place, as the rain had rendered itself master of the temporary buildings, and the banquetting-hall was at least a foot deep in water. The contemporary historian is silent as to the evening of that fearful day.

Thursday was devoted to the repair of damages, and the rain having ceased, an attempt was made to make the banquetting-hall habitable. In it took place various matches afoot, the combatants being attired in mail. One of these is worth recollection. It was a regular set-to with singlesticks, between a "very young gentleman," Mr. Charteris, and that Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, who lived to make the world beyond Eglinton Castle hear of his deeds. Prince Louis did not shine in the singlestick combat—the honours being with Mr. Charteris—and came off almost as badly in four or five slashing bouts with the broadsword, his opponent being this time Mr. Charles Lamb. Both combatants were encased in complete armour, and were vociferously applauded by the audience, all in high good humour at the prospect of a day's out-door tilting on the morrow.

For that one day, tilting, banquetting, and dancing, all came off according to the programme. The procession advanced, this time in due order, to the intense delight of the spectators. The Marquis of Waterford, however, excited much curiosity and no little laughter, by bring-

ing in his train one personage dressed like a palmer, with staff and scallop-shell, and another mysterious creature clad in a capacious rustling white surplice, and decorated with flowing beard and locks. Conjecture was exhausted as to the meaning of this strange entity. As he carried a bottle to refresh himself withal, it was imagined he must be intended for Friar Tuck, while others insisted that he must be the family harper, the bard, of the Beresfords. At the tilting, Lord Glenlyon and the Earl of Eglinton shone conspicuously, as did the Marquis of Waterford and Lord Alford. The two latter knights, finding the *mêlée* a dull affair, broke through all the rules and regulations and fell to pell-mell, until the Judge of the Peace rode up and stopped the bout. There was only one drawback to the fun of the day, and that was the jester. In an unhappy moment it had been decided that a tournament without Wamba would be a failure absolute and complete, and a jester was provided. His costume was magnificent, his cap and bells perfect, and he presented a gay spectacle as he rode to the lists on a mule. But when he began his jokes he soon cleared a ring. Nobody knew exactly who he was—whether a local witling or a clown imported from a metropolitan theatre. The industrious scribe recounts one of his jokes, adding in the classical style affected forty years ago, “*ex uno disce omnes.*” “This is a spectacle worthy of the days of Chaucer,” quoth he; “did you ever see Chaucer?” “No, sir,” answered someone. “Then,” said the jester, taking a piece of bread from his pocket, and proceeding to masticate it, “here you see chaw, sir.” “Pray, sir,” then asked one of the spectators, “have you done anything you are sorry for?” The reply being in the negative, “Why, then,” asked the former, “are you so sorry a jester?”

All this failed to bring down the thunder, lightning, and rain, but on the following day the storm arose, and the tiltyard was abandoned for good and all; the guests of Lord Eglinton soon after taking their departure, many making for Doncaster to see the memorable meeting between Charles the Twelfth, Euclid, and Bloomsbury. In the record of superb and costly failures, the Eglinton tournament deserves the first place. The only thing real about it was the hearty welcome and splendid hospitality of Lord Eglinton himself; in every other respect

it was a failure, for, apart from the weather, the tilting, despite previous practice at St. John's-wood, was ridiculous. Perhaps never was so little amusement provided for so much money. This same costliness is not very likely to commend a tournament to the consideration of the youth of to-day, whose prominent vice is surely not profusion. It is well, therefore, that the projectors of modern tournaments should learn the cost of the last great effort made to restore the games of chivalry, before attempting to graft them on a ladies' club and promiscuous kettle-drum.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK.

AUTHOR OF “YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE,” “HOBSON'S CHOICE,” &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER VII. REHEARSAL.

I WAS struck by the very youthful looks of my fellow-players. The representatives of the characters of Modus, Heartwell, Tinsel, and some others, were little more than school-boys. They were greatly troubled always about their costumes, the proper paint to apply to their faces, and as to whether they should or not pad their calves. Clifford was to be personated by a clerk in the State Paper Office, whose real name was Frank Martin, but who was described in the play-bill as Mr. Hubert Fitzhoward. In his case, there was an additional anxiety. He vexed himself, and he wearied others, with questions touching his whiskers. Now, ought he really to shave them off? Was it certain that they did not harmonise with his ample wig of Charles the Second's pattern? Could they not be hidden beneath the curls of the wig? Poor Mr. Martin! His whiskers seemed very dear to him, although they could hardly have been friends of very long standing. They had grown abundantly; but he was a very young man.

The character of Helen was assigned to a Miss Adelaide Drelincourt, whose real name was Eliza Parkins. She was not without some experience of the stage, for she had figured, as I learnt, at a London theatre, as a member of the *corps de ballet*. But she was ambitious of appearing in what she called “speaking parts.” Her chief difficulties in this respect arose from the cockney tones of her voice, her habits of mispronunciation, and her capricious

dealings with the letter H. It was understood, however, that she had greatly benefited by Mr. Hooton's teaching. She was a comely-looking, good-natured girl, very uneducated and unrefined; her wide mouth wore a perpetual smile, that set her large white teeth flashing, and she indulged in giggles that convulsed her whole frame; she flirted in a very frank way with the other players, and was only ill at ease in regard to the redness of her hands. It was in vain she coated them with a sort of whitewash, composed of a solution of bismuth; the brightness of their natural hue could hardly be suppressed, but gleamed through the scumble of cosmetic. The red had acquired a livid purple tone; it was not wholly overcome.

At rehearsal, I was struck by the fact, that the performers knew very little of their parts, while all were confident that they should be "letter perfect" when the hour of representation arrived. Further, it was to be noticed, that each of the actors viewed himself as the most important figure in the exhibition, and held that his assured success would bring about the prosperity of his colleagues. Over all presided Mr. Toomer Hooton, blandly surveying his pupils, pitying their inexperience, sympathising with their aspirations, and thoroughly satisfied that any favour shown to the entertainment would arise entirely from his own masterly rendering of his favourite character of the Hunchback.

Would anyone come to see us act? I was tempted to enquire. But on this head there seemed to be no misgiving. A conviction prevailed, indeed, that our exertions would be noticed by the public press, and that generally the eye of London would be upon us. It was whispered that managers, both metropolitan and provincial, had sometimes attended the performances of Mr. Hooton's pupils, and had forthwith offered very lucrative engagements to the more promising players. And then the actors freely distributed tickets of admission among their friends and acquaintances. It was thought desirable that the house should be full, although few of the spectators might pay for their places. I was in despair, when I remembered the limited number of my friends. Who would applaud me, I asked? For it was not a question of deserving applause, and in such wise obtaining it. There was need of a display of artificial enthusiasm on my account, if only that I might not

seem to be less esteemed by the public than were my fellow-players.

"Have you got your words, Miss Delamere?" enquired Miss Drelincourt. "It's a norrid lot—I mean a horrid lot—to learn, isn't it? And I always had such a wretched memory; indeed, all our family always had wretched memories. And then, Mr. Bolingbroke is really a dreadful stick. He is not at all equal to such a part as Modus, and ought not to be allowed to play it. He says himself that his line is low comedy, and, of course, Modus isn't a low comedy part. I know he'll ruin all my business. He's very proud of his by-play, but it's mere buffoonery to my thinking, and he spoils every point of my best scene."

"I'll do my best, Miss Delamere, I'll promise you that. But I am afraid you'll find me very awkward," Mr. Hubert Fitzhoward, otherwise Frank Martin, candidly owned. "Anything you want done, if you'll only let me know, I'll honestly try and do it. Or, if there's anything that you'd rather I did not do, I'll endeavour to leave it undone. I hope to get through Clifford tolerably well, but I hope also not to inconvenience you in any way. But I have never had much practice at this sort of thing, and I can't help feeling dreadfully nervous."

"I think we shall all be nervous enough when the night comes, Mr. Fitzhoward."

"Fitzhoward? I beg your pardon. Really, I'd forgotten that was my name, for the moment. And I'm in such a bewildered state just now, that to be addressed by a name I've no strict title to quite startles and upsets me. Would you mind calling me Martin—Frank Martin? that's what people commonly call me, and the name I usually answer to, as they say of the dogs that are advertised for. You see, Miss Delamere, I am, in truth, very little of an actor, and I don't think I am likely to make any great mark on the stage either as Sir Thomas Clifford or as Sir Anybody Else. But I spend my Christmas holidays at an old country house in Hampshire, and the people there, dear old friends of mine, are really mad about private theatricals, and they grow worse and worse every year. Now I've stood out of it all for a long time; but, at last, I find myself fairly drawn into it, as though it were a whirlpool. For there's a young lady there who thinks she can play Julia; I don't believe she can, to tell you the honest truth; but I know that she's

the most charming of her sex, if you'll forgive me for saying so in your presence, Miss Delamere, and make allowance for me; the fact being that I am desperately in love with that young lady, and her most devoted slave in every respect. That being the case, could I allow anybody else but myself to play Sir Thomas Clifford to her Julia? You will admit that I could not, and so I've taken lessons of Toomer, for naturally I want to appear to the best advantage. That I shall get on quite well enough in Hampshire I haven't a doubt; the only question is whether I shall be able to play Clifford here in London without giving you a great deal of trouble, and distressing you much by my serious imperfections as an actor."

Mr. Martin was the most diffident and modest of our number, very kindly and obliging, but certainly he possessed little skill as an actor, less even than he professed. For his opinion of himself was not, I think, quite so humble as he pretended. I detected at times in his performance symptoms of ambition and of self-admiration of a decided kind. I am sure, moreover, that he depended greatly upon the effect he was likely to create in the old Hampshire country house by his appearance in the part, and the picturesque costume of Sir Thomas Clifford. He took delight in his symmetrical silk-stockinged legs; and his whiskers, if they were somewhat of a care to him, were scarcely less a joy and a pride. He was a good-looking, pleasant young man, with a certain graceful simplicity of manner; and in the course of our rehearsals Mr. Martin and I became very cordial friends.

Was I nervous? At times a feeling of faintness came over me, and I was sick at heart, with icy cold hands and an aching, burning forehead. But I laboured to repress any weakness of that sort by sheer force of will; I determined to be brave and to succeed, if that were possible to me. I despised myself when I found fear stealing over me. I tried to gain strength by dwelling upon the object of my exertions. It was for "our home"—"our home," I assured myself again and again. It had become clear to me that I must toil to help Paul, that he needed help, that a share of the burthen of supporting "our home" rested upon my shoulders.

"You're not frightened?" said Miss Drelincourt.

"No, I don't feel frightened."

"Well, you have nerve! But you

may find the difference when night comes. You're such a novice, you see, you don't know half the trouble you've got before you. Why, I've seen some of them quite old stagers, too, very much upset on the first night of a new play. They've stood on the wings, shivering and shaking so as you might have knocked them down with a feather, and all their words, they thought they'd got so perfect, gone clean out of their heads. Wait till night comes; let's see how you manage then." And Miss Drelincourt giggled, with yet some kindly feeling for my ignorance and inexperience. She had been a ballet-girl, and believed she knew the stage thoroughly.

Basil was far more nervous than I was; far less hopeful of my success. But he was never inclined to be sanguine upon any subject; and he was dissatisfied with my view of the profession of the stage. I should have entered upon it with higher notions, for nobler motives. Anxiety to earn money to buy bread withal did not constitute a sufficiently urgent motive. And was acting really to be respected as an art? I asked myself, when brought face to face with the tawdriness and the squalor, the tricks and tinsel, the falsity and the littleness of the world behind the scenes. If an art at all, surely it was the lowest and the poorest of the arts. After all, the player is not an inventor, the creator of anything, but simply a translator; he but speaks the words another has writ down for him; he but fills up the outline designed by another hand; he but moves and breathes, frowns and smiles, as another has prescribed—and the poor shifts and devices, the false hair and padding, the painting and powdering, to which he is compelled to resort. The miserable stock-in-trade of mummery and mimicry! Before I had set foot upon it, the stage had become almost odious to me.

And yet I could appreciate the glories of dramatic poetry, its heroic passions, its exquisite creations, its grace and grandeur, its ennobling and exalting influences and properties. I felt myself melt or burn, or thrill or tremble, at the magic waving of the poet's wand. Indeed, it was for this very reason I found something repellent in the presence of the player, with his matter-of-fact craft, his paltry artifices and contrivances, upon scenes completely vivified by the imagination, and certainly needing not the corporeal support he would obtrude. The world's applause would be his, however, almost to the ignoring of the poet.

True, the actor's triumph, for all its brilliance, is for a season only; Time acts the part of Justice, and restores the even balance of things. The player's fame passes away with his generation; he departs, bequeathing nothing to remind the coming ages that he ever existed. The poet, the painter, and the sculptor, may live for ever in their works. The actor's success perishes with him, it is part of himself. His duty done, he withdraws behind the curtain for ever; the applauding hands and voices are idle and mute; all is silence and oblivion.

These were not the thoughts that should have occupied a young aspirant for histrionic honours. Yet they would visit and oppress me. Basil was right, no doubt. I should have been animated by a larger measure of enthusiasm; in such wise I should have been impelled so much the more towards success. Faith upholds and encourages. Devotion dignifies its object. If I could have respected more the task I had set myself, its accomplishment would really have been less difficult to me. And surely there had been, in times past, men and women, noble ornaments of the stage, who had brought to the exercise of their profession cultivated intelligence, refined sentiment, true nobility of life! They had been fully convinced of the elevation of their duties, believed themselves not merely ministrants of pleasure, but worthy of being counted among the instructors and benefactors of society. How I envied them their power of deeming their art a great one, or their blindness in disregarding its littleness!

"Already, you look pale and weary, my Doris," said Paul. "Is your heart giving way? Do you repent this brave step of yours?"

"No. I'm not afraid."

"You dread failure?"

"No. I have screwed my courage to the sticking-place, and I shall not fail."

"Sticking-place? Ah, that is your Shakespeare, is it not? An awkward expression, though. For to stick is to stop, to come to a standstill, to be embarrassed; so I think the dictionary tells us. There must be no sticking-place, Doris. We must organise a 'claque.' We must secure your triumph beforehand. And we will give you a glass of champagne to exhilarate you."

"No. I need to be very cool and collected. I want all my senses about me."

The important day had arrived. I was

to play Julia in the evening. I read my part over and over again. I could hardly speak anything but the words of Julia. I was haunted by the play, and my every utterance seemed somehow to acquire a certain rhythmical quality, to assume almost the form of blank verse. My sentences became inverted and involved to suit the measure; odd Elizabethan terms and phrases came unawares to my lips. For the time, and in a sense, I was the Julia of the play.

Basil had been with me in the morning, and was to return later in the day. He was most anxious to render me all the assistance in his power.

"I am glad to see you so composed."

"Perhaps I am hardly so composed as I seem."

"Ah, your hand burns."

"Yes. I am rather feverish, and terribly thirsty. Give me another glass of water."

We had dined very simply and frugally at three o'clock. My appetite had been of the slightest. We were to have tea at five o'clock. I was, of course, to dress at the theatre. My costume and finery were contained in a large box which I was to take with me. It made me nervous to find Basil so nervous on my account. From his manner and appearance, one might have judged that his *début* impended, and not mine.

"I am inclined to say with Falstaff: 'I would it were bed-time, Hal, and all well.'"

"Amen," said Basil, with rather a woe-begone smile.

He was conscious that he was chargeable with being something of a wet blanket.

"I think I shall remain in front of the curtain all the evening," he said. "That will be best, perhaps. I am so likely to dispirit you. And should you want me for anything, you can easily send round to me. I shall come to you, of course, when all is over, and the curtain has fallen."

"I suppose Nick will not be there?"

"I think not. He is very angry, as you know, and his prejudices are very strong."

"I don't want him there. He had much better keep away from the theatre."

"You are sure that you have everything you want, that you have forgotten nothing?"

Paul had been out all the afternoon. He had to write his Paris news, and had been gathering materials from his

friends and gossips, his compatriots in Soho. He returned at tea-time, bringing with him some lovely flowers for my hair. He had gone to Covent-garden Market on purpose to obtain them, and had paid a large price for them. It was most kind of him, for he had so much to think of just then. The sprays of stephanotis were perfectly beautiful: just what I wanted.

"So long as you are pleased, dear one," he said, "that is enough; I ask for no more."

Presently he asked: "Your heart still beats firmly, Doris? You are without fear?"

"Almost. I am very anxious, but not afraid; at least, I think not; and I mean to be very brave."

"Poor child! Ah well! we all need to be brave."

"What is the matter, Paul?" I asked. I was struck by a certain change in his voice; and now his face wore an unusually grave look. I had been so busied about my own affairs that I had not noticed before his altered aspect. "Has anything happened?"

"It is nothing, little one," he said. "Something has happened; but we will not speak of it now."

"You have received bad news?"

"Well, yes; some bad news; but good news has arrived also."

"Please, tell me what has happened, Paul."

"Bouchardon has been arrested. The poor Alcide!"

"His life is in peril?"

"No; I do not say that. But his arrest is an inconvenience to him and to his friends. It is discovered that he is not really an English commercial traveller; that his passport does not reveal his true name. It is unfortunate. He cannot buy the French clocks we had need of. He will be released before long, I think; but meanwhile we have to find some other means of knowing what time it is in Paris."

"Poor M. Bouchardon; I am very sorry for him. And your good news, Paul?"

"The king grows more and more unpopular. At the public banquets, no one dares to propose his health. At the theatres, the performances are interrupted again and again by demands for the Marseillaise. The fire is lighted; there is

already a cloud of smoke upon the horizon. We have to wait but a little while now."

I saw that Basil touched him lightly on the arm, and that they interchanged glances.

"Our Basil is right," said Paul; "we should not speak of these things now or to you. Already you have sufficient to occupy and distract you. Fear nothing; we will talk of this French news by-and-by, Doris. For the present, banish all thought of it from your mind. Think only of your part, dear one; of the Julia you are going to personate, and of the triumph that is in store for you."

I was startled by the look of Basil's white, eager face.

"I think we had better be going," he said.

"Our Basil will see you safely to the theatre."

"You are not coming with me, Paul?"

"I cannot. I may not. I have letters to write, of real importance. But I will join you at the theatre as soon as possible. Have no fear, Doris."

"I had so hoped that you would be with me."

"My Doris promised to be brave."

"Your absence is a bad omen, Paul."

"Omens! Let them scare the old women. The young need not fear them."

Laughing he kissed me, and we parted. I went down to the theatre in a cab with Basil.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. III. ROME.

CHAPTER IX. CINDERELLA.

ONE all-important formality has been omitted from the process of this history. Fortunately, the error may be amended. It lies in not having set out with those essential words, "Once upon a time."

Once upon a time, then—that is to say, when Miss Hayward of Deepweald was a child in arms and the Reverend Reginald Gaveston unborn—the same sun that was afterwards to bake Mrs. Swann's Dorcas meeting, shone, much more brightly though less hotly, into a very different sort of room. Room, indeed, is hardly the name for it. It was an immense loft, darkened by loop-holes, long and wide enough for a granary, but so low that a short man could touch its black rafters without having to stand on tiptoe. The floor, uncarpeted, was as black as the rafters; half its planks were loose, and all were rat-eaten; every dusty sunbeam was needed to save the wariest feet from the innumerable traps that the rats and mice had set for their human enemies. Of furniture, in the sense of the word accepted by the Swanns, there was none. But, nevertheless, the room was crowded with furniture calculated to turn many an honest man into a kleptomaniac, and small blame to him.

The very blackness of the rafters was half hidden by gorgeous draperies of lace, old and yellow enough to turn a sane man into a collector, and to drive a collector into acute frenzy. There was a sort of

poetry about the very recklessness with which the exquisite treasures of web-work were seemingly left to moulder in such a hole, and to set off the blackness of old timber instead of the whiteness of young shoulders. It must have been a sorrow to the sun itself, whenever he managed to get a fair peep through a loop-hole, to miss on each occasion another priceless scrap of foliage or tracery that had gone to make a new bed for the mice behind the panel. Nor had all of it the advantage of hanging from the rafters. Much more was heaped and squeezed into corners, where its delicate beauty was invisible even to the sun, and there left to grow black and mouldy. Nor was the lace all. In other corners, and hung from other rafters, were piles and draperies of gold brocade and embroidery, as if the owner of the loft had robbed a cathedral and was unable to get rid of his plunder; even the lace had an ecclesiastical mildew about it, and suggested the adornment of cardinals rather than of queens. It was all a set-out of old clothes indeed, but of a sort to throw a glory over Rag Fair for ever.

The sun, in his struggles to look in, had only one more thing to see. One magnificent lace veil, and one only, was where it ought to be—was turning a live girl into the statue of a bride. Her face was turned away from the light, but her pose and her figure were inconsistent with anything but beauty of feature, by every law of harmony. She probably appeared taller, under the low roof, than she really was, but she was at any rate of full woman's height, and was as stately as a Juno of seventeen. Her absolutely motionless attitude was as perfectly graceful

as if she had been in the habit of standing for Juno to sculptors all her days—it only lacked one grace that can be thought of. It was the grace of unconsciousness. Though the room was empty of all life but her own and the spiders', it was quite clear that she had one very zealous admirer there, who was not a spider. Unless, indeed—and it looked likely—she was herself the magical spinner of all those wonderful lace cobwebs that hung around her. Only in that case she must have been hundreds of years old. She stood thus motionless for many minutes in the midst of her web, with no sign of life in her but the slow rise and fall of the veil that covered her from head to foot; then she faced slowly round to the light, and suddenly, as if moved by an inspiration of caprice, tore off the lace, crumpled it up, threw it across the room into one of the farthest corners, grasped a window-bar with each hand, and looked out at nothing.

There was a want of harmony between her face and her figure, after all. Her features did not suggest Juno; at any rate not according to the classic ideal, although her eyes were large and dark and very beautiful. She was olive-skinned, without any of the bloom of her age, and even hungry-looking. The outlines of her face were clear and well marked, though not boldly; her expression was placid, dull, and without charm. It showed none of the self-conscious self-admiration that had been so remarkably legible through the veil. But, in spite of all it wanted, it was a face that might easily look beautiful every now and then, perhaps—under happy conditions—grow beautiful altogether. She had, at any rate, the beauty of contrast. Her dress, which the wonderful lacework had just covered, was made up of a dark blue flannel jacket, buttoned at the neck and loose about the body and arms, and a well-worn, rather short, skirt of black stuff—a slovenly sort of costume that made her marvellous statuesque grace a splendid triumph over difficulties. She had no ornaments but her eyes.

The room was quiet—not with the comparative stillness of Deepweald, but utterly. The rats were presumably asleep; there was no wind to make noisy draughts through the cracks and holes; not the ghost of a sound was to be heard. The girl was doing nothing, and seemed to have nothing to do. And so—it was only natural—she grasped the bars more tightly,

drew herself back, and yawned desperately. Then she pulled a handful of nuts from the pocket of her skirt, cracked them with her teeth, and munched them slowly.

It says little for her taste, though much for her teeth, that she should try such a means of keeping off ennui, with so many treasures of skill and antiquity lying round her. And at last even this failed; she took to dropping her nuts one by one out of window, and trying how far the bars allowed her to see them fall, which was no more than a yard or two. Suddenly, with the same quick gestures with which she had thrown off the veil, she went to another corner of the room, pulled an embroidered chasuble from one of the dustiest corners, threw it over her shoulders, and stood in the largest sunbeam she could find, so that the gold threads might glitter as much as possible. Then another impulse seized her—she untwisted the tight knot into which her dark hair was coiled, let it fall down over her shoulders and mix with the gold threads and the purple. Only one possible thing was left to be done. She pulled down a large square of lace from the nearest rafter, twisted it round her head turbanwise, routed in another corner till she found a triumph of wood carving in the shape of an ancient Venetian looking-glass, and looked sadly and lovingly at her grotesque head and shoulders. She must have stood thus for at least ten minutes; and not once did she yawn.

At last, however, she laid down the mirror and sighed. She had fought ennui with her very last weapon; there was nothing more to be done; or at any rate she looked for nothing more to do. Without taking off her turban or her chasuble she sat down on the floor, rested her chin upon her knees and embraced them with her arms. And still the room remained as silent as if she were the only living creature whom the house contained.

As she sat there and basked lazily, the warmth seemed to make a humming in her ears. And indeed a distant sound, not unlike that of the sea, had been imperceptibly rising from without upon the dark background of silence. It seemed to travel in upon the sunbeam, as if that were a conductor of sound. It was a confused noise, and very far away. Suddenly, when she seemed dropping off to sleep, the girl sprang to her feet and said aloud to herself:

"I must, and I will!"

In a hurry, as if making up for lost time or afraid that her resolution, whatever it was, might run away before she could follow it, she threw off her finery, twisted up her hair before the looking-glass with one sweep of her arms and without lingering more than was needful, and then began to toss over the contents of the room as if they were the commonest rags in the world. Every now and then she looked at one carefully, and paused; but she always threw it back into the heap until, at last, she discovered a mantilla of black Spanish lace, such as the greatest lady in the land of romance would be proud to wear. She threw it over her head hurriedly, drew the front more than half over her face, and the rest round her in folds, so as to hide her dress as much as possible. With this addition to her natural grace skilfully arranged about her she opened the creaking door of the room, and ran down a staircase that was well-nigh pitch dark though it must have been nearly noon. At the bottom of the stairs she spent nearly ten minutes in opening an elaborately locked and barred door, closed it again, and was at last out of that seemingly deserted house of dust and darkness, and in the open air.

She came out into a narrow lane of tall houses, mostly with shops or rather booths under them. And here was a new strangeness: though it was plainly a street of traffic, she was still as solitary as she had been in the loft with her nuts and her looking-glass. Not a living creature but herself, not so much as a dog or a cat, was to be seen—not even so much as that far-off sea-like murmur was to be heard. A plague in the town would not account for such utter desertion. It was not so very many years ago, for all that it was Once upon a Time; and yet the girl in the mantilla might have stepped right out from her own singular dwelling into a by-way of the middle ages in some country unknown. The sky was beautifully blue and clear; but only a thin strip of it was visible between the many-storied houses, with narrow holes irregularly dotted about them for windows. They were of stone, ancient and grimy with neglect; some looked threatening to fall into ruins. But they had none of the beauty of old age, no quaint gables or carved stories—they were very old, very high, very grimy, and that was all. There was an ugly, evil look about them all; and they exhaled

an evil odour besides. The two rows of houses seemed to have met so nearly as to squeeze all the air out from between them.

If the girl had drawn the mantilla over her eyes to avoid being seen, there was little need for the precaution. Not a face appeared at a single window; not a tradesman was in a single shop; not so much as a street-bird did she meet, as she walked quickly along the broken pavement of the lane. Presently she passed through a gateway in a wall. And now the reader must be blind, or unread, or untravelled indeed if he does not recognise the city beyond the gateway. It is Rome.

Whence she had come, whether she had indeed made a step across time and distance from ages ago, matters for the present no more. The cobwebs and the silence and the solitude are suddenly swept away like a heavy dream at morning. The narrow strip expands into a real blue sky, such as people call Italian, because it is sometimes seen in Italy as well as elsewhere; the air grows sweet and open, and life begins. And what a life it is to-day, as the girl presently finds her way upon the Corso!

It is no common everyday life, that wherein she is all at once reduced to an indistinguishable atom. A crowd of escaped lunatics is swaying and surging round and under and over a long line of open carriages, jammed up so tightly that it can hardly move even at a snail's pace, and seemingly risking shipwreck every moment, like a fleet of boats in a storm at sea. On each side the windows have been removed bodily; the houses have bloomed out into all the colours of the rainbow, and more. And the people on foot, in the carriages, and in the open houses, are not men and women to-day. Whether demons, harlequins, bears, nymphs, or plain masques, or what not, they are all children, and mad children into the bargain. In a word, it is not only Rome, but Rome at the very height of the last day of the Carnival.

I am not going to paint for the thousand-and-first time the humours of the Roman Carnival, in the days—is it a sin to feel one twinge of regret for them at odd times?—before the phantom of the capital of the world had condescended to be the living capital of Italy. It may have been a somewhat disreputable ghost, but it was a merry one, and knew how to keep Carnival. The throwing of nosegays and

sugar-plums was in full swing, when the girl came into the very midst of it out of her dream; and she looked as bewildered as if she had never before dreamed such a dream or seen such a waking. If she had looked out of place in her queer home, if home it was, she was a stray fish in the very strangest of waters here—a girl without a smile, without a friend, without a flower, in the midst of laughter, universal fellowship, and a rain of roses. Even her plain black mantilla, though it was perhaps the costliest costume on the whole Corso, seemed to mark her off from the rest of the world; and she drew it down over her face yet farther.

But she could see through it very well. And the true Carnival spirit, when fairly let loose in all its glory, was this—that not even the very gravest and dullest of fools was able to keep his heart grave for long. All the world became one in the same common madness; it was all one laugh, and there is no sympathy like laughing together. And so it was with the girl in the mantilla before long. She had no nose-gays and no sugar-plums; but all the world seemed to be pelting them about for her as well as for itself. Now she rode in some amazing carriage, and now looked from some crimson balcony, as well by deputy as others could in person. She was soon hedged in the corner of a doorway and did not care to move; she had a good vantage-ground; and as she looked the heavy look began to pass out of her eyes, and the full life round her to find its way into them.

A story-teller is like a looker-on at a carnival. He can only describe what he sees and hears of this person or that; of their past histories he can know nothing until he learns it from their own acts and words. But even as at a carnival where all persons, lookers-on no less than actors, are carried away by the same impulse for the time, it is easy for him to make their immediate thoughts and fancies his own. Whatever this girl's daily life might be, it grew fainter and fainter in her mind till it became invisible and beyond guessing, while to-day's life grew and grew. It was as if she were being touched by the wand of a fairy godmother. The poor ragged skirt and jacket under that most inappropriate veil turned into the silks and satins of yonder group of laughing ladies in the crimson balcony. The doorstep on which she was standing became a finer barouche than that wherein

a party of wild beasts and savages, commanded by Punchinello, were performing a hideous serenade to them; and a party of rats out of the loft came to draw her in the form of cream-coloured horses. She had not a single ornament, not even such a universal thing as a pair of earrings; but, by the same magic, somebody else's diamonds flew across the Corso on a sunbeam, and fixed themselves in her own ears. After all, none are so rich as the poor; their possessions are not limited by possession. So complete was the transformation that it was wonderful her clumsy boots did not turn into glass, so that all the world might see whether her feet were large or small.

She wanted no prince to admire her. The Carnival was a great looking-glass, in which she saw herself in all this glory. She was too much absorbed in the vision to be conscious of that wish, "Oh, if this could last for ever!" which is so fatal to the gifts of fairies. Nobody spoke to her; she stood in her corner as if the fairy godmother had given her the additional privilege of being invisible, so that nobody could see her otherwise than she saw herself, and thus dispel the charm.

In this glorious new self she had forgotten herself utterly, when all at once she started as if a snake had stung her, turned pale, and with one of her lightning movements covered the whole of her face and neck with the front of her mantilla. She shrank back into her corner and cowered down, so that the heads and shoulders of the crowd about her might screen her from a shrivelled-up, elderly man with a remarkable nose like a vulture's beak, who looked in face and figure as if Nature had given the dough a vicious pinch when she made him. He was crawling along, dressed in a black domino, at the extreme edge of the crowd, taking no part in its merriment; and on his arm was a short old woman, also in a domino, monstrously fat and with a face plastered all over with smiles and rouge. They crawled on past the girl's doorstep as well as the crowd allowed them, and disappeared in a cloud of confetti behind the barouche Punchinello. Then the girl lifted up her head again, but not her mantilla.

The shadow was not long that they threw over the Carnival. The sun went in-with their coming, and at their going he came out again, more brightly than ever. The passing cloud seemed even to

have given a new zest to the strange life about her.

As the hours rushed by in a moment, she saw the instantaneous vanishing of the crowd from the Corso, the rush of the race-horses like a whirlwind gone mad, and then—at another touch of the wand—came the thundering of cannon, the shouting of people, and the instantaneous reappearance of the crowd round her, exactly as it had been before. She did not notice that the daylight had begun to fade and that all the brilliant colours were turning gray and brown. And none would have thought of it in watching the lines of lamplight that ran faster and faster along the great street till at last it looked like one vast flame, throwing out sparks that fell into thousands of hands and turned into lighted candles. It was the great sight and the great laugh of all—the hour of the Moccoli. She had no light; but not the less for that she lost herself in breathless interest over the famous battle of the candles, in the blaze of light that turned the day's masquerade into a delightful nightmare. She seemed intoxicated with the whirl of light and laughter; she threw back her mantilla and clasped her hands together—

Suddenly, through the uproar, came a clear, quiet sound of bells. Out went every light, every laugh; the Carnival itself went out in a single instant—the rats scampered home, the diamonds dropped out of Cinderella's ears, and her clothes turned to rags again under her lace veil.

NOTRE DAME DE LOURDES.

MODERN shrines, of recent sanctity, are visited through different motives, the two principal being curiosity and devotion. Also, when one is out for a holiday, it is pleasant to have somewhere to go to for a change of scene; and my latest visit to Lourdes was the consequence of knowing that a much-talked-of spot, attracting its thousands after thousands, lay at the end of a short railway drive from Tarbes, the basis of my operations.

The first time I passed through Lourdes it had no suspicion of the glories in store for it. One could breakfast and dine there, without fear of being crowded, well and cheaply. Notre Dame had just appeared, but without exciting much attention from the world at large, and with considerable opposition from the world at

home. Since then, access to that signally favoured locality has become easier. A railway, taking Lourdes on its way,* has connected Tarbes, the chief place of the department of the High Pyrenees, with Pau, the chief place of the Low Pyrenees. Lourdes, consequently, is accessible at all seasons of the year. Its environs are always a pleasant, even if they do not prove an edifying promenade. There are lovely hills, a climb up which will procure an appetite, as well as an indulgence or a dispensation. A rushing mountain stream, an old citadel perched on an eminence, trees, green pastures, naked rocks—few elements of the picturesque are wanting.

The change in the fortunes of Lourdes, and the source of the change, is betrayed by stalls surmounted by the inscription, "Aux Grands de Marie;" by shops bearing such signs as "Au Rosier de la Grotte;" by the Hôtel de Rome and the Hôtel de la Grotte. Before their existence, I knew the Hôtel des Pyrénées; this time, following the example of worldlings, I was content to put up with the Hôtel de Paris.

Lourdes is situated on a strip of border land, where the stony waves of the Pyrenees are subsiding into the calm of the plain. Nervous people may object to its earthquakes—hitherto not serious—which occur not unfrequently. But the neighbourhood of Bagnères de Bigorre, of the Pic du Midi—and probably the whole chain—all volcanic, have not yet sunk into absolute repose. The quality of its seasons is indicated by fields of ripe maize; by vineyards producing excellent wine, which many have enjoyed, without suspecting it, under the names of claret and Bordeaux; by markets abounding with tomatoes, grapes, fresh figs, peaches, melons, capsicums. On the 24th of September grass was being cut and made into hay, in meadows shorn as close as a lawn. In the mountains, the mowing is so frequently repeated and the hay becomes so excessively short and fine as to require tying up in sheets before carting it away, to prevent its dispersion by the wind. The same practice and result occur in Switzerland.

To reach Lourdes, suppose you are in Paris, drive to the Gare d'Orléans, and take the quarter to nine o'clock express.

* At the station there is a special way out for pilgrims, enabling them to arrange their packets and bundles, and to form in procession directly they leave the trains. Even at Tarbes you see luggage-vans fitted up with temporary benches in case of an overflow of pilgrims to Lourdes.

Soon, you are passing through flat valleys, bounded by green heights clad with stripes of vines of diverse shades, looking like verdant waves rolling over and just about to break. Then the monotonous level of La Beauce gives marked variety to the panorama. Then fields studded with chestnut-trees lead the way to picturesque Poitiers; vineyards sparsely besprinkled with standard peach-trees take you as far as lofty Angoulême, which looks down upon you from its upheaved platform, and which you do not go to, but under. Richer and richer plains, covered with more and more vines, land you at five minutes to six at Bordeaux; where, being a prudent tourist, and knowing that slow and steady wins the race, you will sleep.

After Bordeaux, change of vegetation, indicating change of climate, in spite of the natural sterility of the Landes; plenty of peach-bushes—for they are no more-bearing fruit out in the open; catalpa-trees hung with their long slender pods, testifying to the genial spring and summer; arbutuses, unerring witnesses to the mildness of winter; Japanese spindle-trees and privets in flower; affirm the benevolence of the sky overhead, although meagre field-crops reveal the poverty of the soil beneath.

The cork-trees planted by Napoleon the Third along portions of this line of railway, when he took the waste lands of France under his patronage, don't get on fast. Still they survive; and, as they are long-lived, they may outlast many other material memorials of that extraordinary period. Altogether, it is visibly evident that cultivation is encroaching on the wilderness. But still too vast are the dead-level areas covered with the unattractive—not to say ugly—species of heath, out of whose roots the French carve pipe-bowls, mixed up with bracken, common heather, and ling, above whose gray-green surface may be seen a rare shepherd, reposing on the tripod formed by his stilts and his long staff, and watching his scattered sheep, who, if they graze little for want of grass, make up for it by browsing much. From Morcenx, through woods, to Mont de Marsan, until ploughmen, guiding cream-coloured cows that wear sackcloth aprons on their backs to protect them from flies, announce the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees, which soon rise before you, a multiple mass of titanic blue walls—one ruined wall rising behind another—notched into battlements, and rising into peaks that invite you to thread your way

amongst their intricacies. Before ceasing to admire them you are at Tarbes, an excellent starting-point for their exploration.

Instead of which, following the multitude, we take our tickets to revisit Lourdes. What a change! or, rather, what an addition and increase! That old by-street, still the same, is renamed "Rue de la Grotte." If this be only the ordinary Sunday crowd, what a sight must the influx of pilgrim thousands be!

There is a constant rushing to and fro of hack-carriages, full and empty; of omnibuses—one, to economise a letter, calls itself an omnibus; of peasants' carts; of pedestrians, proudly wearing their blessed beads and carrying their blessed candles and bottles of miraculous water. In scores of stalls, lining each side of the road, there are for sale photographs, lithographs, books of devotion, statuettes, models, rosaries, coloured prints, scapularies, tapers, crowns, glories, lettered legends, jewelled hearts, walking-sticks mounted with miniature views of the grotto, nautilus shells out down into cups for sipping from the miraculous spring—so rich is the supply of "objets de piété." Orientals in costume—not Turks, I presume—announce the "entrée libre" to stocks of "objets de Jérusalem," comprising the curious cruciferous plant known as the Rose of Jericho. With so edifying a collection there are still mixed up a few, although very few, mundane toys. A greater inconsistency is displayed by persons, profanely called "marchands de petits bons dieux," playing cards, on Sunday afternoon, in front of their religious article stalls. Que voulez-vous? Their minds cannot always be strained in the contemplation of local signs and wonders.

For the stranger, the Sunday throng has the great attraction of an assemblage of indigenous costumes and native races, apart from devotional considerations. But when that throng swells into thousands of pilgrims, the enthusiasm of the Lourdes devotees easily becomes catching. Impressionable people, on witnessing that overflow of religious feeling, can scarcely help sharing in the movement. Without enquiring into its grounds or its object, they think that a multitude so vast, so warm, so thoroughly convinced, cannot surely be manifesting such ardent worship without good reason for their faith. It is only the natural yearning of the human heart to obtain glimpses of an unseen world. Were there good reason for

that faith, the rest would be a logical consequence. The facts of the case, therefore, are worth looking into.

In February, 1858, Bernadette Soubirous, fourteen years of age, the daughter of hard-working parents, was learning to read and write, and preparing for her first communion—a religious act usually accomplished by French children, at least in the north, one or two years earlier. Her usual employment of keeping sheep curtailed the time assignable even to those elementary studies. Nevertheless, she had been early taught the practice of devotional exercises. While her flock was grazing she would seize the opportunity to kneel, and tell off the beads of her rosary. Her mother, however, was obliged to recall her from her sheep and her devotions, to assist in housework.

Near Lourdes there is a steep and rocky hill-side, called Massabielle, full of cracks and crannies, holes and caves, which may occasionally penetrate deep into the rock. Some of the openings are now closed with iron grating. On the 11th of that February, Bernadette, her sister Marie, and a young friend of the same age, went to Massabielle, to pick up dry sticks for firing. In front of the grottoes they heard a noise like the wind rustling amongst the branches of trees. Looking in the direction whence the sound proceeded, Bernadette—and she alone—saw, in an oblong vertical cavity, several feet above the level of the soil, the apparition of a human form standing on a small block of granite, and framed in a halo of brilliant light.

Bernadette's first impulse was to run away; but, fixed to the spot by a superior power, she fell on her knees, took a rosary out of her pocket, and began saying her prayers; then, reassured, raising her eyes, she saw that the apparition, smiling on her, was also telling off the beads of a rosary. The form, whose features wore a most affectionate expression, was clad in a long robe of brilliant white, reaching to the feet without covering them; for on each foot were visible two golden full-blown roses. A blue sash, encircling the waist, fell to the ankles in ample folds. A white veil, fastened round the head, draped the whole length of the body without enveloping it. From the joined hands was suspended a rosary with golden links and alabaster beads. No other ornament of any kind was worn by this extraordinary visitant. Its bright blue eyes, beaming with celestial beatitude, filled Bernadette with un-

known transports. After an interval of mutual contemplation, the vision raised its right hand to its forehead. Bernadette involuntarily imitated the movement. Both, in unison, made the sign of the cross, and then the apparition quickly vanished, followed by a train of light. The interview had ended without the utterance of a single word on either part.

While this was occurring, Marie and her friend had been busy binding their bundles of sticks beneath the vault of the grotto—now THE grotto—which is below, and a little to the left of the niche in which the marvellous vision had appeared. On their way home, carrying their faggots on their heads, Bernadette asked her companions whether they had seen anything. They said, "No." Soon afterwards she confided to them what had happened, under the promise of the strictest secrecy. The secret was so well kept that it was soon known to all the gossips of the town. Mamma Soubirous, apprehensive of consequences, forbade her daughter ever to return to Massabielle. The gossips obtained the reversal of that decision by urging that if the apparition were, for instance, the Evil One himself, Bernadette could drive him away by sprinkling him with holy water, with which she could be liberally provided. If, on the other hand, it were a heavenly spirit, Bernadette and her family, honoured by so signal a favour, might derive from it substantial advantages.

Be it remarked that there is no need to suppose, in this case, that any impostor personified the celestial visitor, as was proved to have happened at La Salette. In her interviews with the vision, eighteen in all, although Bernadette was never alone—in the first instances with few companions, afterwards accompanied or awaited by thousands—none but herself saw the apparition, or heard the words she stated it to have pronounced. Their belief in its presence and its utterances was founded solely on her ecstatic looks, her automatic actions, the paleness and transfiguration of her countenance during the visitation, and the inaudible movement of her lips. They saw immediately, by the change in her bearing, whether the apparition had arrived or not.

The impression conveyed to the expectant multitude was analogous to the dramatic effect produced by a skilful actor who communicates to his audience, by their apparent influence upon himself,

the strangeness or the horror of events which he is supposed to witness passing behind the scenes. Granting that Bernadette was no actress, but a sincere believer in the reality of the apparitions, her sincerity, although based on hallucinations, would only render her singular conduct all the more impressive to her credulous beholders.

On her second visit to the grottoes, she was accompanied by a troop of girls of her own age, sufficiently numerous to attract public attention. Arrived at the spot, they all knelt, praying, like her, with the help of their rosaries, and awaiting in that position the arrival of the mysterious lady, who soon came, visible to Bernadette alone, preceded by a brilliant light. "She is there!" she exclaimed. "She is there! she smiles at me; she approaches; she offers me her hand."

Her companions then gave her the bottle of holy water, which was employed in due and regular form. But the more the apparition was sprinkled, the more gracious its looks and gestures became; thereby signifying that there was no reason whatever to take it for an evil spirit. More praying, more telling of beads; and then the apparition, raising the cross of its rosary to its forehead, vanished in a blaze of light invisible to every person present except one.

From that day Bernadette and her visitor were the talk, not only of the town but of the surrounding country. The mother again ordered her daughter not to waste time in visits to the grotto, but in vain. Two female gossips, whose names we will not immortalise, conceived the bright idea of carrying paper, pen, and ink to the grot, and asking the unknown being to signify what it wanted, in writing. The white lady was not to be so caught. She replied, "I have no need to write anything. I will only ask you to be good enough to come here during a fortnight;" adding, "I cannot make you happy in this world, but very much so in the other;" and concluding with, "I desire to see a great many people come to the grotto."

All this while, the two sharp-witted cronies, who would have given their little fingers for a glimpse of the luminous stranger, were obliged to limit their curiosity to the contemplation of Bernadette's ravished and beatified countenance. Nothing else whatever did they see or hear. Nevertheless, the story spread at market,

and was warmly discussed by all classes of society, some being for and others against. For the great majority, she was a privileged being, a seer, chosen as a link between heaven and earth, to transmit to man the wishes of a supernatural personage. The ever-increasing popular excitement soon caused disquietude to the municipal authorities, especially to the commissary of police and the prefect, who requested her to cease her visits to the grotto, which they characterised as ridiculous superstition, to avoid disturbing the tranquillity of the town, and not to prevent poor workpeople from earning their daily bread by idling away their time at Massabielle. The interference of those functionaries was afterwards treated, by clerical writers, as something akin to the deeds of Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate. The sisters charged with Bernadette's instruction also dissuaded her from persisting in her rendezvous with her spectral friend; but her own wilfulness and popular support overcame all opposition.

At the next visit the bright lady said, "Now, my daughter, go and tell the priests that I wish a chapel to be built to me here;" orders which Bernadette promptly obeyed, by calling on the curé of the parish. He received her coldly, bluntly even, asking if she were Bernadette, what she wanted, and what business brought her to his house. Without being disconcerted, she answered, "Yes, Monsieur le Curé, I am Bernadette, charged by the lady who appears to me at Massabielle to tell the priests that she wishes a chapel to be built to her there."

"Do you know this lady's name? Has she told it to you?"

"No, Monsieur le Curé."

"Many people may be led to believe, when they see you praying and in ecstasy at the grotto, that you have the Holy Virgin before your eyes. Expect," he added severely, "if you speak falsely, never to see her. Heaven's gates are closed to impostors."

"I see the lady there," she replied with the conviction of truth, "as I see you. She has spoken to me, as you speak to me."

"But I don't know who this lady is. Before complying with her wishes, I must know what right she has to it. Ask her, the first-time you see her, to give some proof of her power. On the spot where she appears there grows a wild rose-bush. Tell her to cause the roses which will

adorn it to bloom at once at her feet, as if it were spring. If before your eyes and the eyes of all present that prodigy occurs, you may promise her, on my part, that a handsome chapel shall be built on the spot."

The conditions imposed by the wary curé on Bernadette's pretended lady soon put the whole town on the alert. Everyone, including the sceptical commissary of police, wished to witness the settlement of the apparition question one way or another. Long before Bernadette's arrival a great crowd was collected, who made way for her respectfully, and then knelt as she did. As usual, she began her prayers at the lowest part of the ground that sloped from the Gave's* brink to the top of the grotto, traversing all that distance on her knees, telling her rosary with her left hand, and holding a consecrated taper in her right. That day, some time elapsed before the transformation of her features indicated to the lookers-on that her interview with the mysterious lady had commenced. When it did, the curé's test-proposition was announced. The only answer was a gracious smile, an order to Bernadette to pray for sinners, and an invitation to mount to the upper part of the grotto. There the lady thrice pronounced the word "Penitence," repeated by Bernadette so as to be heard around her. The lady, after revealing another secret personally concerning her protégée, suddenly disappeared.

The briar-bush had not put forth a blossom. Notwithstanding which, gaudy prints are offered for sale representing the celestial visitor with branches of double-rose-trees in full bloom at her feet.

On subsequent occasions—to abbreviate the narrative—Bernadette dug with her hands a hole in the grotto from which water exuded. Everyone who could obtain any sort of vessel carried off some of the earth therefrom, moistened with a little of the water. The lady's order was to wash in and drink of this water, not using the water of the Gave; also to eat some of the grass that grew beside it. The hole grew into an abundant spring, ultimately furnishing water enough for all requirements, even those of the present day—and that is saying not a little. From that date, the 25th of February, pilgrims flocked to Lourdes by thousands. But as little girls are not always accepted

in their own country as prophetesses, while some believed she had a special mission in this world, as a spirit medium gifted with second sight, for others she was only an excitable child, half crazy, fit for a lunatic asylum.

After the 25th of February, Bernadette went every day to the grotto, where she saw the apparition and constantly received the order to drink of the fountain, to wash there, and to eat some of the grass which grew on its edge. On the 4th of March, Bernadette, after the usual ceremonies and ecstasies, seemed to be holding with the vision a conversation which those nearest to her vainly tried to overhear. Although, as she said, she asked the lady who she was, the only answer was a gracious smile, and a strict charge to tell the priests that she wished for a chapel, and processions to it.

At another interview, on the 25th of March, she obtained more precise information. Early that morning, people about to begin their daily occupations saw her proceeding to her accustomed prayer-place. Great numbers left their work and followed her. At the close of the ecstatic fit they were rewarded by the information that she had urgently requested the lady to say at least who she was; that the first three requests were only answered by smiles, but that, the fourth time, the lady, after disjoining her hands and allowing her rosary to slip on to her right arm, had opened her two arms, had first inclined them towards the earth, then raised them and joined them again with an air of great fervour; finally, after bestowing on her a most affectionate look, she said, "Je suis l'Immaculée Conception!" and speedily disappeared.

On this unsupported evidence of a supernatural revelation, without a single additional scrap of testimony, is based the belief which urges thousands of devotees to rush to Lourdes from divers points of Christendom. True, on the 16th of July, there was an eighteenth and final apparition in a meadow on the other side of the Gave in front of the grotto; but it was only a silent leave-taking between the earthly and the heavenly friends. After the announcement of the lady's name, the authorities did all they could to check popular manifestations, fearing that superstitious excesses might be fatal to the interests of true religion, as well as dangerous to the public peace. The prefect, regarding Bernadette as insane, ordered

* Gave, in the Low and High Pyrenees, is the general name of rushing streams which have their sources in the mountains.

her to be confined in a madhouse; this, however, was avoided by her friends, who placed her under conventual guardianship. The grotto was enclosed with a strong palisade concealing the spring, and people were warned away by a notice to commit no trespass. Votive offerings, such as bouquets of natural or artificial flowers, pieces of money of all sorts and in great quantities, and wax tapers, were removed. Nothing, however, could stop the affluence of believers or curious enquirers.

Summer came, and with it the crowd of tourists, bathers, invalids, and idlers, who annually betake themselves to the Pyrenean watering-places. Natural curiosity drove them to inspect the Massabielle grottoes and the famous spring. The posts and barricades raised by the civil power only increased the excitement of the visit. The greater the difficulties opposed by the police, the more the pilgrims insisted on reaching the spot where Bernadette knelt during the mysterious interviews, and on offering there their own proper homage.

One day the commissary of police, while on duty close by to warn off intruders, felt himself bound to stop the advance of ten or twelve persons whom he had never seen. As they refused to obey him, he enquired their names.

"Be so good as to lend us your note-book," said one of the party; "we will write in it our names ourselves. The spelling is a little difficult."

Which done, the note-book was politely returned. The commissary cast a glance on it and retired, leaving the strangers to their own devices. The autographs inscribed in the note-book belonged to the highest functionaries of Napoleon the Third's court; innocent and simple-minded personages, whose only thought was to say their prayers and dip their fingers in hallowed springs. The authenticity of Notre Dame de Lourdes was vindicated by patronage then all powerful. Shortly afterwards there arrived an imperial order commanding the prefect to allow free access to the Massabielle grottoes, and not to obstruct the population in the manifestation of their religious faith.

Since that time manifestations have gone on increasing, and that in most substantial forms. A handsome new bridge leads to the scene of the visions. The surrounding hills are crowned or dotted with buildings, clerical and lay, of all dimensions—convents, calvaries, crosses, chapels, shrines. Other charitable or reli-

gious edifices, as the Hôpital de la Grotte, are in course of construction out of native stone. The Lady only asked for a chapel, and they have built her a magnificent basilica, to which pilgrims are guided at night by lamps; a stately sanctuary, a church of hewn stone, which, outside, looks too tall for its breadth; inside, the disproportion disappears, the effect being light, brilliant, and glittering. Of course it is much frequented. Ladies in the confessional are awaiting their confessor's leisure, while an officiating priest at the altars is offering some holy object to kiss to a Sunday congregation, with scarcely an exception well-dressed, even the peasantry presenting themselves in well-to-do garments.

Beneath the church is a spacious crypt, redolent of incense, and hung with ruby-coloured lamps and banners invoking Notre Dame de Lourdes to pray for Rome and France. In the portal stands the statue from which the best photographs are taken, much more finished, chaste, and graceful than the one placed in the niche above the grotto. Nor is business forgotten; on the platform before the portal is the bureau for masses and prayers, where orders are also received for the grotto water.

All around the church, no desirable improvement seems to have to wait for want of money. Works on a grand scale are being carried out: roads made, rocks blasted by gunpowder, monumental buildings erected, grounds laid out to form a future garden, square, or place; in the midst of which is a large elliptical "repositoir," "abri," or shelter for pilgrims, covered with a ring of thatched roof, but open to the sky in the centre, and fitted up with wooden benches as seats, and marble slabs that serve for tables. Being exposed at the sides to the elements, this rotunda can hardly be used as a resting-place by night. The pilgrims, when numerous, sleep where they can: even in the church itself, crowding the confessionals, and snatching a few moments of feverish slumber between the latest and the earliest services.

The road to the grotto, along its whole length, is suggestive of the spirit of the place. While looking at a shop which professes to be opened for the benefit of the persecuted (Catholic) clergy of Geneva, a sick lad is carried past you in a chair, in the hope of being healed by the waters of the grotto. A carriage, containing a lady with bandaged eyes, follows on the same

errand. Your inquisitive eye is then attracted by the semblance of a large clasped missal; it is really a tin-case for carrying off water from the spring, so disguised. No one can suppose that less allowable fluids are ever concealed beneath the binding of those make-believe books. Next, your sensitive ear is annoyed by blind men playing the accordion, or singing nasal canticles. Do they prefer taking up this good position for begging to testing the virtues of the spring? or, after testing them, have they stronger faith in mendicancy?

I go where everybody else is either going to or coming from, following a gentle descent until a magnificent new esplanade is reached, bounded on the right by the romantic rushing Gave, and on the left by the rock of Massabielle, planted with aspen, horse-chestnut, and fir-trees, and furnished with a continuous stone seat along the parapet wall overlooking the stream. Past the grotto, the rock sinks beneath a verdant slope embosomed in trees, at whose foot the weary pedestrian may take his ease on green-backed benches; and from this slope a winding and shady path edged with roses leads up from the grotto to the church.

Close to the grotto, to the left before reaching it, are the piscines (improperly so named), for men and women separately, to which the miraculous water from the grot is conducted for invalids to bathe in. These piscines are not, as elsewhere, open pools or bathing-places, even if under a roof, so that everything which passes there can be witnessed by everyone privileged to enter the enclosure, but quite small private cabinets or closets, like those found in ordinary public bath establishments. The bathing and its results are consequently unseen, except by the attendants. Miraculous and sudden cures are occasionally announced; but Notre Dame de Lourdes has a debtor as well as a creditor account. The waters of her phenomenal spring can kill as well as cure. Not very long ago, an ailing and elderly Breton gentleman, yielding to the urgency of religious advisers, was plunged into the frigid bath, and died suddenly and unexpectedly on the spot.

At all points whence the water issues it is allowed to be taken gratuitously; but there is for sale a large choice of flasks and cans for carrying away the holy water, of various sizes, plain, and engraved with views of the shrine. You may also, for three francs a year, subscribe to the Annals

of Notre Dame de Lourdes, edited by the reverend Fathers, Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception.

The grotto, small and enclosed with an iron palisade, is all but filled with burning candles on iron stands, renewed as they burn out. Beneath the roof are the cast-aside crutches, the wheel and other cripples' chairs, whose occupants have been miraculously cured. The place where Bernadette knelt on the 11th of February, 1858, is marked by a slab with due inscription, and is therefore a favourite praying station. At Lourdes human nature falls into the same weaknesses as elsewhere; witness the notice, "You are begged not to scrawl on the fountain, nor on the walls." On the other side is a movable wooden pulpit; and also a large board, recording in blue letters on a white ground (the Virgin's colours) the lady's eighteen apparitions and the words she spoke, including the order to eat grass. In front of the grotto are benches for ailing or easy-going devotees, as well as a few chairs obtainable by the more luxurious; but ardent worshippers prefer to pray kneeling on the flagstone pavement, some stooping forward and kissing it afterwards.

I drank the water from the public chained cup; it is delicious. I washed my face with it, and kind friends say that since that journey my usual good looks are still more good-looking. I did not eat grass; nobody did. I saw no miracle, although there were several candidates for one. A double club-footed man came down on crutches and washed his poor feet, but no orthopædic consequence followed then. What occurred in the baths was concealed from my cognisance.

A good many priests were present, apparently more in their professional capacity, and for the benefit of the persons they accompanied, than on their own private and personal account. When out of health themselves, they seem to prefer the thermal waters of Caunterets, Bagnères de Bigorre, and other non-miraculous springs. The great incongruity of the persons present leads one to guess at incongruous motives. Here, a smart soldier, sitting in the shade, is whispering in his sweetheart's ear; a few yards farther on, a brown-frocked friar is holding a secluded tête-à-tête with a fair penitent, who, while listening to his lecture, gracefully smokes a cigarette. While some pilgrims are absorbed in ecstasy, others are munching bread and peaches, and drink-

ing whatever their bottles may contain, seated on the grass beneath the trees. Some struggle to scale the walls of heaven, others content themselves with the joys of earth; a few seem to have no higher occupation than to read the Paris newspapers.

After a calm review of the facts, Notre Dame de Lourdes may be fairly taken to be the offspring of the hallucinations entertained by an uneducated and imaginative girl, which the Catholic clergy were compelled, perhaps not unwillingly, by popular enthusiasm and superstition to sanction. After an ineffectual resistance, the civil authorities allow the torrent of devotion to run its course, especially since that course has been recognised and regulated, and there is no further danger of breaches of the peace.

POOR LITTLE GEORGY.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THERE are prettier spots than those quaint rock-gardens of the "old town" of Spielbad-super-Mare; but there are not many of them. A tall gray cliff rising abruptly out of the blue Mediterranean, whose crystal waters are sleeping at this moment so soundly under the hot sun of the autumn afternoon, that only the little aureole-fringe along the foot of the glaring rock marks, by its contrast with the cool green and brown mass beneath, the point where land ends and sea begins. Here and there along the perpendicular face of the cliff, little cracks and crevices, where stray myrtles, or geraniums, or prickly pears stud the gray rock with splashes of brilliant colour, and hang narcissus-like over the smooth, bright mirror of the sea. Away to the westward stretches the long line of mountain coast, the creamy white and purple shadows broken here and there by some scarlet-tiled roof, or the deep red trunks and dark green crests of a cluster of stone pines. To seaward the white gulls are skimming lazily to and fro, and the snowy sails of a graceful English yacht seem to quiver in the glowing atmosphere as they hang from gaff and yard in listless folds. Up here, on the very summit of the cliff, a tangled thicket of gorgeous flowers and shrubs; fragrant with syringa, and heliotrope, and orange-blossom, and magnolia; brilliant with rose and geranium; the narrow winding paths climbing hither and thither, now tunnelled as it were through dense masses of foliage, with just a far-off glimpse, through the cool

green darkness, of some flowering aloe or bit of bright blue sea beyond; now emerging suddenly on the very edge of the cliff, just guarded by a rough, low parapet, from which the tiny crumbs of mortar drop sheer a couple of hundred feet into the water, as the swift green lizards, which have been basking on its edge, scamper off at your approach.

"It's lovely, Dick, lovely!" cried Mary enraptured. "And oh, look! If there isn't the prettiest picture of all!"

It is something more than a year since we left Sitzbad, and I am on my way home from Southern Italy, where, for the last three weeks, I have been frizzling in obedience to a sudden inspiration of my "spirited proprietor," not wholly unconnected, I imagine, with the market value of certain Southern railway stocks. Salamander as I am, of course, bound to be, I am by no means sorry that the task is done, and the materials for such "columns" as may yet be required all safely stowed away in my note-book, and available for use in a somewhat cooler climate than that of Calabria in August and September. My old friend, just settling down in his winter quarters, has insisted on my spending a week or two with him on my return, and as it is not quite certain whether at the end of it I shall have to go straight home, or whether I may not more probably be wanted to occupy temporarily the place of our own correspondent at Vienna, it has been settled that Mary shall come out so far to meet me. My friend's villa is, of course, on the other side of the bay, and within easy reach of the *Etablissement*. But to-day he is laid up with a slight touch of the gout, and as we should never think of depriving him of the pleasure of introducing us to his favourite haunt, we have devoted this first day to the exploration of the old town.

This had not taken very long. Spielbad-super-Mare is, as everyone knows, an independent principality—of I forget exactly how many square yards in extent. There is an additional reason here against the throwing of stones, even by people who do not live in glass-houses; and that is, that any stone, thrown even with moderate force, must inevitably fall in the neighbouring country; which would be a distinct infringement of the duties of neutrality, and might perchance lead to war. So by the time we have toiled up the steep ascent, half path, half staircase, and seen as much as can be seen of the little palace which

occupies about half of Spielbad proper, and inspected the army, or, at least, two-thirds of it—the other man, I fancy, must have gone on leave—and threaded our way through the principal street, along which, as the Spielbadeners proudly boast, real carriages can be driven, we have still plenty of time for a good long rest in the shady gardens, and for admiring the endless succession of lovely pictures presented at every turn of its winding paths.

"And there," cries Mary, suddenly laying an arresting hand on my wrist, and raising a warning finger as she dropped her voice almost to a whisper—"there is the loveliest of them all!"

The path, which has been descending rapidly for some time, has now dipped suddenly down a short flight of steep little stone steps, and ended abruptly in one of those little crevices of which I have spoken as dotting here and there the face of the cliff. This particular crevice is a little wider than most, forming a niche, converted by a clustering mass of magnificent scarlet geraniums into a bower, to whose cool shade scarce a ray of the sun can ever penetrate. One such ray, however, has just now found its way between the sheltering leaves, and pours in a stream of gold upon the scarcely less golden curls of a fair pale boy, fast asleep upon the couch of soft moss, with a bunch of the brilliant scarlet blossoms just dropping from his hand. He had not moved as Mary entered his retreat, but perhaps my tread is something heavier, and in another moment he turns his face more fully towards us, and opens a pair of wide blue eyes which grew wider yet with astonishment and delight, as Mary and I break out together with an exclamation of "Little Georgy!"

Poor little Georgy! It was he, indeed; taller and older-looking than when we had last seen him, but with none of that bloom upon his cheek which the doctors had promised as the result of a year or so in a more genial climate, and with a weary look, which fled indeed before the glad surprise of our recognition, but soon settled down again on the blue eyes that used to dance so merrily. His dress, too, had a strangely faded and neglected appearance, very different from that which it had worn in the old days; and there was altogether a deserted air about the boy, to which, when the first picturesque effect of his place of refuge had passed away, its solitariness gave additional force.

We soon learned the history of it all. As we had only too surely anticipated, the final call which reached Sir George, little more than a week after our departure from Sitzbad, found Mrs. Mortimer Windham so thoroughly established in his good opinion, that the entrusting his boy to her charge had become a matter of course. And for some time he seemed to have fared better than might have been expected. Sir George did not leave Sitzbad without placing in the widow's hands an ample advance upon the more than handsome provision made for the lad; and as, for a time, Fortune smiled upon the lady, her poor little charge got on well enough. She neglected him, of course; and the boy, dotingly fond of his father, and accustomed for so many months to spend almost every hour of the day by his side, was very lonely and often very sad. But Mary's was not the only kind heart in Sitzbad that had been attracted to him, and his loneliness soon came to an end, while his amiable guardian, unusually flush of funds, allowed him a tolerably fair share of the luxuries in which she profusely indulged herself, and, so long as the luck lasted, seemed hardly to grudge even the small items of outlay which were special to him.

Unfortunately, the luck did not last for ever. As autumn drew on they shifted their quarters to Rabagasville, or rather to its outskirts—Spielbad-super-Mare, as everybody knows, being really only a suburb of that famous and wofully over-rated watering-place, from the very heart of which it is not more than one hour's distance by rail. There are conventions in all things, and the world has long since settled that Rabagasville, with its vile climate on the one side, and Bains Marie, with its pleasant but slightly enervating atmosphere on the other, are "health resorts," while Spielbad, which from a sanitary point of view is in truth the queen of the Mediterranean coast, is a "gambling-place," and nothing more. Now, almost Sir George's last words, as the widow's tender hand lay in his at the Sitzbad station, had been: "You won't go near those wretched tables again, will you?" "Not so much as into the room," she had answered, with a fervent, but of course quite involuntary pressure of the strong brown fingers. So on the whole, perhaps, any mention of Spielbad might hardly have been judicious, and it was just as well that Sir George's fre-

quent letters should be addressed to Rabagaville, and that little Georgy's less frequent scrawls—Sir George was moving about a good deal from one inaccessible place to another on the Indian frontier—should be carefully revised and thoroughly purged of any dangerous allusion.

To-day the widow has had to journey to Rabagaville herself, to "touch" in person some fifty pounds or so of her munificent allowance, and Georgy, left for the time altogether to his own devices, has taken advantage of the occasion to get clear away from all the noise and glare and bustle of the Etablissement and its dependencies, and has spent the day among the quaint shady gardens of the old town. There are still some hours to spare before Mrs. Windham is likely to return, and somehow, though there is no actual complaint in the little fellow's narrative, it strikes us simultaneously that the best way in which they can be spent is by carrying him straightway to the nearest restaurant.

"Had your wine to-day, Georgy?"

No, Georgy has not had his wine for a long, long time.

"Why not?—did the doctor stop it?"

Oh no, Georgy has not seen a doctor for a long, long time, either.

"And the medicine?—does that go on still?"

Georgy's face looks graver as he shakes his head again.

"Well, you don't mind that much, eh Georgy?" I suggest, laughingly; "nasty stuff, wasn't it?"

Georgy colours, as he shakes his head for the fourth time, and instinctively addresses his reply to Mary, as more likely to appreciate his views on this head than myself.

"It was nasty," he admits, "horrid nasty. But then, you know, I promised papa I'd take it every day—and—and he said it would please him."

I hold my peace, rebuked. Mary too says nothing, but just stoops and kisses the child, and, as she lifts her face again, hurriedly brushes away something that seems to have settled on her eyelash.

"Come, Georgy; you shall have your glass of wine to-day at all events."

And Georgy has his glass of wine, and is much strengthened and refreshed thereby. So much so, that for the time he is quite his bright prattling self again, and chats away so merrily that the minutes slip by unheeded, and we are fairly startled

when at length a rustling train comes sweeping up to us along the gas-lighted terrace, and a harsh voice—very different from the dulcet tones that had so beguiled poor Sir George—breaks in upon us angrily with:

"George! I thought I told you I would not have you talk to strangers."

"We are not strangers, Mrs. Windham," rejoins Mary, briskly, all her little feathers ruffling up in defence of her friend; "Georgy's papa——"

"I beg your pardon, madam," interrupts the widow, in her iciest tones, "you are strangers to me. Sir George placed his son in my charge, and I request you will not interfere with him."

And before my indignant little wife, struck dumb for the moment by the audacity of the attack, can recover breath to reply, Mrs. Mortimer Windham has seized Georgy by the hand, and swept him away without another word.

I had no small difficulty in persuading poor Mary that we were really powerless, and that any interference would only result in making matters worse for the child. At length, however, I compromised by writing a full account of the true position of affairs to the address at which, as we had learned from Georgy's story, his father had last been heard of, with a duplicate to be forwarded through the authorities at the India Office, under whose orders he was acting. And thus poor Georgy was left to his fate.

And a hard fate it was. Perhaps, had Mrs. Windham been less deeply committed, she might now have taken the alarm and retreated from Spielbad and its engrossing pursuits. But she was over head and ears in debt, and before leaving Spielbad it was very necessary that all debts should be paid. So long as she continued her struggle with fortune, a beneficent administration, all powerful in the little place, almost every house in which was in its own hands, would take care that she was not too hardly pressed. But if she was to retire at all, she must either find the means of doing so for herself, or extract them from the chances of the black and red. And to this latter alternative she set herself with an energy that was almost furious. The tables were hardly laid before she was in her place, and in it she would remain sometimes till they closed, pinning a soiled glove by the side of a five-franc piece or two to the green cloth to retain it during the brief interval when she would be com-

pelled to retire to snatch a mouthful of food at the buffet, or a gasp of fresh air upon the terrace, and hurrying back again with hungry eyes and sharpened features, that seemed to grow more haggard with every hour, and almost with every turn of the game.

And all the time she never let poor Georgy out of her sight. Even the terrace was forbidden ground to him now, except when she herself would pace hurriedly up and down it for a few minutes or lean against the marble balustrade, deep in fallacious calculations of martingales and progressions and ballottage, and all the maddening mysteries of play. All the rest of the weary day he would be cooped up in the steaming *salle de jeu* by her side. There is a rule of the administration, duly framed and glazed, in the marble-pillared hall, that no young person under the age of eighteen shall be admitted to the play-room. But it is never a very Median or Persian rule, and Mrs. Mortimer Windham was much too profitable a client for the *commissaire* to dream of enforcing it against her. So there, from noon to midnight, poor little Georgy spent his listless, weary hours; and in that close, unhealthy, breathless atmosphere, the boy was withering swiftly and visibly away.

One more attempt we made to liberate him before it should be too late. It was my good old host, better versed than I in the manners and customs of the place, who first suggested the probable difficulty as to debts, and with his wonted generosity placed his purse at my disposal. I wrote to Mrs. Windham, offering in plain terms to discharge all her liabilities and hand her one hundred pounds over and above, if only she would surrender Georgy to our care, or at least remove him from *Spielbad*. Sir George, I knew, would gladly repay the loan; "and even if he don't," said my old friend, cheerily, "I'll get it back out of old Blanc before long." But the devil of play had fast hold of the widow now, and her only reply was a blank envelope enclosing my own letter sent back without a word.

"The child will die long before his father can get back," sobbed my poor little wife, fairly wringing her hands in despair.

And so in truth it seemed. Even supposing that my letter went straight to Sir George's hands, and that he left for *Spielbad* the very day of its receipt, three or four months at the very least must elapse

before he could possibly be with us; and it hardly seemed possible that the boy could last as many weeks. But the crisis came even sooner than that, and in a quite unexpected manner.

For nearly a fortnight Mrs. Windham had played on with varying fortune; now winning a score or two of louis, now losing almost down to her last five-franc piece; and we had watched the struggle with an interest very different from, but almost as deep, as her own. Mary, who formerly could rarely be induced so much as to enter the *salle*, had now to be dragged from it almost by force; and as for myself, I confess that, play-hardened stoic as I was, my own attention was so disturbed that anything like "business" became impossible, and, after losing some two or three of my host's *rouleaux* by sheer blundering, I gave up the attempt, and left the expenses of the trip to provide for themselves.

At last, one evening, as we strolled according to our now settled custom into the play-room after dinner, we became aware of a change.

There, indeed, in his usual corner on the broad *settee* by the closely-curtained window, his head pillowed on one thin white hand and the tangled golden curls hanging heavily over his damp brow, lay poor little Georgy, sleeping the weary sleep that, but for the one bright red spot on his thin cheek, might to all appearance be that of death; and, as usual, the widow's quick and angry glance flashed its prompt challenge, even as we entered the room. But there was a look of triumph in it to-night which had never been there before; and, drawing near the table at which she sat, we soon discovered the reason of the change.

The luck had fairly turned at last. Instead of the usual meagre little pile—more often of silver than gold—there now lay before her, in a symmetrical row, at least half-a-dozen shining black *rouleaux*, whilst on the adjacent square of the table, consecrated to the special worship of the "noir," was a still more formidable array of notes and gold already passing the magic limit of the lawful stake. Even as we approached, the little ball leaped once more to its temporary resting-place, and "Treize—noir, impair et manque," added another "maximum" of four hundred pounds to the glittering store. The widow had "got upon a series" at last.

"Messieurs! faites le jeu."

Mrs. Windham takes up her rake and is

about to withdraw a few more of the superfluous rouleaux, when, in the very act, she pauses to throw another glance of triumph at my wife. As she does so, her eyes seem to fasten upon something behind Mary's back, and a ghastly change comes over her face as the rake falls from her hand.

"Maximum à la masse!" cries the employé, slightly tapping the huge pile still lying on the black, to attract its owner's attention. But the widow heeds him not; is still staring with blank dismay at that unknown object behind us, the sight of which has brought her triumph to such a sudden pause.

"Vingt-sept—rouge, impair et passe."

The series has come to an end, and as half the heaped-up spoils are raked back again into the bank, their owner gives a shrill, half-suppressed scream, and hurriedly sweeping what remains into a fold of her shawl, makes a wild dash for the opposite door, just as a tall figure, with white-set lips and flashing eyes, comes striding up to the place where she had sat. For a moment, there is a commotion round the table. Two or three Englishmen slip instinctively between the retreating woman and the threatening figure in pursuit. Two or three Frenchmen smile, and whisper to each other, "Tiens! voilà le mari." The chef de parti comes gliding swiftly up. But already Mary is at Sir George's side, and has laid a little detaining hand upon his arm.

"You remember me, Sir George," she whispers hurriedly, "Mrs. —? Here is Georgy! Come!"

And the next moment the child is in his father's arms.

"Georgy! Georgy!"

The boy just opened his heavy eyes and a smile flitted across his face as the weary head sank down upon his father's shoulder. I could see the strong man stagger, as he glanced from Georgy's white features to the scarcely less pale face of my wife, and whispered, "Dead!"

But Georgy was not dead. We took him home to Mary's own room, and, somehow, our good host contrived a shake-down for his father too. And, among us, we nursed him and fed him, and brought him round again. But it was a long job. I had to go to Vienna alone, leaving Mary at Spielbad to look after him, or I believe Sir George would have detained her by force.

How it was that he arrived so opportunely I never exactly learned. But his mission in the East had somehow come to

a satisfactory conclusion rather earlier than was expected; and he had travelled all the latter part of the way in the same ships and trains which brought his own letters announcing the fact. Not finding the widow and her charge at the address which had been given him, he had made enquiries, and, just catching the last train from Babasville, had made his way, as we have seen, straight to the play-room, just in time. He is in India again now, and Georgy, almost a strong lad, often comes to visit us. As for Indian shawls, china, and so forth, I sometimes tell Mary I think we had better cut the paper, and set up in opposition to Messrs. Farmer and Rogers.

What ultimately became of the widow I can hardly tell you. Between Sir George and her there passed no further communication whatever; and in a day or two, taking courage from his silence, she slipped back quietly to her old haunt, and resumed the familiar crusade against the bank. I left her rather "in vein," and for the rest of that season I believe she did pretty well. Then luck turned again, and I am afraid she must have finally resorted to some unrecognised means of assisting it. At all events, the last time I met her was just on the frontier, across which she was being carefully escorted by a couple of M. Blanc's gendarmes, with a polite request not to give herself the trouble to pass it again.

ODD IDEAS.

New lights being much required just now, when the old ones are voted burned out, it is comforting to be assured that geniuses are not wanting, prepared to satisfy the demand, and illuminate the understandings of a generation sadly perplexed by

Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt.

The world must keep moving, if only in a circle. Our ancestors were worthy folk, but it were absurd to admit they were in any way as wise as our noble selves.

Ignorant of the pleasant gospel of dirt, the simple souls believed in Genesis, and the evolution or development of the ape with a pliable thumb and big brain being a dead secret to Moses, claimed descent from a paragon of animals, admirable in form, noble in reason, infinite in faculty, angel-like in action, and god-like in apprehension. Content to think as Shakespeare

thought regarding man, no wonder they accepted a Newton's notions respecting the earth and the sun. Lacking a better adviser, they are hardly to be blamed, but we of the nineteenth century have no excuse for erring in like manner. Nutting, of Staten Island, has been cogitating by the sad sea waves, and thought it all out, with this result. The earth has only one motion, from east to west, and plays upon a shaft passing through its centre, set upon a sort of framework, the bars of which cast shadows, mistaken by careless observers for spots on the sun. This shaft, serving to hold up the earth, is really two shafts, an outer hollow one attached to the northern and southern extremities of the earth, and an inner solid one upon which the other revolves. The solid shaft is ten degrees thick, with pillar-like supports acting as chimneys and water-courses; the water, passing down through the coral-work about the equator, and through the rocks in other places, rushes out at the ends of the shaft, and is drawn up to the equator again by the revolution of the earth. As to the sun, astronomers are altogether wrong about its size and distance from the earth. The latter does not exceed eight hundred miles. This is easily demonstrated. Draw a ball four inches in diameter, with a line running horizontally through the centre, and extending one inch beyond the ball on each side. Then add five perpendicular lines—the first, passing through the centre of the ball, to be marked "equator;" the second and third, drawn on the right and left of the first and nearly half an inch from it, to be marked "tropic;" the fourth, drawn half an inch outside the ball on the left of it, to be marked "arctic circle;" and the fifth, the same distance outside the ball on the right hand, and marked "antarctic circle." Now take a stick or ruler, lay it from south to north, that is, from right to left, over the ball, so that it touches the antarctic circle and the northern tropic lines. That will be the northern edge of the sun, and will be found to touch the central line about three-eighths of an inch from the ball, showing that the sun would shine perpendicularly about eight hundred miles from the earth, which accounts for the open sea—six hundred miles long by six hundred broad—which exists there. If the sun were, as some believe, five times as large as the earth, it would shine over the larger part of the globe and leave the smaller shade on the opposite side from the sun,

which would destroy the equality of day and night at the equator, and keep an open sea at the poles. How is it that passing north or south on the earth, when in fifty degrees south latitude, you would have to look north to see the sun, while a man in fifty degrees north latitude would have to look south for it? If the sun were larger than the earth, it would be seen either way. Make the sun smaller than the earth, and there will be no trouble about it. The old salt may never have heard of a Gordian knot, but he can cut one as boldly as more renowned theorists. He is not, however, to have all the glory of setting a too-long-deceived world right astronomically. He must share honours with Mr. Welsford of Plymouth, who, full of faith in his own wisdom, advertised in *The Times*: "Fact versus Fiction. Fact one. I have for years observed, at noon, when fifty degrees north of the sun's perpendicular, the shadow of any perpendicular substance is as long on a plane base as the substance is high. This clearly proves the distance of the sun is not as many thousand miles as modern tuition says it is millions. I hereby challenge the modern scientific to show how it is possible for such amount of shadow to appear, if the sun's distance was more than six times the earth's diameter, the earth being a globe. Fact two. It is a well-known fact, when an eclipse of the sun occurs, the dark body of the moon appears to the eye of an observer to pass over the sun's disc from west to east. This proves that the earth does not turn daily before the sun. I challenge the afore-named to show the possibility of the earth's turning once in twenty-four hours. The moon travelling round the earth only once in twenty-nine days, the sun stationary, and the eclipse not to appear to an observer to pass from east to west before the sun." No "modern scientific" had the hardihood to take up the challenge of the Devonshire philosopher, for very sufficient reasons, into which it is unnecessary for us to enter.

To non-scientific people it matters nothing how far the sun's rays have to travel, so long as they get the benefit of them; but everybody is interested in the weather, and will rejoice to learn that its vagaries can be controlled, at least in one quarter of the globe. A Kentuckian Baptist minister has devised a plan whereby a continuity of calm, warm, sunny days may be ensured to the happy denizens of North America. He has

discovered that two hostile currents of air are perpetually contending for mastery there—a warm, tropical current, blowing from the south-west, striving for supremacy with a cold polar current, blowing from the north. In summer they flow amicably enough, one close to the earth's surface, the other above it; but in winter they come into collision, and storms and cold weather are the consequence. It is obvious that if the polar current could be drained off into one locality, other localities would be freed from those unwelcome visitations. Now, our scientific Baptist has further discovered that an explosion of gunpowder will create a vortex into which the obnoxious air-current will flow from all directions. He therefore proposes that a battery of fifteen-inch guns should be established on the Aleutian Islands, to draw the polar current into that valueless region, and with it the winter supply of cold weather, and so prevent the formation of storm centres in the States. A shrewd fellow-countryman of the would-be public benefactor points out that it will be necessary to guard against gunpowder being exploded outside the designated "damping-ground." Small boys must be made to understand that they cannot be allowed to create winter in the back-yard with horse-pistols, and patriotic citizens must be forbidden bringing about storms on the 5th of July by firing crackers on the 4th. These precautions taken, and the Aleutian battery secured against competition, areas of depression and nomadic storm centres will no longer exist in the United States; ice and snow will no longer be seen, and the Weather Bureau may be forthwith abolished.

A few months ago a New York journal energetically protested against telegraph-wires being carried underground, on the score that the immunity from damage by lightning—which was secured by the aerial wires in almost every street tending to diffuse atmospheric electricity when thunderstorms prevailed—would be materially interfered with. While "humans" are to be tenderly protected against the fear of being killed by electricity, it is proposed to get rid of stray dogs by conducting wires along the ground connected with the staples to which the canine waifs are secured, and then by a powerful battery thirty or forty dogs might be disposed of instantaneously, without pain to themselves or trouble to their executioners.

Mr. Bain, carrying the idea a little farther, would treat murderers in the same fashion, substituting execution by an electric shock for hanging, and supersede the lash, the treadwheel, and the crank by the battery. By using Faraday's magneto-electrical machine any required amount of torture might be inflicted, and the graduation made with scientific precision, while the mysterious nature of the punishment would add to its horrors; the terrific power exercised by the lightest finger-touch of the operator making the criminal feel his humiliating prostration. However shocking to the subject's sensibilities at the time, we fear electric punishment would not tend to make the punished one a better man; for a lady doctor writes: "More quarrels arise between husbands and wives, owing to electrical changes through which their nervous systems go, by lodging together, night after night, under the same bed-clothes, than by any other disturbing cause. There is nothing that will derange the nervous system of a person who is eliminative in nervous force like lying in bed all night with another person who is almost absorbent in nervous force. The absorber will go to sleep and rest all night, while the eliminator will be tossing and tumbling, restless and nervous, and wake up in the morning fretful, peevish, and discouraged. No two persons, no matter who they are, should habitually sleep together. One will thrive, and one will lose. This is the law."

This is an odd idea indeed, but equally odd, though in another way, is the proposal of a South Carolinian judge, who thinks the most feasible way of keeping drinking within bounds is to leave liquor-dealers at liberty to sell as much drink as they can, but only to customers able to produce a drinking-license, to be granted by the magistrates to any applicant prepared to give a bond for his or her good behaviour. An English moderate—very moderate—drinker would have everybody's corn measured by his own particular bushel, and legally prohibit anyone taking more than one glass of intoxicating liquor per day, an enactment that would probably work a wonderful change in the publican's notion of that vague measure of capacity; while another social reformer would bring exhilarating beverages into disrepute by debarring distillers and brewers from becoming members of any religious society.

Preachers, lecturers, orators, and legislators busy themselves mightily about man's intemperate drinking, but discreetly leave woman's intemperate dressing alone, thinking probably with Fanny Fudge that

Why a new bonnet should stand in the way
Of one's going to heaven, 'tisn't easy to say.

The very few attempts to tarn ladies from the errors of their ways in this respect must be credited to Quixotes of their own sex. The latest thing out in this direction is the "Emancipated Costume," invented by Mrs. Martha Gearing, of Wisconsin, and intended to free woman from the thralldom of fashion, the trammels of skirts, and the bills of dressmakers. Going into her sawdust-lined ice-house one winter's day, Mrs. Gearing found it as agreeably warm then as it was pleasantly cool in summer; and, thinking over this extraordinary circumstance, came to the conclusion that sawdust clothing was the only wear for sensible women.

An American journalist, anxious to enlighten the ladies without offending their modesty, says that if the new dress were to be made for a boy of six it would consist of a shirt and trousers combined, and that the pattern would be precisely the same were the garment intended for a large-sized female reformer, hairpins and boots being the only addition required to complete the toilette. The emancipated costume is made double, the intervening space being divided into water-tight compartments provided with valves, through which sawdust can be introduced, in quantities regulated by the wearer's taste. By taking in or letting out a little sawdust, the emancipated costume can be adapted to every change of weather, so that one dress will serve all the year round; and it has the merit of allowing as liberal a display of form as the present style of ladies' gear, without interfering with the wearer's freedom of movement. This alone ought to make Mrs. Gearing's invention acceptable to those for whose use it is designed, but that ingenious dame has effectually defeated her object by devising a costume possessing such advantages, that the sex would never be allowed to monopolise its use. As a transatlantic critic observes, the schoolboy would worry the home authorities until they clad him in emancipated costume, that he might be enabled to endure with fortitude the reproofs of his teacher; and map-pedlars and book-agents bound for regions inhabited by heavily-

shod people of athletic build would insist upon donning sawdust-stuffed suits. Cricketers, gymnasts, and workers of the masculine persuasion would guard themselves against casualties in like manner, and railway travellers, liable to suffer from the mistakes of sleepy signalmen, and the colliding propensities of goods and passenger trains, would soon come to look upon the emancipated costume as the travelling man's best companion, even if his journeying were confined to crossing Lake Superior by the proposed winter railroad, made by simply spitting four hundred miles of rails to the ice, without grading, piling, excavating, ballasting, or tying, so that it may be removed as soon as the ice becomes incapable of bearing the strain, and housed until winter comes round again.

Modern republicans, ignoring any historical evidence to the contrary, lay all great wars to the account of kingly greed, and declare that everlasting peace would follow the establishment of a world of republics. Carrying the idea a little farther, a German pronounces personal ambition to be the one obstacle in the way of humanity prospering as it should do. To get rid of this impediment he proposes the universal abolition of names—national, geographical, and individual—and the substitution of numbers in their place. Thus, every country would throw off its distinctive appellation, and be henceforth known as District One, District Two, and so on; and every person in the world would be numbered and registered in the district to which he belongs. Human nature being weak, one number might obtain undue predominance over other numbers, wherefore it will be necessary to change everybody's number at the end of each year; by which delightful arrangement, not only will personal ambition be extinguished, but evil-doers will no longer despair of regaining the esteem of their fellow-men, since no stigma can possibly be attached to a number changing its personality every twelve months.

Masters and mistresses bewail the scarcity of good servants nowadays; they never were over-plentiful apparently. An amateur financier and politician dilating upon England's wants in 1685, declares that diligence, faithfulness, and obedience have become so rare in the land that it was the duty of the State to bring about a revival of those fast-fading virtues by giving ten pounds to every servant

remaining in one place for seven years. This was a very modest demand to make upon the public treasury compared to that made by some citizens of Wisconsin, who, a year ago, petitioned the American Senate to pass a law requiring the Treasurer of the United States to pay to every man, woman, and child in the country, without making any distinction on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude, the sum of ten dollars a week, such sum to be paid every Saturday night, at the post-office nearest such person's residence. They fancied this could be done at a mere nominal cost to the country, seeing that the government had only to print so many greenbacks, and there was the money; although they were considerate enough to limit their desire to the issue of five billions of dollars per annum, so that there might not be an undue expansion of the currency. We fear they were fated to be as disappointed with the answer to their petition as the officer's widow, who, after receiving a pension for a few years, married again; but her second matrimonial experiment proving an unhappy one, obtained a divorce, and then memorialised Congress to be restored to the pension-roll, as she had reverted to her position of widow. The Committee to whom the demand was referred for consideration, reported that they knew no precedent for such restoration, and thought it unwise to make one. The petitioner, we may be sure, believes to this day that she has been defrauded of her just dues, for ladies have a logic of their own, a logic of which Dr. Robert Chambers has set down three excellent examples. His brother, finding a brooch, advertised it, and was waited upon by a lady, who at once proceeded to describe a ring she had lost. Politely reminded that it was a brooch that had been found, she replied, "Oh yes, I know, but I thought you might have seen or heard something of my ring!" A lady living in a villa in the exterior environs of London was asked why she was at the expense of keeping a cow, seeing that it would be much cheaper to buy milk for the household. "Well," said she, "we keep the cow because we have a field quite at hand, which answers very nicely." "But," was the rejoinder, "why do you rent the field?" The answer was, "Because, you know, we have got the cow!" This is droll, but was capped by the

Doctor's third story of the lady in reduced circumstances, who mentioned to a friend that she had arranged to rent a house belonging to a baker in Peebles. The friend was somewhat surprised at the announcement, considering the lady's circumstances, and asked if the expense would not be too much for her. "Oh, not at all," was the answer; "we'll take bread for the rent!"

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER VIII. REPRESENTATION.

I WAS the occupant of a wretched, little, queer-shaped, whitewashed apartment, poorly furnished with a rickety table, a scratched and clouded looking-glass, two battered chairs with tattered seats, and a rusty fireplace thrust into an angle of the wall.

"And this is my room?"

"This is what we call the 'star dressing-room,'" said a red-faced, hearty, middle-aged woman, who looked like a cook, and who, it appeared, was attached to the wardrobe department of the theatre, and was to act as my "dresser." "You have it all to yourself, you see."

"It's very cold."

"You're nervous, miss; that's where it is. I durstn't light a fire, for that stove's such a bad one to burn; all the smoke goes the wrong way, and gets into the gentlemen's dressing-rooms, and sets them all choking, until their language is quite distressing to hear. But you won't feel it cold when I've turned the gas well on."

Thereupon the room was flooded with light, and an unwholesome warmth produced, which was certainly preferable to the absolute cold of which I had complained.

"Now we shall see better what we're about," said the dresser—Mrs. Bates was called. "We haven't so much time to waste; but I daresay we shan't begin so very punctual. Amateurs is seldom given that way. You've got a heap of 'air, to be sure, and of a pretty colour. Are you going to have an 'air-dresser?"

"No; I always dress my own hair."

"But you're never going to wear it hanging all abroad in that wild fashion?"

"Why not?"

"Well, take care the audience don't gey you, that's all."

"Bidicule me, you mean? But these loose curls suit the dress, which is of the time of Charles the Second."

"That may be; all the same, I've known parties gayed for less than that. Don't you think you're rather slim for Julia? We must spread out your skirts, and make the most of you; a little padding, here and there, won't do any harm. Why, the last Julia we had here was more than double your size and weight. To be sure, she was more than double your age, and was said to be the mother of a large family. I've known a good many middle-aged Julias altogether. It's a young part, you see; but it almost requires an old woman to know how to do it—so I'm told, at least. It's seldom I go in front to see the performance; I've quite enough to do behind. Why, what's the matter with this dress of yours?"

It was so small for me that it would not meet at the back. It had to be pinned on me; we could manage it in no other way. I felt dreadfully squeezed, and drew breath with difficulty. Moreover, each time I moved I was in danger of splitting my bodice from top to bottom.

As I dressed I could hear the orchestra playing the overture to *Fra Diavolo*. How strangely the music sounded! It came from an unexpected quarter, and was very noisy in quality, with unlooked-for blares of trumpets and beatings of drums. It set my heart throbbing—with fear in a degree; and yet I felt exhilarated too.

There was silence. Then the tinkling of a bell, the squeaking of a pulley or a windlass—the curtain was rising. A rustle among the audience; a murmur of applause. Then voices, raised and articulate, after an artificial histrionic fashion. The play had commenced. Clifford and Welford, Gaylove, Holdwell, and Simpson had been discovered seated at small tables, drinking wine from green glasses; the scene represented the interior of a tavern.

"You've forgotten your rouge!" cried Mrs. Bates. "You're never going on like that! Why, you're as white as a sheet! You can wash it off after the second act and look as pale as you like. But you can't go on without rouge. Let me——"

She brandished a hare's foot.

"I'll do it myself, thank you," I said eagerly; for I felt she was capable of giving me the looks of a Jezebel.

Prolonged applause. Could I mistake that voice? Mr. Toomer Hooton had entered upon the scene as Master Walter,

and was performing in his established manner.

A tap at the door. A boy appeared, holding a long strip of paper.

"Julia, you're called," he said.

"I am to go on? It's my turn?"

"Just so," he said, with a laugh.

What an old, experienced, droll, cunning face the imp had!

I stood at the wings, waiting for the change of scene—for the "old-fashioned garden of a country-house," in front of which Julia and Helen make their first appearance.

Helen—Miss Drelincourt—had already taken up her position. I scarcely knew her for the moment; she had so covered her face with white, so circled her eyes with black, and painted her lips so bright a scarlet. She looked like a pantomime-figure—say the clown—but she seemed very well satisfied with her appearance.

"Isn't it fun?" she giggled, nervously.

"Don't be frightened, my dear; it's nothing. Keep your heart up. You'll succeed, never fear. I never saw you look so beautiful. My dear, you're a perfect picture. You've plenty of friends in front."

It was old Uncle Junius who spoke, the kind old man; he had been playing in the orchestra, and had left his place, on purpose to come round and cheer me up. He pressed my hand very tenderly. I was most grateful to him. Indeed, I felt sadly the want of encouragement; my heart was sinking terribly.

"If I could only sound a few notes on my French horn I feel it would cheer you up wonderfully; it would allay your fears and soothe you, and yet nerve you at the same time. Did you hear me in the overture? I played extra loud in hopes that I might catch your ear. I wanted you to know that you had a friend near. Lucius is in front, and Catalina; and I had a glimpse of your brother Basil not a minute ago. You'll have plenty of support, and quite an enthusiastic reception, never fear. Be brave and speak out, and look the audience full in the face as though you did not care a button for them; consider them only as so many rows of cabbages—that's the way to succeed on the stage."

He wrung my hand hurriedly, for the scene was changing. Another moment, and I was in the presence of the audience. There was a great clapping of hands, a sustained roar of applause.

"Bow!" cried a voice from the side-

wings. I inclined my head, saluting the audience as gracefully as I could.

"Bow again, keep on bowing!" cried Uncle Junius, for he was my counsellor.

I was terribly frightened. My heart beat violently; my hands were icy cold; my step was infirm; and I trembled so, that I felt in danger of falling. I breathed with difficulty; to speak seemed impossible to me. But a few moments were now given me to collect myself: for Helen—Miss Drelincourt—had now to make her entrance, and to acknowledge the applause with which she was greeted.

She was scarcely at all abashed; her acquaintance with the stage was of good service to her. Her face was covered with smiles; and she curtsied with the artificial grace she had acquired as a ballet-girl.

"I thought you'd no friends! You 'ave packed the 'ouse!" she found time to whisper to me.

Then she commenced her part:

I like not, Julia, this your country life;
I'm weary on't!

And so forth. Fortunately my earlier utterances were very brief. I felt that I was speaking in a toneless, inane, inanimate way, like one in a dream; that I was staring vacantly before me; that my arms clove to my sides; that I had the air of a stupid school-girl repeating lines she had learnt by heart mechanically, unintelligently. But I could not rouse myself from a certain torpor or stupor of fear that oppressed me. I felt completely cowed, confused, and bewildered. Floating mists and odd-shaped clouds danced before my eyes. The things about me became blurred of outline, or strangely multiplied of form. I saw three faces of Helen instead of one. All the same the words I had to speak did not escape from my mind. I maintained a perfect recollection of my cues. Only my command over my voice had gone. I spoke in a low, dull, foolish monotone. The inflexions, the emphasis, the varieties of note I had contemplated had become impossible to me.

The scene dragged on. I hated myself for my weakness, my incompetence.

As yet I had seen nothing of the audience; my gaze had been directed straight before me, but there had been no speculation in my eyes; and the dazzling line of foot-lights, with the thick vapour rising above them, formed a screen that, at first, seemed impenetrable. But, by-and-by, in a spectral way, faces could be dis-

cerned through the mist; I could see heads moving and hands clapping, and even eyes glowing. Surely in the front row of the pit sat the three art-students I had met on the occasion of Mr. Leveridge's birthday-party! Did they form part of the "claque" of which Paul had spoken? And near them sat a little group of foreigners, who might be friends of Paul's. And was not that Mr. Lucius Grisdale? What a sea of faces! And then, above, the thronged boxes, bright with colour; and, over all, the dark threatening cloud of the overcrowded gallery. And in that private box—could it be? There was no mistaking those white looks and large rubicund features, albeit he did endeavour to conceal himself behind the curtains—Mr. Leveridge!

And he had come to see me—fail!

I made a great effort to recover command of myself—to pluck up spirit and courage. I planted my feet firmly on the stage, "stiffened my sinews, set my teeth, and stretched the nostril wide." I resolved to try hard, very hard, to succeed. I thought of Paul, of our poverty, of the need there was for my best efforts.

Certainly I was now more self-possessed; my voice was coming back to me. In my speech describing my love for my guardian, Master Walter, though I still felt miserably short of my intentions, I felt that I had sounded here and there a right note.

Miss Drelincourt supported me by her perfect knowledge of the words she was required to speak; but she had a bad habit of "backing up the stage," as actors call it—a common trick among the meaner and more jealous of the performers; she stepped behind me as I spoke, so as to place me at the disadvantage of turning away from the audience to address her, or of talking over my shoulder to her. All her own speeches she delivered steadily to the house, without bestowing a glance upon me; and she was very eager to deliver her share of the dialogue, hastening her replies so as to intercept any applause that might fall to my share. But this may have been due to nervousness.

My next scene was with the Clifford of the night, Mr. Hubert Fitzhoward, and certainly he occasioned me very great embarrassment. He was so nervous that he gasped for breath, and his voice died away in his throat—a hollow murmur. He seemed, indeed, almost choking with fright, while the champagne he had taken to counteract his fears had induced an attack of hiccups, and had sufficed his

face with crimson. He came on at the wrong cues and the wrong entrances. He forgot his part, and asked me, "What is it?" "What's next?" in painfully audible tones. And then he would walk directly to the prompter for help, and loudly thank him in the most gentlemanly way for supplying the correct text. Sometimes he would stand stock still, completely lost; in another moment he was frisking and prancing all over the stage, so that I never knew exactly where I should find him, when I turned to speak to him. Now he stood so far from me, as though dreading contact with me, that the intimacy of our discourse seemed perfectly absurd; presently he stuck so closely to my skirts that I could scarcely move or he continued pressing my hand, clasping my waist, with ridiculous persistence. I was almost inclined to break from him and rush off the stage.

"I am afraid I was terribly imperfect, and put you out a good deal," he said to me in the wings. "Pray excuse me, Miss Delamere. I'm so very new to this kind of thing; but I know I shall improve as we go on. I never could get that scene into my head; but I'm perfect with the next act, and I know all the business by heart. I can't make any mistake. You'll see; we shall get on capitally. Not but what we're doing very well as it is. The thing is really going very well. It's quite a success. It's really a very creditable performance of *The Hunchback*. So everybody says. And then, you know, Hooton is a host in himself. He'd pull anything through."

I suppose Mr. Fitzhoward was speaking seriously, both as to his faith in our preceptor, Mr. Hooton, and his conviction of the merits of the performance generally. I had yet to learn how incomplete a judgment could be formed of a representation from the actor's position on the stage; and how many imperfections and shortcomings pass undiscovered by the spectators. They see nothing of the most palpable blunders; they fail to overhear the whispers interchanged by the players. Stage-illusion, however effective it may be, is oftentimes very coarsely and awkwardly conducted.

As yet, although my excess of fear had quitted me, and I was a little more conscious of what I was doing, and of what I purposed to do, I was well aware that I had won no real success. Applause had been awarded me by my friends; there seemed, indeed, a prevalent anxiety to make the most of my smallest merits—

to approve my exertions without regard to their value. I was in hopes, however, that I should receive important aid from the presence of Mr. Hooton on the boards, and that I should be encouraged to conduct myself more completely to my own satisfaction. It was something that I had to play certain scenes without being hampered by the distressing incapacity of Mr. Fitzhoward.

I had been so fully occupied with myself and my own proceedings and responsibilities, that I had found little time to note the aspect of Mr. Hooton in the character of Master Walter. But certainly he looked very strange in his doublet and trunks of purple kersaymere, his plum-coloured stockings, and dark wig that clustered in ringlets about his head and shoulders. It was hard to recognise him.

He had severely blackened his brows and reddened his cheeks. He had adorned his face with a fierce beard, which wagged curiously as he moved his jaws. Unfortunately this false hair distilled certain trickles of glue or other liquid cement, which oozed darkly about his face and made me shrink from the perils of his paternal embraces. I dreaded lest I should be suddenly the richer by a pair of whiskers transferred from his cheeks to mine.

However, Mr. Hooton's presence certainly kept the representation alive. He spared no exertion; he was most animated, energetic, vociferous, gesticulatory. He bustled here and there, waving his arms and fluttering his hands in the air. Now he flew or darted about the stage; now he assumed the solemn gait considered essential to tragedy, consisting of a long stride and then a halt while one foot was dragged along to join the other, the body meantime being swayed to and fro in rather an intoxicated manner. He imparted intense significance to his smiles; his nods and bows were most portentous; while his rolling eyes expressed amazement, mystery, menace, suspicion, super-subtlety, and I know not what besides. I cannot think that his performance was at all imitative of nature; but, no doubt, it was in strict accordance with theatrical precedent. And of heroic acting—and Mr. Hooton's efforts claimed to be of that class—one has, perhaps, no more right to expect close correspondence with nature on the stage, than to look in an epic for the colloquialisms and the common-places of every-day converse.

It is certain that real feeling did not at all enter into Mr. Hooton's performance. I

was aware, however, that an actor's skill might consist not in experiencing himself the distress he portrays, but rather in imitating the external signs of feeling. His proceedings upon the scene may be part of a system merely, carefully prepared and elaborated, but in which his own emotions have no share. His exhibitions of rage, grief, tenderness may be but efforts of memory, lessons learnt by rote, and only submitted to the contemplation of the public after constant study and frequent repetition in private. It was a question, as I knew, how far the player should permit himself to be in earnest. I had heard that John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons became absorbed in the parts they played, identified themselves with the sufferings they depicted; and that Miss O'Neill in pathetic characters could never restrain her tears; whereas Garrick and Kean could grimace and give way to all kinds of monkey tricks in the midst of their finest scenes.

All the same I was somewhat amazed at Mr. Hooton's complete separation from the part he played. He was never Master Walter—he was always Mr. Hooton. And yet he was scarcely the Mr. Hooton I had been accustomed to see in Cirencester-place. He spoke the words of the dramatist, but in tones that did not seem to be his own. His voice and manner were indeed as artificial and assumed as his beard. There was never any chance of his forgetting that he was an actor and a teacher of acting. He bore his part in mind, and he went through the processes of declamation and demeanour he had prescribed to himself; but he was careful to observe his audience the while, and to take note of the conduct of his pupils; and he was decidedly vain of his own achievements.

"You hear that round of applause?" he asked during one of the pauses in the performance. "They've found out that there's an actor here. It's not my doing. I've no friends in front. I haven't packed the house. It's legitimate appreciation on the part of an intelligent audience. For, really, you know I haven't given away a ticket."

But his statement was not quite correct. At least, certain of his pupils whispered that he always sent in people to applaud him. Indeed, the gentleman who played the part of Modus, and who affected to be droll upon all occasions, pretended to inter-

pret the cries of "Brayvo, 'ooton," sounding from different quarters of the house.

"That bass voice," he said, "is Hooton's butcher; that shrill cry is Hooton's baker; the other voices belong to his sweep, his butterman, and the pot-boy from round the corner who brings Hooton his beer. That very hoarse lad in the corner of the gallery cleans Hooton's boots; he is remunerated by means of orders, which he sells if he can persuade anybody to buy them; and he is rapidly losing his voice from his hard work in getting up a call for Hooton between the acts."

In my ignorance and inexperience, I had been trying to persuade myself that I was really Julia, that her sorrows, her sobs, her anguish, her despair, were really mine. The more I succeeded in effecting this, the more I thought I should rouse the sympathy and the applause of my audience. But certainly it was hard to maintain this view of my duties as an actress with Mr. Hooton at my elbow. His whispers, his nudges, his pushes, and pulls, were very trying.

"Don't turn your back to the audience. Your dress is all coming to pieces, the lacing of your stays is all visible. A little more to the right, please. Throw your voice well out. Keep the game alive! Cross. Your handkerchief. Pace the stage. Rise. Sit. Weep. That's the ticket!" and so on. It was, indeed, hard to him and me.

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STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCESILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. III. ROME.

CHAPTER X. A CARNIVAL ROMANCE.

THE breath of the Angelus had literally blown out the Carnival. The sudden darkness and silence falling all at once, like a night in the tropics, upon the noise and brilliance of the day were in themselves strikingly dramatic—a very coup de théâtre. But to the girl it must have been a moment of absolutely tragic bitterness. So absorbed had she grown in that bewilderingly intoxicating vision of a glorified self, that so sudden a waking, just when her dream was so deep and intense as to feel eternal, was not to be borne. It was exactly as if some Eastern enchanter had held out to her all the wealth, beauty, joy, and glory of earth, only to snatch them away with a cruel laugh as soon as her finger-tips had touched them. But even this sudden waking, harsh and cold as it was, did not account for the scared, almost terrified glance she threw up at the darkening sky above, as she exclaimed aloud:

"What shall I do!"

The broad Corso was now well-nigh as empty as that unknown desert city, whence she had entered Rome in the morning. A group of grotesque figures was still flitting about here and there on its way to the masquerade at the theatre, but the prevailing solitude and silence were thus only the more strongly emphasised. The girl was alone in the corner which she had used all day as the best place for seeing, without being seen. But, even as

she spoke, like a tragedy queen appealing to the night above from the night below, the deep voice of a man answered her, from somewhere near her shoulder, as if the air had taken tongue:

"Are you in trouble, signorina? Can I help you?"

She started, and covered her face closely with her mantilla. It was already too dark to make her corner any longer of use either for seeing or hiding; but she nevertheless shrank a little more into it, just as she had been startled by the sight of the fat scarecrow and the lean. She looked, however, through her lace; but, even as she was concealed by her black veil, so was he by the hood of a black domino. He was just a voice and a black shadow. And the depth of the voice had a sepulchral sound to ears fresh from the passing away of the glory of the world.

"Can I help you in any way?" the voice asked again.

We know that the girl's mind was not free from fancies. And we know too, from many histories, that whenever there is a very strong temptation, a tempter is sure to be not very far away. It was easy enough for instinct to imagine in this voice from the darkness the phantom of the vanished Carnival, or perhaps its genius, with all its gifts to bestow at will. And in that case she knew very well what she craved for, and how he could help her. But she only answered:

"No. Nobody can put the clock back again."

"The clock, signorina? What have clocks to do with the Carnival? And what has Time to do with Rome? Eternity does not want clocks or clock-makers."

But—why should not the clock be put back if you please? What woman wills, you know. Command me, signorina."

Voice is everything—words are nothing. Spoken in a lighter way, his speech would have been a mere scrap of badinage, such as one masker on the Corso might throw at another, and with as little point in it. But the voice made it a solemn profession of power and obedience combined. It never occurred to her, that the first duty of a girl, who is addressed in the street after dark by a strange man, is to walk off as fast as she can without running.

"If you will take my advice, signorina," he said, after a pause and in a yet graver tone if possible, "you will go straight home before the clock wants putting back any more. The soldiers will soon be clearing the theatre; and you are young—at least your voice is—and alone. And meanwhile, as you see, everybody is not at the theatre—I am not, for one. Unless you are waiting for somebody who is certain to come very soon indeed, you had better go home."

Such a speech, addressed to a Roman girl on the last night of the Carnival, was in itself an impressive peculiarity. He waited quietly for her to either move or answer. As she did neither, he said, without looking towards her and as if addressing the now wholly deserted Corso:

"There is nothing in the world that is very wrong, except being afraid."

Gradually she was becoming aware—without knowing it—that there was a real magic about this stranger. The penetration which perceived her distress to be genuine was in itself a proof of innocence—that is to say, of wisdom. And even the voice and the shadow conveyed an impression of that simplicity of nature which makes itself felt and comprehended by its mere presence, and from which no woman, be she Roman or otherwise, feels inclined to run away when in need of honest aid.

"I am not afraid," she answered. "But I can't get in. I can't get in."

"Then you are no cousin to the starling, signorina But why cannot you get in? And where? Is your home a school?"

"No, signor."

"A nunnery?"

"No, signor!"

"Not a prison—since you want to get in?"

"No, signor."

"An enchanted castle?"

"No, signor."

"What then? My imagination does not pass the enchanted castle. What then?"

She hung down her head, and answered:

"The Ghetto."

"Ah, the Ghetto!"

That, then, was the town within a town whence she had come that morning—that little nest of foul, narrow streets cut off by high walls from the peril of corrupting Gentile purity, and closed every night against ingress and egress at the hour of curfew—in one word, the Petticoat-lane of Rome. The girl was indeed thrice over an exile. First, from the Land of Promise; secondly, from Rome, the seat of the scorner; and now from the foulness of the den of refuge appointed by law. The deep voice at her side sounded less courteous when it said, "Ah, the Ghetto!" The Hebrew quarter of those days was, even to the Romans themselves, better known by name, and that a very ill name indeed, than in reality. To say the best possible of it, it was not a pleasant quarter to any of the senses, unless perhaps to the eyes of persons so devoted to the particular sort of picturesqueness inseparable from dirt, as to be deaf to the perpetual squabbling of the most inharmonious voices in the world over petty bargains, and callous to a chaos of evil odours more numerous and more inextricably confounded than the famous seventy-and-seven of Cologne.

But, if the Ghetto was not savoury to Roman Gentiles, those days were far less pleasant—apart from scudi—to Roman Jews. They remembered the times, when not bare-backed horses but naked Jews were made to race along the Corso, in honour of Shrove Tuesday. And, though the barbarous game was, in its quadruped form, a Gentile pastime, it was still paid for by a subscription levied on the Ghetto. Each terrified horse that ran with bleeding sides still represented the Carnival chastisement of a Jew. The Roman Jews were still, by way of yet more intolerable punishment, driven in a herd to be converted by a dull sermon every Holy Cross day, and that at so small a fee per head that the most habitual convert hardly grew the richer. It was no wonder that this girl had felt so much like a caged swallow when shut up alone in her loft, on the great day when her neighbours themselves had shut up shop, even

on a Tuesday, and were making Christian holiday. But far less wonder was it that the free, open life of joy and common sympathy with the outer world, wherefrom she was cut off by the walls of the Ghetto, had inspired her with fuller dreams and more eager longings than were natural even to a girl of seventeen—standing, that is to say, on the threshold of untried womanhood, when the birds in her heart are beginning to sing aloud, and the wings are breaking from her shoulders. And it was least wonder of all that, when the vision was over, that the thought of the Ghetto was something worse than a waking.

"Do you know nobody outside the—in all Rome?" asked her companion coldly. "Is there nobody who will give you a night's shelter till the gate opens in the morning?"

She answered by a stare as if the words of his question, as well as their accent, had been spoken in an unknown tongue.

"Whom could I know outside the Ghetto?"

"I should like to help you, signorina. But it does not seem to be a case for a man. There is nobody to knock down, and I don't know a woman in all Rome. And if I did, I could not——" He did not add, "ask her to give shelter to a stray Jewess from the Ghetto, whom I picked up after dark on the Corso." A man may not think himself a fool for believing in the honesty of a mere voice, but he must be unjust indeed if he blames others for thinking him one. "What is usually done when your friends find themselves locked out after dark? I suppose they are sometimes? Do they use silver keys? And if so, where do they apply them?"

"I don't know—I never heard."

"Well, I suppose I must find out then," said the voice, sounding as if it were very likely in unison with a shrug of the shoulders. At any rate, it was expressive enough of the acceptance of a task of good nature, as a matter of course, but unwillingly, and in the spirit of a martyr to courtesy. In short, it plainly said that its owner did not mean to act the knight-errant to stray girls, either on the Corso or elsewhere, again. "Come," he said, a little impatiently, "I daresay the gate of the Ghetto is like every other gate I have ever heard of, and wants nothing but one drop of oil of silver to make the hinges turn."

"You mean you can get them to open the gate?"

"No, signorina. But I can try, and shall most likely——"

"Then—oh no, signor!"

Just as his voice had suggested a shrug of the shoulders, so hers, in its sudden eagerness, must have been accompanied by an unseen clasping of hands.

"Come, this is nonsense, signorina. You were just now crying out because you could not go home; and now you say 'Oh no' as soon as you think you can. Do you mean you have spent all your money on sugar-plums and candles? Of course you have; and as I have not, I must spend it on something. You can pay me when we meet next. Come, do you want to stay in the streets till to-morrow?"

"I have no home, signor. None now. None to-morrow!"

"Then, I am afraid I cannot help you. Felicissima notte, signorina."

It may be that she had lost her faith in his being an actual magician. But he was an undoubtedly human voice, and a strong one; and that is better than a mere straw to cling to in the dark.

"I—I dare not go home!"

He turned back before he had made a second footstep. "You dare not? I said just now there is no harm in anything but being afraid. Why dare you not go home?"

"I—I was left in the house to keep off the rats—when they went out to see the Carnival——"

"Who went out—the rats? I beg your pardon, signorina."

"And now they are back again and have found me gone. And what shall I do? What will become of me? I could not help it, signor; I could not, indeed."

To each other, they were but voices talking to one another out of the darkness, hinting at possible gestures now and then, but otherwise as incorporeal as echoes. To us, they are as yet nothing more. But there is a marvellous influence about the mere presence of certain men. And there are moments when an impulsive nature, whether in the North or in the South, is unable to contain itself, and loses shyness in an overwhelming passion for sympathy. The glorious day-dream seemed to have left her this stranger's voice alone as a last thread to cling to before it floated away hopelessly and for ever.

"And I would not!" she burst out volubly, almost defiantly, as if appealing to the whole newly-discovered world. "I had never seen a Carnival. I had never been outside the Ghetto since I was born."

I never thought of it; it never came in my head till to-day. But to-day! Why, I felt the sun run through me like a hot knife as I sat among the lace—I wanted—I don't know what, signor. Other girls have been outside the Ghetto, and have told me things—but oh, nothing like what I have seen. The beautiful dresses—and I know what they have cost, by Saint Bacchus! to a yard—and the diamonds, signor, all in real ears! And now it is all over; and the rats—and oh, signor, what will become of me? How could I tell that they rang Ave Maria to-day, and brought the night down, sooner than any other day in all the year?"

In the eagerness of her speech, her mantilla fell back from her face. And his ears had no time to retain the jar they received from some of her words for a very simple but amply sufficient reason. As her mantilla fell back, the moon shone.

He saw a young face with marvellously eloquent dark eyes, and a perfect form, all made beautiful by the magic of moonlight, and set off by the one and only dress ever invented that is and makes beautiful.

She saw the harsh, grave face of a very plain young man, without a solitary personal advantage of either feature or stature, except a breadth of chest and shoulder fully accountable for the deep voice and atmosphere of strength that had hitherto represented him. He was not ugly. He was a great deal worse than ugly; he was only plain. His face, closely shaved all over according to the then fashion, and framed in the hood of his black domino, was certainly not distinguished from others by features a little larger and rougher than usual, and by a pair of small, common gray eyes. And yet the influence which had first commanded the girl's wondering hope, and then her desperate trust, was rather increased by its visible expression. Not one woman in a thousand would have been attracted by his face; but not one in a million would not have trusted it instinctively and implicitly. It was not the face of a man who is apt to look upon women. But one might be sure that those dull, gray eyes, if once drawn to a woman's, would never wander. Now they looked; and he said, with an emphasis almost startling in a voice seemingly so inflexible:

"You have never been outside the Ghetto?"

"Never, till to-day."

"Why, you can never have heard music! Think of it! A girl to have grown up in the very heart of the whole musical dust-heap and never soiled by a speck of it; as pure as if there were no opera—no Italy—no Rome even! It is a miracle! Can you sing?"

"I don't know, signor."

"You don't know?"

"No. I never tried."

"Signorina, you have a singer's voice when you speak; you can express feeling; you are of the singers' race; and you know no music, and have never tried to sing! For Heaven's sake, signorina, do not say it if it is not true," he hurried on eagerly, as if he too had undergone a sudden transformation, and as anxiously as if all Rome's fate, which is the world's, hung upon her answer. "No—it cannot be! And yet—is it true?"

She could only look her amazement, and no wonder.

"Is it true?"

"Why should I try to sing? There is nobody to hear me."

That is not what the birds say. But he did not stop to criticise.

"Never mind why. It is true, then—a real woman, with a real voice, who has never heard a false note and never made one! No, it is not a miracle. It is destiny. And I have found her. Never mind the clock—never mind the Ghetto—never mind anything. Come!"

Her eyes opened to their widest, and asked:

"Where?"

"Oh, anywhere under the stars. What is your name?"

The very question was a command, and she had neither purpose nor will. Locked out from the Ghetto, all astray in strange streets, and with the atmosphere of the Carnival still hanging over her like a dream-cloud, all ways in life were for the moment one to her; and there was a mesmeric force in his brusque energy—a force to be obeyed, and that without question or fear.

And indeed if, at that moment, a fiend had risen up out of the pavement of the Corso and had thrown open any door which, by some chance, might prove not to lead back to the Ghetto—wherever else it might lead—she would have taken him by the hand and entered.

"Your name?" he asked again.

"Noëmi Baruc."

"Mine is Andrew Gordon. Come."

FASHIONABLE CRICKET.

Is it true that the last and most serious symptom of "blue fever" is about to disappear from the list of engagements for the London season? Was the match played the other day at Lord's actually the last of the Eton and Harrow matches to be played in London? Is the institution about which so much sham enthusiasm is warmed up, and so much ridiculous rodomontade written, to be finally washed out by a steady downpour of rain? Perhaps. That is to say, if the persons—presumably old enough to know better—who write letters to the papers signed "dark" or "light" blue, do not prove too powerful for the authorities of Harrow. To judge by these letters, and the talk of the days of the Eton and Harrow match, the game of cricket is the noblest outcome of the thought and thews of man, and one to which other studies may worthily be set aside. For what chance, so far as popular renown is concerned, has a senior wrangler or a double-first against the stroke of the University boat or the captain of the University eleven? He may get on terms with the strong-armed and fleet-footed one later in life, but as a youth he is naught to the hero of the oar and bat. That this popular adoration of muscular feats is a reaction against the "midnight oil" theory of existence is now clear enough, but whether the enthusiasm for cricket can be kept up to its present fever-heat is a little doubtful. It is true that cricket appeals to the English people as a whole, and is, like fox-hunting, a truly democratic amusement. It goes through every stratum of that many-plied structure known as English society, and does under certain conditions admirable service in bringing various sorts and conditions of men together. What can be more pleasant than the evening game on the village-green, when the parson defends his wicket with might and main against that terrible bowler the village carpenter, who is always "dead on" the wicket, or that insidious doctor, whose slow "twisters" bewilder the batman, who has only just escaped the heavy firing of his predecessor? What is more delightful than the home-and-home match between village and village, or between school and school? All those who come to see are interested in the game or the school, and there is a pleasant association about the meeting, such as that

which made the day of the University boat-race once the pleasantest of the year, instead of the aquatic Derby it now is, with every disagreeable feature of the Epsom kermesse multiplied by ten. He would indeed be churlish who would grudge the lookers-on at really good cricket the pleasure of feeling themselves, in spirit at least, again exulting over a long drive, a clean cut, or a slashing if dangerous leg hit, and who would raise his eyebrows and shrug his shoulders at the grave college dons, who lose their gravity nowhere save in the cricket-field.

It is because we know good cricket when we see it, and sympathise both with players and appreciative onlookers, that the spectacle of Lord's during an Eton and Harrow match raises our ire. We know that of the assembled thousands not one in five either knows or cares anything about cricket, or has but the faintest connection with either of the competing schools. Lord's has been compared to a race-course, with peer and peasant anxiously watching the race, and feeling the pulse quicken as the leaders close at the half-distance and race home stride for stride; but we confess that we cannot see the aptness of the comparison. It will apply to the village match, but those who affect to see in Lord's a great democratic institution forget the gate-money, which effectually deprives it of any attraction for the masses. Moreover, the London masses do not care much for cricket, probably because they have very little chance of exercising any taste they may have for the noble game; but if they did, the half-crown gate-money would effectually keep them out. Public schools cricket at Lord's can, indeed, no more be regarded as a popular institution than the Sandown Club race-course, Hurlingham, Prince's, or the Orleans Club. In fact, the cricketing and scholastic aspects of the match have been so entirely overshadowed by the social and gastronomical importance of the event, that, except as affording opportunity for ill-timed applause and ill-bred censure, the two elevens might be dispensed with altogether, and much additional space gained for the accommodation of the carriages and their inhabitants. More tents for light refreshments could then be pitched; and, with the addition of a few marquees and all the musicians of the Household Brigade, a very good fashionable version of old Greenwich fair could be produced.

The change wrought by the last twenty years at Lord's has been gradual, but unchecked, as the advance of cricket itself in popular estimation. A century and a half ago cricket existed, it is true, but was classed with vulgar amusements, such as bull-baiting and boxing—not yet raised to the rank of a science. A nobleman who so far forgot himself as to consort with cricketers was denounced for his uncleanly living; aristocratic contempt going so far as to say that a gentleman who would play at cricket would eat black-puddings, whatever precise amount of turpitude may be connoted by that gastronomical feat. But in Opie's time, as is shown by his famous picture of the Red Boy holding the curious curved bat of the period, the sons of peers played at cricket, and very funny they looked in the days when boys were dressed like men. Let us imagine a boy keeping wicket in a cocked hat, red laced coat, breeches, shoes and buckles, like the tiny batsman painted by Opie. It seems odd, but perhaps not more so than the costume of I Zingari would have appeared to Sir Charles Grandison. Once taken up by the public schools, cricket, year by year, displaced the manly sports of our grandfathers, to wit—bull-baiting, cock-fighting, badger-drawing, and boxing; but, so late as the day when Fuller Pilch batted, and Alfred Mynn bowled, in stove-pipe hats, braces, and the now extinct articles then known as "white ducks," Lord's cricket-ground was not converted into a vast picnic. This object hardly entered into the calculations of the shrewd, hard-headed Scot, from whom the famous field takes its name. The first home of cricket in London was the White Conduit-fields—at least that was the domain of the first cricket club. As the White Conduit district was built over, a cricket-ground was established on the place now occupied by Dorset-square, the original domicile of the Marylebone Cricket Club. Hence Lord was driven by inexorably advancing bricks and mortar to a "location" between North and South Bank. Then came the canal, driving him farther afield, till he secured the now well-known space north of the St. John's-wood-road, not without difficulty, and a heavy whip of the Marylebone Club to acquire a long lease; for "big money" was offered by the enterprising builders who have succeeded in covering a large part of St. John's-wood with edifices equally fragile in structure and reputation.

Lord's Cricket-ground was saved, and for many years was a delightful place of resort. When first the public schools matches were played at Lord's, Winchester participating, not a score of carriages surrounded the ground, and the meeting of old college chums, and the excitement of the sisters and cousins of the boys, was very agreeable to witness. But all is changed, for now the preparations for the Eton and Harrow day assume gigantic proportions. There is a desperate struggle for stray members' tickets, and a noble ambition is shown to have, if not the best turn-out, yet the best luncheon on the ground. The same man who remarked that, if things go on at their present rate, the daily newspapers will be published at midnight, was, until doubt was thrown on the recurrence of the match, occupied in a calculation as to how early on the day preceding the Eton and Harrow picnic he ought to send his carriage, in order to secure what certain writers persist in calling a "coign of vantage." It might have been thought that the fight for precedence could no farther go than the sending of a tenantless carriage to take up a good situation, but the Derby style of refreshment is not luxurious enough for the more ambitious matron. At whatever cost to others, she will have a tent, or, if not a tent, a table on terra firma, and her servants are hard at work in the morning unloading hampers, setting up tables and the rest, and making arrangements for heating soup; for your genuine girl of the period must have hot soup, or her luncheon is spoiled. In sober truth, the luncheon is the real event of the day, and the homage originally devoted to sinew is diverted to stomach. Previous to this supreme event, the Gainsborough hats pretend to take an interest in the match, although eighty percent of them might, if they would, avow equal ignorance with that of the Russian lady, who, at the conclusion of the first innings, enquired "when the amusements were going to begin." When we hear the squeaky voice of a minor pipe out "played" or "bowled," our ears are tickled, for the little lad has some knowledge of what he is squeaking about, but what right has that too-radiantly-attired matron, Mrs. McSpelter, to clap her hands and applaud every time a light blue hits the ball, whether he makes a run off or not? She knows nothing about either the game or the schools, and only wears

light blue because it suits her complexion. Old McSpelter, who married her when he was already middle-aged, most assuredly never enjoyed the advantage of instruction at either Eton, Harrow, or—to judge by appearances—any school, public or otherwise. But Mrs. Mac—as the worthy merchant designates her—hopes that her boys, yet young, may in time become of Eton or Harrow. This prospective enthusiasm is difficult to understand. That the young lady whose brother or cousin is at Eton, and has enjoyed the honour of being soundly thrashed by the younger brother of one of the eleven, should clothe herself, literally from top to toe, in the palest blue, is quite comprehensible. She is a pretty blonde to begin with, and impulsive withal—the sort of person capable of wearing papa's racing colours at Ascot, if—and this is a big "if"—they became her. She knows the name of every one of the young barbarians at play, and would scream out "bowled" and "played" were she not restrained by a priggish brother, whose voice is as the sound of a flute, and who is suspected of writing for the Saturday Refrigerator. Not being much of a cricketer himself, the brother, who affects a clerical style of costume, although he is really a briefless barrister, occasionally permits a wintry smile to ripple over his face as a "four" is scored, quite forgetting that in the playing-fields at Eton two would have been as much as the hit would have counted. But the flute-voiced one never was at Eton, and although he talks persistently of "University men," never dwelt at either of the traditional seats of learning. Outside the pavilion, the circle of carriages and the general picnic, circulates an army of loungers, for the most part arrayed like the lilies—Japanese lilies—of the field. There are pretty girls enough, with colour heightened, and eyes glistening with—but no, it cannot be that the champagne-cup, which cheers and inebriates, has been lifted once too often to the veritable arc de cupidon bent above that dimpled chin? There is the young man of the period too, tightly buttoned up in lengthy frock-coat of the M.B. style, or more gaily attired on the model of O'Barry, of the War Office, who appears in a white hat, a pink shirt, a cravat of ambiguous blue, a green coat, and nether garments of moonlit gray. It is by no means difficult to those to the manner born, to separate the genuine public school men from the pretenders who vainly imagine that a patch of light or dark blue

will in some way connect them with the contending schools. Among them is our old friend "'Arry." "'Arr-a-crown" will not keep 'Arry—whose barber's shop yields a handsome yearly income—out of Lord's. By no means. He loves to be "in it," as he says, to rub shoulders with those whom he calls the "real swells," and he has been to Lord's so often that he talks of Eton and 'Arrow, both of which he attends professionally, as glibly as the best. 'Arry and O'Barry are, we must confess, a little too much for us, and we groan over the cockneying of an interesting struggle. Let, as the Harrow authorities properly insist, the boys attend before all to their studies, and if they must play public matches, let them be played away from the picnicking, the flirting, the eternal champagne-cup, the ogling and giggling, the vulgar noise and crush of Lord's.

In plain truth, the Eton and Harrow match, as it is now played, is a sham and a nuisance, crying aloud for abolition.

IN BLACK RUSSIA.

A STORY.

"WHY, it is Musgrave! ce cher Arthur! I thought you, mon ami, to be in Spain still. What good wind, what wind of fortune, has blown you to us here, in Russia?"

Such were the words which reached my ears, as a gloved grasp was suddenly laid upon my arm, while I was traversing the railway platform at Minsk. I turned to find myself confronted by the smiling face of Demetrius Vassili, a Russian whom I had known for some three or four years at St. Petersburg, Paris, and wherever diplomatists and birds of passage congregate. He, this well-whiskered, glib-tongued Vassili, belonged to both categories, since, when I first knew him, in the Czar's capital, he was a professor of the university, while in Paris he was an underling of the Russian Embassy, and at Madrid a gentleman at large.

I confess that I did not much like Demetrius Vassili, though I was more than half ashamed of my prejudice, for the man was friendly, almost too ostentatiously so, was polite, genial, and one of those amiable persons who are always taking our good opinion by storm, as it were, by the graceful rendering of some little service or other. Vassili, when I was a raw lad new to the Continent, had been kind to me once or twice, and I had repaid his good nature by taking his part when others

spoke evil of him, in a vague way, behind his back, for he was not popular somehow. There he was, at any rate, and evidently delighted to see me.

"By-the-bye!" abruptly put in my old acquaintance, linking his arm in mine, "I have to congratulate you, have I not? It is true that you are about to marry the beautiful Mademoiselle Marie, daughter of Count Constantine Orloff, the young lady who at Madrid, when I was there, broke all hearts?"

It was true that I was betrothed to Marie Orloff; indeed I was on my way then to her father's mansion, at which it had been arranged that I should be a guest until the wedding should take place, according to both the English and Russo-Greek forms, at St. Petersburg. Our engagement had come about in this wise. I, Arthur Musgrave, as an attaché of our legation at Madrid, had been thrown much into the society of the daughter of the Russian envoy, had learned to love her, and had been lucky enough to teach her to love me. My chief difficulty was with the count, who was at first very much annoyed and displeased. Russia—youngest of nations—has an aristocracy that in pride and pretension rivals the "blue blood" of Spain, and every Muscovite noble is convinced that the English are, as Napoleon called us, a nation of shopkeepers, quite unfit to mate with their own upper classes. Fortunately for me, however, I was heir to an entailed property, small, indeed, but the rent-roll of which seemed respectable in Continental eyes; while I was able to convince Count Orloff that my Border ancestry had driven off Scottish cattle, and ridden in warden raids, at a time when his own forefathers were probably unbaptised Tartars, for it is a curious fact that the titled families of Russia are Georgian, Tartar, German, Swedish, anything but Russian.

All now was happily settled, and, as I have said, I was on my way to my future father-in-law's country château, a summer residence in the lake district of Ostaschkoi, near Tver on the Upper Volga. The Count's estates lay chiefly in that neighbourhood, and he had lately been appointed, by one of those abrupt transitions from one service to another, which are common under the Czar's rule, governor of the province.

"But what chance, M. Vassili, brings you here?" I asked, when we had shaken hands. "I heard of you last as in Rome."

"Here to-day, there to-morrow," an-

swered Vassili, airily. "I have been in Asia lately, shall be at Wilna to-morrow, and in St. Petersburg next week. I serve a master who has dealings in far-away places."

"You mean the Emperor?" I enquired, and the Russian nodded with a look of good-humoured mystery. At this moment up came a porter to tell me, cringingly, that my excellency must, he feared, be content to wait six hours or more for a train. There had been a movement of troops towards Poland, disordering the company's arrangements, and taking up the rolling-stock.

"The Emperor's orders, noble gospodin," he added, with a deprecatory shrug, as he saw my vexed face.

Then Demetrius chimed in. His train, too, had been delayed by the concentration of troops on the Polish frontier. He, too, had some hours to spend at Minsk. He had ordered dinner at the Black Eagle, hard by. The landlord knew him well, and would serve up a tolerable repast. Would I be charitable, and share what would otherwise be a solitary meal?

Vassili gave me a good dinner; and we lingered long over our cigars and coffee, chatting of other scenes and old times. Then, at length, word was brought that the train for Wilna was in sight.

"Now I think of it," said my host, in his careless way, "on your road to the Count's château you will pass Staritz—yes!" he added, glancing at the open map that lay beside me on the table; "of course you will, and change horses there. I wish, if it be not too much to ask, that you would kindly give a message from me to the village priest, or papas, there—Pope John Petrovich."

"I will, with pleasure," I replied; "but remember, my Russian is not very fluent, and I presume the priest talks no French."

Vassili laughingly assured me that the words were few and simple, and suggested that I should pencil them, from his dictation, on a slip of paper which he pushed towards me. These were the words of the message. "Your son" ("our clergy marry, you know, like the laity," interjected Demetrius) "has been ill, but take comfort. He is doing well now, and, if he acts promptly, with the blessing of the Panagia, will succeed. He sends his love, faith, and duty."

"I saw the Pope's son," explained Demetrius, "the other day at Odessa. Young Cyril is a corn-dealer and hay-merchant, a pushing, speculative fellow, but as honest

as the day. He was recovering from a fever, but hoped to fill his purse by buying up all the—ah! there is the railway whistle, so we must be quick! You'll do my errand then, dear Arthur, will you not, and gladden the heart of the good old man?"

It was not until long after Vassili and I had parted, that it occurred to me to wonder why he should have charged me with such a message. It would have been simpler, surely, and more speedy, as a means of communicating with Pope John, to have relied on the post. But then these rustic priests were ignorant, and possibly the eyes of the papas were not very well accustomed to deciphering manuscript. At any rate I would make a point of executing the commission.

"Pope John, English lord?" said the innkeeper at Staritza, falteringly, as I asked for a guide to show me the way to the parsonage, while the slow postillions were unharnessing, in the tardy fashion in which work is done in Russia, the tired horses from the carriage.

"Certainly," said I, observing his embarrassment. "Is the priest ill, or what is there surprising in a traveller's enquiring for him?"

The landlord bowed obsequiously.

"You'll find the papas in good health, noble gospodin," he said, in sugared accents. "Yonder is the parsonage, with the white gable."

"Then I want no guide to conduct me there," said I, laughing, and at once walked across to the garden gate. A neat, snug little dwelling was the parsonage, with its white walls, its tiny garden full of humble potherbs and hardy flowers, and the sacred pigeons cooing softly as they sunned themselves upon its red-eaved roof. An ill-looking fellow opened the door in answer to my summons, scanned me narrowly, and, as I thought, with suspicion, and after some colloquy conducted me to what I guessed, by the few books and the many pictured saints on the wall, to be the priest's study. Ten minutes elapsed, and then in came the master of the house, Pope John.

"Forgive me, noble sir, if I have kept you waiting," said the priest, with as low a bow as he could have executed in the presence of his bishop. "You bring me news, I am told, of my dear son?"

I cannot say that the reverend gentleman impressed me very favourably. Pope John was a corpulent old man, with a snowy beard that would have done credit

to a hermit; long white locks falling from beneath his black velvet skull-cap, a snuffy and frayed cassock, and dark-blue spectacles, from behind which a pair of keen though half-shut eyes surveyed me with a watchfulness that had in it something feline. The priest's voice, too, at once coarse and wheedling, grated on my ear, though nothing could exceed the bland urbanity of his reception of me. Twice over did I repeat the substance of Vassili's remarks concerning the young corndealer at Odessa, and twice, at the old man's request, did I mention every circumstance of my interview with Demetrius, "his kind and noble patron," as he called him; then I placed the written slip of paper, on which I had pencilled the message, in the priest's hands, and declining his offer of refreshments, took my leave of him. As I left the parsonage I thought I heard some whispered talk, and then a low, sneering laugh.

"I am much mistaken," said I to myself, as I stepped into my carriage, and gave my postillion the signal to start, "if Pope John, 'the good old man,' as Vassili called him, be not as consummate and greasy a humbug as any in Muscovy." Then my thoughts reverted to rosy dreams of Marie and the future, and I sank into a reverie, from which I only awakened to perceive that my driver was proceeding in a leisurely manner that was most unusual, for if Russians work slowly, they drive fast.

"Come, come, my lad!" said I, good-humouredly; "surely three good nags and a light kibitka ought not to go at a snail's-pace like this!"

As I spoke I heard the gallop of distant horses, mingling with the clank of steel. We were on a sandy road, traversing one of those huge pine forests, the sombre gloom of which, alternating with the glare of the white sand, has occasioned the name of "Black Russia" to be assigned to these central provinces of the ancient Muscovy. Very soon we were overtaken by the hard riders in our rear, their swords clashing against flank and stirrup, their horses in a foam—in all, some five-and-twenty mounted men. Most of these, by their long lances and barbarian equipment, I knew to be Cossacks, but others wore the uniform of gendarmes, and three at least were officers.

"Pull up! halt, I say!" shouted he who seemed to command; and in an instant my driver obeyed.

"Secure the foreigner!" was the next

order; and with amazing quickness I was grasped by two of the dismounted troopers.

"Resist, and I fire!" growled a Cossack corporal, pressing the muzzle of his pistol to my left temple, while his soldiers dexterously chained my wrists together. Then, shaking off the stupor of surprise, I found my tongue. There was, I said, evidently some mistake, some confusion of persons. My passport, if they would kindly look for it in the breast-pocket of my ulster, would prove me to be Arthur Musgrave, of the British diplomatic service, junior attaché of H.B.M.'s Legation at Madrid.

"Prisoner, you trifle with justice!" said the commandant sternly, in French; and indeed, when the morocco case was drawn out and opened, it proved to be empty. My passport and papers were gone, inexplicably to me. As I stared blankly there was a roar of laughter, mingled with comments on my effrontery.

"Remove the pretended Englishman!" ordered the colonel; and I was thrust back into the carriage, a soldier on each side of me, and conducted to the town of Torjok, where I was lodged in jail.

I do not like, even yet, to recall what I underwent during the miserable three weeks that I spent in the prison of Torjok. It was not that the cell was narrow, the bed squalid, and the fare hard and bad. I was young and strong, and could rough it. But it was maddening to be eternally examined and cross-examined by civil magistrates and military functionaries, none of whom would listen to the plain truth, and all of whom tried, by threat, promise, persuasion, to wring out of me a confession which, as they said, would enable me to claim the Czar's mercy and a lighter punishment for my crime. I was browbeaten, bullied, argued with, coaxed, but never accused of anything. When I enquired the nature of my offence I was jeered at. When I adjured my captors to write to the British Embassy, my prayer was treated as an impudent jest. And when I mentioned Count Orloff, the governor of the province, as my future father-in-law, I really thought the Judge of Instruction would have flown at my throat, so angry was he.

"Only bread and water for the contumacious!" I heard him roar to the jailer as he went out. I thought, between them, that they would have driven me mad, and should have welcomed Siberia as a release.

I grew sullen at last, and refused to

return any answer to the interrogatories with which they plied me. I began almost to doubt my own identity. It could not be myself, Arthur Musgrave, who was the tenant of this Russian den, and daily questioned as to my complicity in something extremely subversive of Church and State. Let them knout me, hang me, banish me if they would, I felt as though I were the only sane man among a pack of madmen.

"Here is the wretch, your excellency," said a voice one day as my cell door was thrown open, with a clatter of swords and spurs on the stone floor that indicated the arrival of some distinguished personage; "there the desperado is, lord governor!"

I looked up. There, in front of the group stood, in a rich uniform, the breast of which sparkled with orders, the "excellency" in question. The recognition was mutual.

"Count Orloff!" "What! Musgrave! Arthur, my dear boy, what terrible error is this?"

And to the scandal of the judge, the jailer, and the rest of them, the governor of the province hurried across the grimy floor to clasp my hands, and to order, in a voice that brooked no denial or delay, that my chains should instantly be taken off.

"My poor fellow, how you must have suffered," said the Count feelingly, as he saw how pale and haggard I had grown. And then came explanations, the cream of which was that there had been a socialist conspiracy, a widespread one, luckily detected in time, a prime mover in which had been my acquaintance, Vassili, who had evidently made a cat's-paw of me in inducing me to carry his message to the priest, while at the same time he purloined my English passport and papers, probably for the sake of escaping, in case of the worst, under my name.

"But Pope John, and his son," said I, bewildered.

"The real Pope John, a sad old rogue," answered the Count, smiling, "had been arrested the day before you reached Staritz, and you found his house in possession of the police. The white-bearded person to whom you gave the message, disguised in the priest's clothes, was Major Bulow, of the Imperial Gendarmerie; and the message itself was an artful concoction, couched in a sort of verbal cipher, the key to which a traitor gave us, and which, but for our military precautions, would have led to a revolt of

the Polish regiment at Tver, and a rising of the peasantry in fifty parishes. As it is, all is safe, and a telegram has just informed me that Vassili himself has been captured on the frontier. If ever a man deserved Siberia—but you are free, Arthur. Come with me, and Marie and I will teach you to forget this misery.”

I have been married and happy now this many a year, but I do not think that the ill-omened face of Demetrius Vassili will ever be seen again on this side of the Oural.

TENDERNESS.

Not unto every heart is God's good gift
Of simple tenderness allowed; we meet
With love in many fashions when we lift
First to our lips life's waters bitter-sweet.
Love comes upon us with resistless power
Of curbless passion, and with headstrong will;
It plays around like April's breeze and shower,
Or calmly flows, a rapid stream, and still.
It comes with blessedness unto the heart
That welcomes it aright, or—bitter fate!
It wrings the bosom with so fierce a smart,
That love, we cry, is crueler than hate,
And then, ah me, when love has ceased to bless,
Our broken hearts cry out for tenderness!

We long for tenderness like that which hung
About us, lying on our mother's breast;
A selfless feeling, that no pen nor tongue
Can praise aright, since silence sings it best.
A love, as far removed from passion's heat
As from the chillness of its dying fire;
A love to lean on when the falling feet
Begin to totter and the eyes to tire.

In youth's brief heyday hottest love we seek,
The reddest rose we grasp—but when it dies,
God grant that later blossoms, violets meek,
May spring for us beneath life's autumn skies!
God grant some loving one be near to bless
Our weary way with simple tenderness!

IN THE SILENT WORLD.

THE hitherto silent world is just now enlivened by the friendly rivalry of two sets of teachers—those adhering to the system of teaching by signs, with the rudiments of which the majority of educated persons are familiar, and those advocating the German or “lip” system, by which the patient is not only made to understand what is said by studying the movement of the lips, but can also, under ordinary conditions, be taught to utter sounds intelligible, if not musical. It is hardly within the scope of the present paper to discuss at length the causes of deafness—especially of that terrible kind known as “congenital.” To ordinary human beings, it is difficult to realise the condition of a creature who from birth has been unconscious of sound, and to whom warning or reproof must be conveyed by stamping on the floor,

that the vibration may be “felt,” as nothing can be heard. Yet in Great Britain there are many thousands of these unhappy persons. Briefly summed up, the causes of congenital deafness are threefold: the close blood relationship of parents, hereditary transmission, and scrofula. A very large number of persons are deaf by hereditary transmission of that defect. A remarkable case is that of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, U.S.A., which was inhabited in the year A.D. 1720 by about two thousand Indians, whose descendants now number about two hundred. Among these, strange to say, no case of a congenitally deaf child has occurred—yet we find the alarming number of fully one in every hundred and fifty of the white inhabitants deaf, instead of one in fifteen hundred, or ten times the usual number. All are descended from one common ancestor, a missionary who went over to the island in the year before mentioned. He was himself a hearing and speaking person, but one of his descendants was congenitally deaf, and now there are descendants of his to the third generation without any hearing whatever. In many other cases also, all the children of two persons congenitally deaf have proved deaf also. It is of course to be regretted that two persons similarly afflicted should marry and perpetuate their miserable race, but it may be asked, with whom else can they mate? Knowing—at least in this country, in France, and in America—only the language of signs, with which it cannot be expected that the world will trouble itself to the extent of acquiring perfect knowledge, the unfortunate deaf-mutes find themselves cut off from all society but their own. Unable to mix comfortably with hearing persons, they will naturally shrink from them—be drawn to others like themselves, and marry them with the result of increasing the evil from which they suffer.

Besides the congenital deaf-mutes, who, it is needless to repeat, are not dumb for want of the organs of speech, but merely because they have no idea of sound, there is the large class of accidentally deaf persons, who having started in life with hearing-power, have lost it from falls, frights, fevers, blows, and great, or sudden noises. Until recently, a large number of children became deaf after scarlet fever; but the increased skill of physicians, and the greater care now taken in nursing, have materially reduced the number of

sufferers from this cause. From 1851 to 1861, the rate of increase in the general population was largely exceeded by that of the deaf-mute portion of it; but from 1861 to 1871, while the general population increased in a similar ratio, the proportion of the deaf decreased from one in one thousand four hundred and thirty-two, to one in one thousand six hundred and forty-four. Still the deaf-and-dumb statistics of this country are sufficiently appalling, and the more so when it is known that, out of more than nineteen thousand deaf-mutes, some four or five thousand are entirely uneducated. Who that has lived in the country has not met the village "fool" or "softy"—often a person by no means devoid of brain-power, but restricted in the use of it by congenital deafness and the entire want of education? Who has not heard of the "gibbering idiot," a hapless creature striving to make itself understood by "mopping and mowing?" The unfortunate being is often renowned in his native village for a strange shrewdness, not at all surprising when we reflect that the "softy" is not "soft" or imbecile, but possibly endowed with an acute mind, which struggles and strives to shine through the husk of dumbness and ignorance, as a star strives to pierce the surrounding gloom.

It is not to be wondered at that, in the history of human benevolence, frequent reference is made to those who have striven to restore to deaf-mutes the privilege enjoyed by the majority. From the time of St. John of Beverly to that of Pedro Ponce de Leon, the art of teaching the deaf gradually advanced; the last-named, a Benedictine monk, having taught two brothers and a sister of the Constable of Aragon, and afterwards a son of the governor of Castile. This worthy man, instead of employing the printing-press then already in full blast, unfortunately bottled up his knowledge in a manuscript, and corked it down—after the manner of his kind—in the library of his monastery, where it lay fallow for nearly half a century, until discovered by Juan Pablo Bonet, another Spanish priest, who in 1620 published a work on the deaf and dumb. This work brought forth good fruit during Bonet's life, and for a hundred years after. In Italy, France, Great Britain, Switzerland, the Low Countries, and Germany, sprang up not only imitators but rivals of Bonet, many of whom imagined themselves original inventors. In

England, as early as 1648, John Bulwer published *Philocophus*, or the Deafe and Dumb Man's Friend; and a few years later, Wallis, Savilian professor at Oxford, a man of great scientific knowledge, and Dr. William Holder, a clergyman of the Church of England and a Fellow of the Royal Society, practised their theories on a few people with considerable success. In 1680, George Dalgarno, a native of Aberdeen, published a valuable work entitled, *Didascalocophus*, a pleasant word for dumb people by the way, and containing the first manual alphabet ever seen in this country. Ten years later, Dr. Amman, a physician and native of Switzerland, but practising in Holland, published a book called *Surdus Loquens*, believing, or affecting to believe, himself the first instructor of the deaf. His work was successful, and was translated into several foreign languages, but brought about no great educational movement in favour of deaf-mutes, for the reason, it may be supposed, that people had not yet learned to regard education as it is now happily regarded—the prerogative of civilised man.

The great movement for raising deaf-mutes to the level of ordinary beings was the work of two remarkable men, following the two systems already adverted to. The Abbé de l'Épée, born in 1712, and Samuel Heinicke, born in 1729, may be regarded as the perfectors of the "sign" or French system, and the "lip" or German system. Owing possibly to the more popular, generous, and expansive character of the Abbé de l'Épée, his system became widely known, while Heinicke's plan was restricted almost entirely to Germany, a country which then had hardly begun to be heard of in the world of literature. Everybody has heard of the successor of the Abbé de l'Épée, the Abbé Sicard, before whom even the terrible Septembrisers dropped their sabres red with the blood of priest and aristocrat. Men maddened with blood, and brandy, and gunpowder, respected the teacher of the deaf and dumb, and paused to admire the priest whose life had been spent in alleviating the sufferings of his fellow-mortals.

In France, in America, and in England the sign system has been so long taught as to be familiar, and has been carried so far as to create almost a special language, which reverses the ordinary method of construction. More than this, a system of signs analogous to the "arbitrariness" of

the shorthand writer has sprung up, simplifying, it is true, communication between deaf-mutes, but removing them far away from the language of speaking people. Natural signs suggest themselves to the deaf-mute. He snaps his fingers and pats his thigh to signify a dog; he describes a woman by imitating the action of tying on a bonnet. Love, joy, astonishment, and sorrow are indicated by the expression of the countenance and movements of the hands across the region of the heart. The sign of God is made by pointing the hand upward and bowing reverently. The pierced hands denote Christ. It is naturally extremely difficult to tell exactly what deaf-mutes feel at the sight of the sign they employ, but that the language employed by them differs widely from that used by speaking people will be seen from the following extract from the *New Englander* for April, 1871. Translated into sign-language the story of the Prodigal Son comes out as follows: "Once, man one, sons two. Son younger say, Father, property your divide: part my, me give. Father so: son each, part his give. Days few after, son younger money all take, country far go, money spend, wine drink, food nice eat. Money by-and-by gone all. Country everywhere food little: son hungry very. Go seek men any, me hire. Gentleman meet. Gentleman send son field, swine feed. Son swine husks eat, see—self husks eat want—cannot—husks him give nobody. Son think, say, father my, servants many, bread enough, part give away can—I none—starve, die. I decide: Father I go to, say I bad, God disobey, you disobey—name my hereafter son, no—I unworthy—you me work give servant like. So son begin go. Father far look, son see, pity, meet, run, embrace. Son father say, I bad, you disobey, God disobey—name my hereafter son, no—I unworthy. But father servants call, command robe best bring, son put on, ring finger put on, shoes feet put on, calf fat bring, kill. We all eat, merry. Why? Son this my formerly dead, now alive: formerly lost, now found: rejoice."

This is the very imperfect representation in words of the signs used by the deaf-mutes, but it must not be supposed that they are incapable of rearranging the inverted order of the expressions here set down. Other instances quoted in the article already referred to show that with proper tuition they are able to write out a statement in average English. The process,

however, is very slow, the pupils whose examples are given having been all under instruction for five years.

In teaching a deaf child by the French or sign system, the first thing done is to instruct it in the manual alphabet. In England the two-handed alphabet, a modification of that invented by Dalgarno, is employed; but on the Continent and in America the one-handed alphabet, invented by the Spaniard, Bonet, is preferred. It was by 'this one-handed alphabet that Laura Bridgman, the celebrated blind deaf-mute, was taught by Dr. Howe, of the Perkins Institute for the Blind, Boston, Massachusetts. This extraordinary example of persevering education still lives. She is now about forty-eight years old, and able to communicate freely in ordinary language, spelled out letter by letter in rapid movements of the one-handed alphabet. Miss Hull, an accomplished lady who has achieved extraordinary success in teaching deaf-mutes, on the German or "lip" system, tells me a remarkable story of Laura Bridgman. When in Boston, in 1873, Miss Hull paid Laura a visit, in company with Miss Harriet Rogers, principal of the Clarke Institute for Deaf-mutes, Northampton, Massachusetts. The wonderfully taught blind deaf-mute recognised the last-named lady on the second shake of the hand, although no name was mentioned, and she had not felt Miss Rogers's hand for six or seven years.

To resume the course of education on the French system. When the deaf child has acquired the letters of the manual alphabet, the names of surrounding or familiar objects are taught, then adjectives and verbs in one form, either the infinitive or the present participle. At the same time a copious vocabulary of gesture is placed at the disposal of the pupil, by which many circumstances can be narrated to or by the pupil, before language itself is attempted. But as I have previously noted, the general result of this introduction of signs and pantomime is to make the pupil think in such signs, and not in ordinary spoken language, so that even when his education is completed, the language of books, and the everyday expressions of people who hear, require to be translated into signs before they can be thoroughly understood. The effect of this is to separate the deaf from hearing people. They congregate in classes, they found clubs and associations where they

can talk together in their broken language and thus widen the gulf between them and their speaking brethren. The consequences of this inability of deaf people to communicate with the outside world are very serious. It shuts them out from seeking for employment, and limits their capacity to the most mechanical of handicrafts, and even in these places them in unequal competition with those who hear. A gentleman on entering his sitting-room one morning found pinned on the sofa a placard bearing the following words: "Sofa break no sit I make glue." As he was familiar with deaf-and-dumb people and their peculiar forms of expression, he understood the meaning clearly enough, but everyone would not have understood that a deaf-and-dumb carpenter wished to notify him as follows: "This sofa has been broken; do not sit upon it; I have just mended it with glue."

It may seem strange that Laura Bridgman, with one sense fewer than ordinary deaf-mutes, should convey her thoughts in better language than that employed by them, but this apparent anomaly is easy of explanation. Taught entirely by the sense of touch to spell words by the manual alphabet, she knows nothing of signs and gestures which could not appeal to her sightless eyes. This peculiarity in the case of Laura Bridgman is eminently suggestive. The fact that she cannot see signs and gestures accounts for her language being grammatical, and the fact that she has learned grammatical language without signs proves that such language is possible to the deaf, without the addition of pantomime. Thus an English child might be taught to speak French or Dutch, or any other than that assumed to be its "natural" language.

Thus far the French system: the explanation of which will facilitate the comprehension of the German, or "lip" system. The latter is of at least equal antiquity with its more widely known rival. It is probable that the earliest efforts in England and in Spain were directed rather to "lip" teaching than the manual alphabet, but the German system was never made popular till the appearance of Dr. Amman's *Surdus Loquens*, in its more extended and perfect form, entitled *Dissertatio de Loquela*. The methods of instruction pursued in nearly all the German schools up to the present time are founded on the principles laid down by Amman and put in practice by

Heinicke, a poor German, who after much labour succeeded in establishing the first practical school for teaching the dumb to speak at Leipzig, in 1778, under the auspices of the Elector of Saxony. Heinicke, possibly with a view to his own profit, was somewhat of a mystery-monger. Nevertheless his system spread rapidly in Germany, but in other countries was overshadowed by the fame of the two French abbés, who preached their system far and wide. In England the German system was first taught privately by Mr. G. Van Asch, who came over in 1859 from Rotterdam, where he had studied the subject under Dr. Hirsch, in the Institution for the Deaf. He educated the children of a Manchester merchant on this plan, and afterwards took private pupils. In 1867 the German system was more publicly introduced in the Jews' Deaf and Dumb Home in Burton-crescent, under the direction of Mr. W. Van Praagh, who had also studied the subject at Rotterdam under Dr. Hirsch. The subject was then taken up by the benevolent, and the present Institution for the Oral Instruction of the Deaf, in Fitzroy-square, was started in 1872. In the following year Miss Hull adopted the German system in her private school in the Holland-road, and this year the Glasgow Institution has done the same. The movement for establishing a Training College for Teachers was set on foot by Mr. B. St. J. Ackers, a benevolent gentleman, whose attention was turned to the subject by a calamity in his own family, thus described by himself: "In 1869, after many years of married life, our first—and for long our only—child was born. At three months old she was attacked with 'purpura,' a virulent fever, sometimes called 'land scurvy;' and was for ten days apparently at the point of death. When she recovered, instead of the sharp, bright look she had previously shown, instead of waking at the slightest noise, she was wholly unconscious of sound—her hearing was totally lost. We took her at three years old to London for the best medical and surgical advice; but all was of no avail. What pained us so much, almost more than all, was that no one seemed able to tell us what was the best method on which to have our child educated. We then applied to different schools, but heard such opposite statements that we were fairly bewildered. Each school cried up its own system, and there seemed no unprejudiced person who

could help us. So we determined to search and prove the various systems by personal inspection—primarily for the benefit of our own child, but never losing sight of the question of the best method for educating the deaf in general. To this end we visited most of the leading schools in Great Britain, Canada, the United States, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France.

The result of experience was to convince Mr. Ackers of the superiority of the "lip" system, and to induce him to extend to others the method he had found so efficacious, not only in his own family, but in the numerous cases investigated by him.

This German system may literally be called the Art of Teaching the Dumb to Speak. This will hardly appear impossible if it be borne in mind that the vocal organs of congenitally deaf persons are, so long as they are young, unimpaired. The faculty of producing sound is there, but the idea of sound not being present no attempt is made to employ it. It is true that by long disuse the larynx loses the vocal property, but in the case of deaf children there is very little difficulty in inducing them to utter articulate sounds, not so clear and musical as those proceeding from persons who are not deaf, but distinct and intelligible. At the same time the eye of the pupil becomes educated to follow the lips of the speaker, and to gather from their movements the words uttered. The process of teaching children on the German system is curious and interesting. The first aim is to strengthen and expand the vocal organs by gentle exercise, the next to train the pupil to watch the motions of the lips and tongue, and endeavour to copy them. The sense of sound, to which the auditory nerve is dead, is next conveyed through the sense of touch; the pupils being taught to feel the vibrations in their own throats and bodies when sound is emitted, and to learn to control these vibrations at will. When a correct understanding and use of all the vowels and consonants has been obtained, the pupils are ready to form words and to use them as we do. The building up of language now commences, on a plan similar to that which Nature follows when children learn to talk by ear. Simple words and every-day phrases come first, the more difficult being gradually built upon and out of the simpler forms of expression; and the closer the artificial educational plan approaches to the natural

ear-taught process, the better will be the result in the end. In some German schools a few natural gestures are allowed to be used in the early stages of teaching, but the highest type of the system is steadfastly opposed to all signs, and makes the pupils depend entirely on language as addressed to the eye, the meaning being conveyed by analogy, and language evolved out of language, as one problem in Euclid springs naturally from the one that precedes it. It must not be supposed that extraordinary intelligence is required in the pupils. Deaf children are very observant, and when pains are taken to talk to and with them, they soon learn to converse freely with those whom they meet constantly. Conversational language must not be looked for in the first two years of instruction, for it must be borne in mind that a child, when its hearing is perfect, takes a long while to learn to talk, but about the third or fourth year pupils of average ability begin to speak very intelligibly. One concession, and one only, the deaf children require, and that is that all speaking to them shall open their mouths widely and enunciate with distinctness, a habit valuable in all, and, as the Archbishop of Canterbury remarked at the meeting at Lambeth Palace, invaluable to clergymen. This is "all that is necessary to put them on a level with others, and to enable them to make their way in the world." Mr. Ackers says he "saw one in Vienna, a fancy leather merchant—all the cases I am now speaking of are toto-congenital—who employed seventy men under him; whose premises the Emperor and Empress of Austria visited before the great Vienna Exhibition; who could not only speak the language of his country fluently, but also a little English; who had visited England and other countries; was a practical horticulturist, and altogether an agreeable, intelligent, wealthy man—wealthy through his own talents and industry.

"We went into a hatter's shop in Friedberg who had a toto-congenital deaf workman. That very morning a man had been convicted for theft, principally on the evidence given, *vivâ voce*, in open court by that deaf workman, who stood the test of examination and cross-examination without any other method of communication being used than word of mouth.

"Take another case. A lady of great wealth had four children; fever came and struck down three; two died, the other

lived, but her hearing was totally lost. She was then four years of age. The poor mother, as might be expected, was overwhelmed with grief; and for twelve months was herself ill, and unable to attend to the education of her poor little deaf child. It was not until the latter was between five and six years of age, twelve months after losing hearing, that the mother attempted to educate her at all. Her speech was almost gone; indeed, to such an extent was this the case, that she had but one word left, a word natural to a child—'cake.' The mother was an energetic, clever woman, no doubt, but she had a large household, and kept much company, living in the most fashionable society of a wealthy neighbourhood; yet she found time to educate her child, notwithstanding that a large younger family (she had eight living children when I saw her), added to her other cares, must have left her little time for such teaching. She made a practice of giving her deaf child two hours every morning, and with this instruction her daughter became a highly-educated and agreeable woman in society. We spent the day at her father's house, and a most accomplished woman we found her. She talked to my wife of pictures, poetry, and all manner of subjects common to ladies, such as needlework, &c. To me she talked of riding (she was a great horsewoman), billiards, and other topics she thought would interest me; explaining the difference between their game of billiards and ours, giving me the names of the different woods the cues were made of, and conversing with me as freely as though she had been a hearing person; indeed, several times during the day, my wife forgot that she was speaking to one deaf, so accurately did this deaf young lady read everything that was said to her when she could see the speaker's face; but occasionally my wife, forgetting this, turned away, and of course received no answer."

That there is nothing improbable in the instances related by Mr. Ackers is proved by the personal experience of the writer. Having some time since been fortunate enough to become acquainted with Miss Hull, I presented myself one fine morning at her house in Holland-road. In a light pleasant room, overlooking a garden, I found that patient lady hard at work among her pupils, ranging from the age of four to twelve or thirteen years—boys and girls, all diligently occupied with book and

slate. It was a Saturday morning, and many of the children had already written their letters home, upon such subjects as children delight in. That they were stone deaf was certain. The loudest noise I can make—which is saying a good deal—produced not the slightest effect on the children whose backs were turned; while those who looked towards me stared curiously at the widely-parted lips, but without starting or giving the slightest evidence of hearing. I was anxious to see, in the first place, how the children were taught; and Miss Hull pitched upon Charlie—a bright-eyed little fellow about four years old—and called his attention to a black board, on which she proceeded to teach him his letters, or rather the elementary sounds of the English language. The first sound taught is the open a, written ar on the black board—the sound in star, in short. Opening her mouth very widely, to let Charlie see distinctly the shape the lips and tongue assumed, she produced the sound, placing at the same time the child's hand upon her own throat. To my astonishment the child, whose only idea of sound was conveyed by the vibration of the larynx, and whose mouth simply imitated hers in shape, produced the sound perfectly. Frequently during the lesson to this young pupil of six weeks' standing it became evident that, when he opened his mouth, he had no idea whether he produced a sound or not, until he was shown that his larynx remained still while that of the teacher was vibrating. The next sounds, oo, o, ow, and ee, were repeated with more difficulty; the hesitation of the child being proportionate to the difficulty of seeing "into" the teacher's mouth. A, the English a, was also troublesome, as was ew. In teaching p, m, and t, no vowel is added to make them pea, em, and tea, but the propulsive force alone is given. It is difficult to describe this on paper other than by noting that p is like puh, m like um, and t like tuh. F, too, is like fff altogether; s is the sound not unfamiliar to dramatic authors; and the motive power of k—a terrible struggle for the dumb—I despair of getting upon paper. In the case of the nasals, m, n, and ng, the hand of the child is taught to seek the vibration of the nose, and thus acquires the habit of producing a sound. The more advanced pupils experienced not the slightest apparent difficulty in speaking, not of course in bright, musical, careless tones, but rather in a dry

wooden voice, but yet quite intelligible, bating that the d's and t's showed their natural faculty for conversion, and the b's and p's also became sometimes interchanged, as did also the g's and k's. This last remark is made in no depreciatory tone, but rather as suggesting enquiry to those who, like Professor Max Müller, have made language and its "phonetic decay" their especial study. It was curious to me to find repeated among these deaf children the precise phenomena which have puzzled me in my German friends. One of these, who imagines he speaks English and French like a native, always calls a pig a "big," the duke is always "de tuke," the grand hotel is the "krand," and ce pauvre garçon is "ze bauvrekarçon."

It was pleasant to see and hear Miss Hull's pupils speak with her and each other, but I was as yet in doubt as to their power of understanding others. I therefore somewhat unreasonably—my mouth being partially hidden by a moustache—proposed that I should talk to the children myself, and Miss Hull suggested that I should narrate any short incident about a child, a horse, or a dog, promising that they would repeat it after me audibly and write it down. Bringing my features as nearly as possible to a level with those of my young friends, I told them a short story about a certain white Pomeranian dog who is the delight and torment of my existence. Never having conversed with a deaf-and-dumb person before in my life, and merely striving to imitate the method of Miss Hull, I doubt me that I overdid the enunciation, that, in short, I "mouthed" my words overmuch, and hardened my final consonants to excess, pronouncing dog as "dogg," and mug as "mugg." But they understood me perfectly, repeated the words after me, and wrote them down with no more mistakes than ordinary school-children would make in writing from dictation. Afterwards Miss Hull dictated a story suggested by myself, of a hundred words in length, the children repeating afterwards, but writing nothing till the end, when each deaf child wrote out its report. To my astonishment one little girl, eleven years old, reported the story she had heard, and repeated once, absolutely word for word. This was enough to remove the last fragment of scepticism, and I took my leave of Miss Hull, marveling greatly at her art.

This instance will show what measure

of success can be achieved by a skilled teacher, but the difficulty of finding instructors is great, and without thoroughly trained instructors no good can be achieved. It is computed that four hundred teachers would be required to teach the uneducated deaf children of this country, for one teacher cannot take charge of many pupils. Such teaching is of course expensive, but not too much so for a comparatively poor country like Germany, where compulsory education is provided for every deaf-and-dumb child. It is to be sincerely hoped that the Society for Training Teachers of the Deaf on the German System, presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, will take a great part in removing what is at present a reproach to wealthy England.

SOMETHING ABOUT COACHES.

"WHAT'S in a name?" is a question that applies very well to the various members of the coach or carriage family; from the gilded, lumbering state-coach, down to the vehicle in which Mrs. White and her children drive out to take tea with her friend Mrs. Green on Sunday afternoons, Dobbin being on this occasion honoured with the office of dragging human beings instead of potatoes and cabbages. What *is* in a name, when we hear vehicles spoken of as tandems, dennets, flies, drags, stanhopes, dog-carts, and a round dozen or two of other names? Do the designations apply to persons who invented or built these varieties of vehicular conveyance? Or can we guess from them the characteristic peculiarities of each kind?

One thing is certain, that the syllable car, or char, is made to do duty under a great variety of circumstances, and has done so in many different countries and ages. Car, cart, chariot, carri-coche, carriage, carraça, caretta, chare, charette, charat, caroce, caroche, caravan—these are not accidental resemblances; there is a family likeness among them all, whichever may have been the original.

Unquestionably, the first wheel-carriages drawn by horses or other animals were two-wheelers, and were open or exposed to the weather. The first wheel was probably a circular slice cut out of the trunk of a big tree, with a hole in the middle made for the reception of some kind of axle; and two such wheels, with a platform or basket or

open box over them, and a pole or shaft or two in front, would constitute a vehicle, give it what name we may. The country car or cart of Portugal to this very day is little more than such a primitive production; the two disc wheels are trimmed out and lightened a little; but the slight framework over them, the horizontal pole in front, and the half-box or half-basket to contain the articles to be carried, are as simple as such things can well be. From such a car or cart to the ancient Roman chariot may seem a wide leap indeed; but the latter is, or was, almost as simple as the former. Each wheel of the chariot was, it is true, made to turn on the axle with some degree of independence of the other, so as to enable the vehicle the better to work its way along crooked streets and around corners. Chariot, in the Biblical times, was the name given to a vehicle used by great personages; Joseph was allowed to ride in one of Pharaoh's chariots as a mark of distinction and honour. Chariot was also, in various parts of the Sacred Narrative, the name given to the war-vehicle, with swords or scythes jutting out from the sides; also to the vehicle for running races at the competing games; and likewise to a vehicle used in thrashing out corn. But, in truth, the English word, though perhaps the best that could be found for the translation, did not necessarily give a discriminating account of the points of difference in the vehicles here named. Though a two-wheeler, the chariot was by no means always a single-horse affair; two or more horses were yoked together; and there was even a chariot used by Nero at the public games with ten horses abreast. One of the existing Anglo-Saxon illuminated manuscripts gives a representation of a chariot supposed to be derived, with very little change, from that which was used by the ancient Britons in the time of Cæsar. It has been whimsically said, "without meaning to insult the memory of our warlike ancestors, this chariot has, nevertheless, a striking resemblance to a donkey-cart in use in our country villages;" and yet this was probably "the moving platform from whence Boadicea with her injured daughters harangued the brave though undisciplined Iceni."

The *barco de terra* of the Pampas of La Plata is another example of the simplest form of construction; a little better than the Portugal car in having larger wheels, with spokes and felloes.

The name is not a bad one—*barco de terra*, land-boat; seeing that the vehicle carries provisions and water, as well as passengers and merchandise, over the wide-spreading plains of that part of South America.

Still keeping to the two ideas, we meet with mention of numerous vehicles, the designations of which cling more or less to the syllables car and char. When Charles of Anjou, towards the close of the thirteenth century, entered Naples with his fair queen consort, she rode in a *caretta* richly adorned. More or less contemporaneous with this, in France and other countries, the chroniclers make mention of the car, chare, chariette, charat, all of which, if stripped of their adornments, were virtually broad-wheeled carts. The courtly and chivalrous Froissart, speaking in his chronicle of the return of the victorious English, in the time of Edward the Third, makes mention of the *charettes* used by the warriors. We should probably be foiled in any attempt to make an etymological distinction between those vehicles which begin their names with car, and those whose initial syllable is char; let us be content to regard them all as members of one very large family.

What was the first four-wheeler, is a question not to be answered with any degree of precision. There are difficulties of construction involved, requiring the exercise of ingenuity to overcome. Where four wheels, two front and two rear, are of equal diameter, there is an obstacle to the free turning of the vehicle; a grating and jolting, alike injurious to the framework, and unpleasant to any persons who may occupy the conveyance. In turning a sharp corner, the difficulty reaches its maximum. An improvement consisted in making the front wheels smaller than the others, with their axle turning on a perch-bolt as a pivot; the front wheels could thereby follow the horse or horses readily round a corner, and coax the hind wheels (so to speak) after them. As this, however, much lengthened the framework of the vehicle, a further improvement was effected by a crane-neck iron beam being adjusted over each front wheel, enabling the perch-bolt to be used without much, if any, lengthening of the vehicle. Opinions differ as to whether the waggons mentioned in the Biblical narrative, as being despatched from the court of Pharaoh to bring the wives and children of the family of Jacob thither, were two-wheel or four-wheel vehicles. The emigrant waggon, in the nearly bygone days of

backwood and prairie-travel in North America, was about as primitive a four-wheeler as can well be imagined—primitive, but of necessity strong. It was originally very little more than a kind of oblong packing-case of rough planks, beneath which the wheels were adjusted, with a slight rocking or turning action given to the front pair. The principal sitters were accommodated with a kind of framed chair, so fixed to two bearers of elastic wood as to possess some degree of gentle up-and-down movement; the other occupants, if any, had full experience of the miseries accompanying springless vehicles on rough tracks. Judging from the frescoes on the walls of the long-buried mansions at Pompeii, it would appear that the Pompeian wine-cart was a four-wheeler, the wheels all equal in diameter, and the carts having an arched space in the centre to facilitate the turning of the front pair. In the days of Queen Elizabeth we know that there were four-wheeled vehicles, called caravans—long waggons, for the reception of passengers, merchandise, and luggage; they were rough in character, and their strength was sorely tried by the hideously-rugged roads of those days. For aught we know, the caravan for wild beasts belonging to a travelling menagerie might possibly claim the Tudor caravan as its progenitor, subject to improvements in build and finish. The van, an obvious successor to the caravan, is now more and more used as a substitute for the waggon, being much lighter, mounted on wheels easier to draw, with a smaller number of horses, and adapted for more expeditious travelling.

The closed four-wheeler, whether drawn by one horse or by more, is a type of a very numerous family, the origin of which is left in some obscurity, notwithstanding the labours of Beckmann and other investigators to throw light upon it. Supposing coach to be the father of the family, it is nevertheless uncertain what form the name originally assumed, and in what country it originated. England puts in a claim; so does France; Italy and Spain oppose both of them, and also oppose each other; while Hungary is considered to have very fair evidence in support of her rival pretensions. There is a village called Kotsee or Kotssee, in Hungary, supposed to be connected with the origin of the word "coach." If car be the significant syllable in a multitude of names for open vehicles, and kotsee one of the earliest names for a closed vehicle, we

can imagine an amalgamation of the two in such names as *caroche*, *caroce*, until we come to the English coach, the German *kutsche*, the Dutch *koets*, the Danish *kudak*, and so forth. At any rate there is a pleasant bit here for the etymologists; some of whom also speculate whether coach may not have come from *kuttes*, to cover; or from *koetsas*, to lie along; or from couch, seeing that many of the earlier coaches were for reclining rather than sitting, and might therefore be regarded as wheeled litters or wheeled coaches. A very good combination of names is met with in the *cari-coche* or cart-coach of Buenos Ayres. This is an enclosed two-wheel vehicle, that may be drawn by any number of horses, attached to it by straps or thongs of raw hide. The vehicle has a door behind, not at the sides; the body is singularly placed over and between the wheels, not resting on their axle, but on swinging thongs of raw hide.

The original state-coaches of European sovereigns were, in principle, little more than improvements on the four-wheel waggon, however bedizened with gold and colours; one point consisted in so slinging the body as to lessen the jolting over bad roads. Even in some countries where mechanical skill is fairly developed, the strap or thong suspension is still employed, because the roads are too villainous to permit the adoption of steel springs. Visitors to the South Kensington Museum are not generally aware that in one of the remote and somewhat dark corridors there is a collection of state-coaches, worthy of notice as examples of inelegant splendour and doubtful comfort. As to the two state-coaches with which most Londoners are more or less familiar, the lumbering vehicle in which the Lord Mayor proceeds to and from Westminster Hall on the 9th of November was built a hundred and twenty years ago, just before the second George died. Cipriani decorated its panels with those allegorical pictures which were so much in favour in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but towards which we have little tendency at present. Her Majesty's state-coach, used only when she opens or closes Parliament, is more tasteful and costly. It was planned by Sir William Chambers a few years later than the lumbering vehicle just described. Horace Walpole regarded it as a beautiful object, although somewhat too crowded in its adornments; the palm-trees introduced as part of the floral design were in accord-

ance with Sir William's predilection for oriental subjects. It cost the nation more than seven thousand pounds—unquestionably a heavy price for such a work.

To come back, however, to the coaches used by less exalted personages. There was a long-continued struggle between the coach and the sedan, the latter a mode of conveyance which required neither wheels nor horses, and which was so far convenient that it could be carried into the entrance-hall of a mansion, thereby enabling a fair lady to avoid alighting in the open air. Paris introduced a kind of midway affair called the roulette or brouette, a sedan on wheels. The regular sedan chairmen sought for its prohibition, as interfering with the vested rights of their craft; but the roulette gained the day, until it was, in its turn, superseded by the coach. The original stage-coach was a heavy variety of the private coach, strong enough (not always) to bear the rough-and-tumble tribulations of very defective roads. It often had a boot, or rather two boots, the nature of which has been a matter of some discussion. Dean Trench once wrote: "I do not know the history of the word 'boot,' as describing one part of a carriage; but it is plain that, not the luggage but the chief persons used to ride in the boot." It seems, however, from other accounts, that there were two boots, on the two sides of the lumbering vehicle; they were projections from the sides, and open to the air. An engraving is extant representing Queen Elizabeth's palace at Nonsuch; in it is to be seen a representation of a carriage for her attendants, with boots at the sides. Taylor, the water-poet, inveighed against land-vehicles of all kinds, as pestiferous enemies to his employment as a waterman or Thames boatman. He denounced the coach as a machine in which people were "tost, tumbled, rumbled, and jumbled without mercy;" and of those which ran long journeys, as stage-coaches (in which he himself had travelled, despite his opposition to them), he said: "It means two boots and no spurs; sometimes having two pairs of legs in one boot; and oftentimes against Nature, most preposterously, it makes fair ladies wear the boot. Moreover, it makes people imitate sea-crabs, in being drawn sideways as they are when they sit in the boot of the coach." So far as this last-named characteristic is concerned, it must have somewhat resembled the seat or seats of an Irish jaunting-car. Why it was called a boot, no one seems now to know; but the name is suggested

to have come from the French *boîte*, a box; even to this day the driver's seat is usually called a box, and a boot for luggage is often under that seat. Some go farther afield, and trace the name to boat, between which and the old-fashioned coach-boot there was some similarity in shape. Even when stage-coaches made a little pretension to swiftness, this lateral appendage remained some time in use. The first flying-coach from Oxford to London, after the Restoration, had a boot on each side.

It is when we come to the varieties of the pleasure-coach family that the multiplicity of names presents itself in full force. What with the difference between the open and the closed vehicle, two-wheeler, the single-seat and the double-seat kinds, a classification would be by no means easy. We English have chosen to give the name chariot to a vehicle bearing very little relation indeed to the similarly-named vehicle of classical times. A chariot in fact is a single-seat coach, with the sitters facing the horses; and the name has been thus used for a couple of centuries back. There is an entry in Sir William Dugdale's Diary, almost precisely two hundred years ago, to the following effect: "Payd to Mr. Meares, a coach-maker in St. Martin's-lane, for a little chariot, which I then sent into the country, £23 13s. 0d.; and for a cover of canvas, £01 00s. 0d.; also for harness for two horses, £04 00s. 00d."

We still recognise St. Martin's-lane, Long-acre, and Great Queen-street, as the veritable nucleus or bazaar of the coach-making trade; whence a larger number of skilfully-constructed and highly-finished private carriages are sent forth every year than from any other district in any country. The workmen are in almost all the branches thoroughly well-trained; and some of them constitute almost the élite among artisans. We know not whether the picture would require to be modified in some of its details and tints to suit the present state of things; but when Mr. W. B. Adams wrote his volume on *Pleasure Carriages* about the beginning of the present reign, he discoursed thus on the relation existing between the groups or classes of workmen engaged in the construction of first-class carriages: "They are not an equal body, but composed of classes taking rank one after another. The body-makers are the first on the list; then follow the carriage (frame-work) makers; then the trimmers; then the smiths; then the spring-makers; then the wheelwrights,

painters, platers, brace-makers, and so on. The body-makers are the wealthiest of all, and compose amongst themselves a species of aristocracy, to which the other workmen look up with feelings half of respect half of jealousy. They feel their importance, and treat the others with various consideration, according to their station. Carriage-makers are entitled to a species of condescending familiarity; trimmers are considered too good to be despised; a foreman of painters they would treat with respect, but working painters can at most be favoured with a nod; a smith is considered quite unendurable; a plater is contemptuously designated a bead-striker; a wheelwright is held to be a kind of rough wood-chopper; and a brace-maker a mere vulgar snob. The other classes partake of the same feelings of caste in their various proportions. A body-maker is considered a good catch as a husband for the daughter of an ordinary mechanic." Would Longacre accept this picture now, or regard it as a caricature?

Among the medley of names at present or recently given to pleasure-carriages, some are intelligible, while others defy all etymological scrutiny. The landau is named from a town in Germany; it is a coach that may be used open or closed at pleasure. The landalet, as its name implies, is a lighter and smaller landau. The barouche, a favourite open carriage in summer, is of French origin; as is the barouchet. The britzschka was introduced from Russia about half a century ago. Why phaeton is so named, we cannot pretend to say; but the vehicle so called belongs to the barouche and britzschka group. The cabriolet is French, and so is the vis-à-vis. Droitzschka came from Russia or from Poland; an odd kind of an affair, modified in England into a vehicle fitted for invalids, aged persons, and children, with its formidable name shortened into drosky. The curricule is one of the few kinds of two-wheelers with two horses abreast; while the tandem is a straggling affair with two wheels and two horses, but one of the horses behind the other. The cab (short for cabriolet) is a handy bachelor's vehicle; the gig is about the lightest of all, being little more than an open-railed chair, supported on the shafts by two side springs; the dog-cart is a gig, with a space under the seat to contain either dogs or luggage; while the tilbury, named after the coachmaker who invented it, is a modified cab. The stanhope, named after a noble lord, is another of

the family of single horse two-wheelers; and so is the sulky, for one person only; and so the buggy, and the jaunting-car, and the whisky. The dennet, we are told, has three springs peculiarly arranged, and "was so called because the three springs were named after the three Miss Dennets, whose elegant stage-dancing was much in vogue about the time this vehicle came into use." The French misanthrope, for one person, was probably the origin of our sulky. The fly is a roomy carriage let out to hire; why it is so called, is not quite clear. The French fiacre neither denotes a particular person nor a special origin: there happened to be a figure of St. Fiacre in the front of the building where the first lender of these vehicles kept them. When we consider how readily the name hansom has come into use among us, as the designation for a vehicle, we need not marvel at the French having adopted fiacre. Victoria, clarence, brougham, are so many proofs of the ease with which the names of persons are given to new forms of carriages.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER IX. THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

I DO not pretend to say that Mr. Hooton was absolutely jealous of my modicum of histrionic ability; it would be absurd to suppose that; but certainly he objected to the bestowal of applause upon others; he would, if possible, have arrogated it wholly to himself. I do think he started with the full intention of assisting his pupils to the utmost of his power; but presently it became clear that his main desire was to achieve distinction on his own account. The sight of the foot-lights, the scent of performance—that combined odour of gas and orange-peel, size and paint, and polluted air which pervades all theatres—had upon him an intoxicating effect, revived within him ambitions of the past; he was as an old war-horse pawing and prancing in his paddock, smelling the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting. And his desire to shine brought with it a disposition to extinguish the light of others. Presently he had convinced himself that Master Walter was not only the most important character in *The Hunchback*, but that there was really no other in the play.

He quite drowned our voices by the loudness of his tones. Upon all occasions he occupied the centre of the stage, and by the turbulence of his attitudes and gestures fairly drove us from him, almost compelling us to take refuge in the wings. He interrupted our speeches; he withheld from us the proper cues. It seemed to me that he sought to embarrass us as much as possible. He neglected the business that had been carefully decided upon at rehearsal. When, in the fourth act, he should have led me to the side, pointing out an imaginary looking-glass, "one sheet from floor to ceiling," supposed to reflect my image as Lord Rochdale's bride, although we had prearranged in the morning that the mirror should be feigned to be on the right, greatly to my surprise and perplexity, at night, he deliberately crossed the stage and bade me survey my likeness on the left! When, later on, I sought to "start up" from my seat, in accordance with the directions of the dramatist, at the words:

Oh happy steed,
My heart bounds at the thought of thee—

I found myself securely pinned down. Master Walter had carefully planted one of the legs of his chair upon my flowing skirt. My movement produced a loud rending of certain stitches; but I could not really rise until he thought proper to release me. It was in vain that I endeavoured to attract his attention to my situation, to whisper entreaties that he would move his chair; he declined to hear me or to withdraw his mind from his part, he had become absorbed in Master Walter. It was fortunate that I had to wear another dress in the following act. For it was with difficulty I could now retain my first costume about me. The pins holding it together had given way again and again, exposing a yawning gap at the back, and now there was danger of the bodice and the skirt wholly dissolving partnership.

Assuredly it was a night of trial in every sense. I felt that my poor abilities had been seen to serious disadvantage, could not indeed be fairly estimated; the conditions of the performance had so cruelly hampered me. It was in vain that in the intervals of performance I hinted to Mr. Hooton complaint of his proceedings. "You see," he said, with a lofty smile, "I have my own reputation as an actor to consider. You can't ask me to sacrifice myself altogether to my pupils. No; I

am willing to go great lengths on their account; but I cannot go quite so far as that. I have to think of the poet whose humble interpreter I am; and I am bound to have some regard for my own interests. Many have come here to-night to see my notion of Master Walter. Would it be right to send them away disappointed? I really could not do such a thing. For, after all, you know, I am a servant of the public, their very faithful, humble servant. Well, at their bidding, I've given them my idea of Master Walter. My impersonation of the part may have merit, or it may not; that is not for me to say. But there it is. Let people speak of it as they find it. It strikes me they like it; but that may be only my vanity. All I know is that I have not packed the house. So far as I am concerned, the applause is perfectly genuine. I have always declined the aid of a claque. I have not sent a single creature into the house to call out 'Hooton,' or to summon me before the curtain. Almost I am tempted to regret that I ever relinquished the stage to become a teacher of acting. The public, you see, recognise an actor when they see one."

He was immensely pleased with himself, that was certain. And the cries of "Brayvo, 'ooton," which every now and then proceeded from the gallery, may have been honest expressions of public approval. To the Master Walter of the night they afforded infinite satisfaction; but to poor Julia, such a Sir Thomas Clifford as Mr. Hubert Fitzhoward presented, and such a guardian and father as she had in Mr. Toomer Hooton, were serious distresses.

The audience treated me with great indulgence. Perhaps, I should rather say that I was liberally applauded by my friends; counting among them the cordial little band of art-students, and the foreigners, Paul's comrades, who probably understood the play but imperfectly. Indeed, the outward signs of success were not wanting; nevertheless, I was not to be deceived by them. I knew that I had failed. And though I could with justice charge a large measure of my discomfiture upon the incompetence of my play-fallows, yet I felt that I must be held responsible for my own very considerable shortcomings. And I was very little inclined to judge myself leniently.

It is true that I had suffered from what is called "stage-fright"—that "sea-sickness on land" as the malady has been described—which had for the time almost

paralysed me, stealing away my brains, the tones of my voice, depriving my whole frame of movement and force. Then, my senses having in part returned to me, I had become a mere automaton, proceeding lifelessly through the part, speaking the lines set down for me, but without colour, or vigour, or variety. But my nervousness, my alarms, had fairly quitted me some time before the play concluded. I had regained control over my powers. Now could I not contrive one of those bursts of passion, which, at rehearsal, had seemed to lie easily within my means? The dramatist had permitted the representative of Julia many opportunities of making "points," as certain effects of the theatre are always called. Could I make no "point?" Scarcely, it seemed. I was bitterly mortified by a sense of my own incapacity. I tried hard to identify myself more and still more with the character of Julia, to feel that she loved Clifford as I loved Paul, that her union with the Earl of Rochdale was an odium to her as had been to me my projected marriage with Mr. Leveridge. And one successful moment I did enjoy at last. It was, as I judged, the one hopeful thing in my performance. But I had lashed myself into a kind of nervous frenzy; I was trembling all over, and yet despair had brought me an access of strength. I delivered wildly, perhaps, and yet with something I felt to be very like real passion, the lines beginning :

Beware! Beware, how you abandon me
To myself! I'm young, rash, inexperienced;
tempted
By most insufferable misery!
Bold, desperate, and reckless!

The applause rewarding this effort owned a more genuine ring than any I had heard throughout that long, wearisome evening. For a moment I had been really an artist, had placed myself en rapport with my audience, had moved their hearts, at least had touched their emotions. But presently my voice had flattened again. I could make no further point.

"Very good, Miss Delamere," said Mr. Hooton as we stood in the wings. "A little crude, but certainly strong. Take my word for it; you are worth thirty shillings a week to any theatre."

I felt worn out with such unusual exertion and excitement.

"As white as a sheet I declare," said Mrs. Bates, "but that's just the thing for the last scene. There's a many Julias I've known as have got dreadful red in the face before the play was over; it's the

elocution as does it. We shan't need the powder puff in your case."

No doubt, my very weariness helped the impersonation. I looked and felt wretched enough for Julia, or any other even more distressed and despondent heroine. I was sick at heart, I tottered as I walked, my voice had become a mere whisper.

It was over at last. With what feelings of relief I saw the coarse green baize curtain uncoiling above, and then slowly descending to part me from the spectators! How promptly the actors relinquished their histrionic attitudes, airs, and graces, and became common-place people again! They were interchanging congratulations. "How well you did that!" "How capitally you got through your scene with So-and-so!" It was agreed that there had seldom been seen a more admirable performance of *The Hunchback*—by amateurs. Even Mr. Fitzhoward was encouraged to think that he had filled the part of Clifford rather creditably than otherwise.

"Altogether, I may say that I am proud of my pupils," observed Mr. Hooton with a bland smile, signifying his approval of his own exertions. He had removed his Charles the Second's wig, and was rubbing his moist bald head with a dry towel. His appearance was certainly eccentric.

Everybody included in the cast was called before the curtain. Flowers were thrown upon the stage; hats and handkerchiefs were waved. Mr. Fitzhoward led me on. I curtsied and smiled, scarcely knowing what I did, while my companion clumsily trod upon my dress. The Modus of the night led on the Helen. Mr. Hooton reserved to himself the distinction of a separate call. He crossed the stage alone, smirking and bowing, yet preserving the high action of the tragedian in his gait. He seemed to say: "These young people, my pupils, are all very well; and their efforts are creditable to themselves and to my instructions—the latter especially; but for real legitimate acting of the best class you must come to me, you know—you must come to me."

With what a deep, true sense of thankfulness I escaped from the stage! I could not congratulate myself on my success. But it was a comfort to think that I had made the effort, and that for the present the hour of toil was over. I could not then occupy myself with reflecting as to the effect the events of the night might have upon my future fortunes.

And now a sort of dream-like feeling came over me. The reaction after intense

excitement exercised a numbing influence upon my faculties. I have no distinctness of memory as to what happened at the theatre after the conclusion of the performance. A group gathered round me—all talking to me at once—and I answered I know not what. I addressed myself to I know not whom.

But this was Basil, surely, with a brighter light in his eyes and an unwonted flush upon his wan face. He was sharing my thankfulness that my hour of trial was over. With me also, as I think, he was convinced that I had failed, or fallen very far short of real success—that no very promising career as an actress was open to me. He was saying little, but he was looking upon me very sympathetically, and pressing my hand very tenderly.

And then he was laughing. It was suspected that Nick had been present, muffled up, partially disguised, in the back row of the gallery.

I enquired about Paul. Basil's face fell, or so it seemed to me. He had not seen Paul. He could tell me nothing of him; he knew nothing of him. He was surprised that Paul had not appeared. Something must have detained him—something, surely, had occurred to prevent his coming to the theatre. But I was bidden to feel no uneasiness. I was assured, again and again, that so far as anyone—everyone—knew, there was no sort of reason for the slightest anxiety on Paul's account. He might join me before I left the theatre. He might have made some mistake about the time.

I was, I remember, faint for a few minutes, scarcely conscious. An unsuspected square foot of window was opened in my diminutive dressing-room, and there ensued a flow of fresh air into the room. I felt myself recovering. Smelling-salts were proffered me; someone was dabbing my forehead with eau-de-cologne. Whose kind hand was tending me? Whose soft voice was soothing me? Why, this was Catalina, without doubt! How tender and affectionate she was!

"Doris," she was saying, "do you know you played beautifully? I have been crying so. I felt as though it was all real. And I was so grieved for you; and rather frightened, too, when you grew so passionate. I never saw anything so

exquisite. And, dearest, you looked perfectly lovely. I never noticed that your dress was open at the back. Was it? No one could have seen it. It was an exquisite dress. How glad I was that it all ended happily at last. I was so afraid it was going to be very, very sad at the end. But it all came right, and you married the lover you loved so well, and who loved you so truly. I could sit and see it played all through over and over again. I call it a really beautiful play. And how brave it was of you to act such a part as Julia!"

Uncle Junius was there, smiling and talking in a very encouraging way, for one who had seen so many performances from his seat in the orchestra.

"It was sweet," he said; "it was very pretty. I never saw a more graceful Julia. My dear, there is a place for you upon the stage, if you care to fill it. Once or twice you faltered; it could not be helped, of course; it was only to be expected. I wish I could have cheered you with a note on my French horn."

And then someone was telling me—or was he telling me himself?—that Mr. Lucius Grisdale greatly approved the performance, and purposed devoting a column of his newspaper to a dissertation upon histrionic art generally, with particular reference to the exertions of Miss Delamere in the part of Julia in *The Hunchback*.

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PERCY AND THE PROPHET:

EVENTS IN THE LIVES OF A LADY
AND HER LOVERS.

RELATED BY

WILKIE COLLINS.

[The Right of Translating this Story is registered by the Author in France, Italy, and Germany, in conformity with the law.]

FIRST WORDS.

THE late Lieutenant-Colonel Bervie was generally very willing to tell the eventful love-story of his youthful days to any persons who were really desirous of hearing it. In relating, at the outset of his narrative, the extraordinary manner in which a total stranger foretold certain events which affected the happiness of two other persons besides himself, he never laid any claims to the unquestioning belief of his audience. "Form your own opinion, friends," he used to say. "Whether I am relating a series of marvels or a series of coincidences, I give you my word of honour I am telling you the truth. If this assurance does not satisfy you, I can only recommend the same modest view of questions that are beyond the range of our own experience, which wise Shakespeare advocates in those well-known lines: 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in our philosophy.'"

So the old soldier spoke, when years had taught him to be tolerant of all men, in the peaceful evening of his life.

The story is once more told in these

pages, with the colonel's reservations, though not always in the colonel's language. For example, the noble conduct of one of the characters (to which he never did justice) will now be found to occupy the prominent place on the scene that is fairly its due.

THE STORY.

PART I. THE PREDICTION.

CHAPTER I. THE QUACK.

THE disasters that follow the hateful offence against Christianity, which men call War, were severely felt in England during the peace that ensued on the overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo. At this melancholy period of our national history, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce suffered an unexampled depression. The deficiency in the revenue was publicly acknowledged in Parliament to be alarming. With rare exceptions, distress prevailed among all classes of the community. The starving nation was ripe and ready for a revolutionary rising against its rulers—the rulers who had shed the people's blood and wasted the people's substance in a war which had yielded to the popular interests absolutely nothing in return.

Among the unfortunate persons who were driven, during the disastrous early years of this century, to strange shifts and devices to obtain the means of living, was a certain obscure medical man, of French extraction, named Lagarde. The doctor

(duly qualified in England as well as in his own country to bear the title) was an inhabitant of London, living in one of the narrow streets which connect the great thoroughfare of the Strand with the banks of the Thames.

The method of obtaining employment chosen by poor Lagarde, as the one alternative left in the face of starvation, was, and is still, considered by the medical profession to be the method of a quack. He advertised in the public journals.

In language studiously free from pretence or exaggeration, the French physician declared himself to have been converted to a belief in animal magnetism (as it was then called), by serious study of the discoveries first announced in France by the famous Mesmer. The two classes of the community to which his appeal was addressed were (first) persons of the invalid sort, afflicted with maladies which ordinary medical practice had failed to cure; and (secondly) persons disposed towards mystical investigation, who might be inclined to test the power of "clairvoyance" as a means of revealing the hidden chances and changes of the future. "No fee is exacted from those who may honour me with their confidence," the doctor modestly added, "because I cannot guarantee beforehand that I shall be successful in ministering to their necessities and wishes. The process that I employ is no secret: it was first made public long before my time. I am thrown into a magnetic sleep; and the hand of the person who consults me is placed in mine. The result depends entirely on mysterious laws of nervous sympathy and nervous insight, to the existence of which I can testify, but which (in the present state of scientific enquiry) I am not able to explain. Those whom I am fortunate enough to satisfy are requested to drop their offerings, according to their means, into a money-box fixed on the waiting-room table. Those whom I do not satisfy will be pleased to accept the expression of my regret, and will not be expected to give anything. It is quite possible that I may be the dupe of mistaken convictions: all I ask of the public is to believe that they are at least the convictions of an honest man. I have only to add that ladies and gentlemen who may wish to give me a trial will find me at home in the evening, between the hours of six and ten."

Towards the close of the year 1816, this strange advertisement became a general

topic of conversation among educated people in London. For some weeks the "sittings" of the seer were largely attended, and (all things considered) were not badly remunerated. A faithful few believed in him, and told wonderful stories of what he had pronounced and prophesied in his state of trance. The majority of his visitors simply viewed him in the light of a public amusement, and wondered why such a gentlemanlike man should have chosen to gain his living by exhibiting himself as a quack.

CHAPTER II. THE NUMBERS.

ON a raw and snowy evening towards the latter part of January, 1817, a gentleman, walking along the Strand, turned into the street in which Doctor Lagarde lived, and knocked at the mesmerist's door. The gentleman was young and handsome, with a certain peculiarity in his gait which revealed him as belonging to the military profession. His dress studiously avoided the exaggerations and absurdities of the hideous fashion prevailing in those days. In a word, the outward mark set on him was the mark which unmistakably proclaims a well-bred man.

He was admitted by an elderly male servant to a waiting-room on the first floor. The light of one little lamp, placed on a bracket fixed to the wall, was so obscured by a dark green shade as to make it difficult, if not impossible, for visitors meeting by accident to recognise each other. The metal money-box fixed to the table was just visible. In the flickering light of a small fire, the stranger perceived the figures of three men seated, apart and silent, who were the only occupants of the room besides himself. The wretched weather had, no doubt, kept the doctor's lady-visitors at home. So far as objects were to be seen, there was nothing to attract attention in the waiting-room. The furniture was plain and neat, and nothing more. The elderly servant handed a card, with a number inscribed on it, to the new visitor, said in a whisper, "Your number will be called, sir, in your turn," and disappeared. For some minutes nothing disturbed the deep silence but the faint ticking of a clock. After a while a bell rang from an inner room, a door opened, and a gentleman appeared, whose interview with Doctor Lagarde had terminated. His opinion of the sitting was openly expressed in one emphatic word—"Humbug!" No contribution dropped

from his hand as he passed the money-box on his way out.

The next number (being Number Fifteen) was called by the elderly servant, and the first incident occurred in the strange series of events destined to happen in the doctor's house that night.

One after another the three men who had been waiting rose, examined their cards under the light of the lamp, and sat down again surprised and disappointed. The servant advanced to investigate the matter. The numbers possessed by the three visitors, instead of being Fifteen, Sixteen, and Seventeen, proved to be Sixteen, Seventeen, and Eighteen. Turning to the stranger who had arrived the last, the servant said:

"Have I made a mistake, sir? My sight is not so good as it was, and I am afraid I have awkwardly confused the cards in this dark place. Have I given you Number Fifteen instead of Number Eighteen?"

The gentleman produced his card. A mistake had certainly been made, but not the mistake that the servant supposed. The card held by the latest visitor turned out to be the card previously held by the dissatisfied stranger who had just left the room—Number Fourteen! As to the card numbered Fifteen, it was only discovered the next morning lying in a corner, dropped on the floor!

Acting on his first impulse, the servant hurried out of the room, calling to the gentleman who had been the original holder of Fourteen to come back and bear his testimony to that fact. The street-door had been opened for him by the landlady of the house. She was a pretty woman—and the gentleman had fortunately lingered to talk to her. He was induced, at the intercession of the landlady, to ascend the stairs again. On returning to the waiting-room, he addressed a characteristic question to the assembled visitors. "*Mors* humbug?" asked the gentleman who liked to talk to a pretty woman.

The servant—completely puzzled by his own stupidity—attempted to make his apologies.

"Pray forgive me, gentlemen," he said. "I am afraid I have confused the cards I distribute with the cards returned to me. In the case of mistakes of any kind I am ordered to set them right on the spot. In *this* case, I think I had better consult my master."

He disappeared in the inner room. Left by themselves, the visitors began to speak jestingly of the strange situation in which they were placed. The original holder of Number Fourteen described his own experience of the doctor in his own pithy way. "I applied to the fellow to tell my fortune. He first went to sleep over it, and then he said he could tell me nothing. I asked why. 'I don't know,' says he. 'I do,' says I—'humbug!' I'll bet you the long odds, gentlemen, that *you* find it humbug too."

Before the wager could be accepted or declined, the door of the inner room was opened again. The tall, lean, black figure of a new personage appeared on the threshold, relieved darkly against the light in the room behind him. A singularly quiet, sad voice addressed the visitors in these words:

"Gentlemen, I must beg your indulgence. The apparent accident which has given to the last comer the number already held by a gentleman who has unsuccessfully consulted me, may have a meaning which we can none of us at present see. Observe, I don't speak positively, I only say it may be. If the three visitors who have been so good as to wait, will allow the present holder of Number Fourteen to consult me out of his turn—and if the earlier visitor who left me dissatisfied with his consultation will consent to stay here a little longer—I pledge myself, if nothing happens during the first ten minutes of the interview, to receive the gentlemen who have yet to consult me, and to detain no longer the gentleman who has seen me already. On the other hand, if anything does happen, there is a chance at least that one among you—most likely the original holder of Number Fourteen—may be concerned in it. Under these circumstances, is ten minutes' patience too much to ask of you?"

The three visitors who had waited longest consulted among themselves, and (having nothing better to do with their time) decided on accepting the doctor's proposal. The visitor who believed it all to be "humbug" coolly took a gold coin out of his pocket, tossed it into the air, caught it in his closed hand, and walked up to the shaded lamp on the bracket. "Heads, stay," he said, "Tails, go." He opened his hand, and looked at the coin. "Heads! Very good. Go on with your hocus-pocus, sir—I'll wait."

"You believe in chance," said the

doctor, quietly observing him. "That is not my experience of life."

He paused to let the stranger who held Number Fourteen pass him into the inner room—then followed, closing the door behind him.

CHAPTER III. THE CONSULTATION.

THE consulting-room was better lit than the waiting-room, and that was the only difference between the two. In the one as in the other, no attempt was made to impress the imagination. Everywhere, the commonplace furniture of a London lodging-house was left without the slightest effort to alter or improve it by changes of any kind.

Seen under the clearer light, Doctor Lagarde appeared to be the last person living who would consent to degrade himself by an attempt at imposture of any kind. His eyes were the dreamy eyes of a visionary; his look was the prematurely-aged look of a student, accustomed to give the hours to his book which ought to have been given to his bed. To state it briefly, the disciple of Mesmer was a man who might easily be deceived by others, but who was incapable of consciously practising deception himself. Signing to his visitor to take a chair, he seated himself on the opposite side of the small table that stood between them—waited a moment with his face hidden in his hands, as if to collect himself—and then spoke.

"Do you come to consult me on a case of illness?" he enquired, "or do you ask me to look into the darkness which hides your future life?"

The stranger answered gravely: "I have no need to consult you about my health. I come to hear what you can tell me of my future life."

"You know that I can try," pursued the doctor; "but that I cannot promise to succeed?"

"I accept your conditions," the stranger rejoined. "I neither believe nor disbelieve. If you will excuse my speaking frankly, I mean to observe you closely, and to decide for myself."

Doctor Lagarde smiled sadly.

"You have heard of me as a charlatan who contrives to amuse a few idle people," he said. "I don't complain of that; my present position leads necessarily to mis-interpretation of myself and my motives. Still I may at least say that I am the victim of a sincere avowal of my belief in a great science. Yes! I repeat it, a great

science! New, I daresay, to the generation we live in, though it was known and practised in the days when the pyramids were built. My sincerity in this matter has cost me the income that I derived from my medical practice. Patients distrust me; doctors refuse to consult with me. I could starve if I had no one to think of but myself. But I have another person to consider, who is very dear to me; and I am driven, literally driven, either to turn beggar in the streets, or to do what I am doing now. Everything is against me. I am a needy foreigner (naturally distrusted in this country). I am a republican and a socialist (naturally exiled from my own country). Who will help such an outlawed man as I am? It doesn't matter. The age is advancing; and the great truths which it is my misfortune to advocate before the time is ripe for them, are steadily forcing their way to recognition. They will conquer yet, when the hard struggle of life is over for the poor quack who now presumes to speak to you. Enough (and too much) of myself! Let us, as you say in England, get to business. To be of any use to you, I must first be thrown into the magnetic trance. The person who has the strongest influence over me is the person who will do it to-night." He paused, and looked round towards the corner of the room behind him. "Mother," he said, gently, "are you ready?"

An elderly lady, dressed in deep mourning, rose from her seat in the corner. She had been, thus far, hidden from notice by the high back of the easy-chair in which her son sat. Excepting some folds of fine black lace, laid over her white hair so as to form a head-dress at once simple and picturesque, there was nothing remarkable in her attire. The visitor, well accustomed to the society of women of high rank and breeding, rose and bowed, as if (stranger though she was to him) he recognised a person of distinction. She gravely returned his salute, and moved round the table so as to place herself opposite to her son.

"When you please, Henry," she said.

Bending over him, she took both the doctor's hands in hers, and fixed her eyes steadily on his. No words passed between them; nothing more took place. In a minute or two, his head was resting against the back of the chair, and his eyelids had closed.

"Are you sleeping?" asked Madame Lagarde.

"I am sleeping," he answered.

She laid his hands gently on the arms of the chair, and turned to address the visitor.

"Let the sleep gain on him for a minute or two more," she said. "Then take one of his hands, and put to him what questions you please."

"Does he hear us now, madam?"

"You might fire off a pistol, sir, close to his ear, and he would not hear it. The vibration might disturb him; that is all. Until you or I touch him, and so establish the nervous sympathy, he is as lost to all sense of our presence here, as if he were dead."

"You believe in magnetism yourself, of course?"

"My son's belief, sir, is mine, in this thing as in other things. I have heard what he has been saying to you. It is for me that he sacrifices himself by holding these exhibitions; it is in my poor interests that his hardly-earned money is made. I am in infirm health; and remonstrate as I may, my son persists in providing for me, not the bare comforts only, but even the luxuries of life. Except in this, he has never heard me express a wish without cheerfully obeying it. Whatever I may suffer, I have my compensation; I can still thank God for giving me the greatest happiness that a woman can enjoy—the possession of a good son." She smiled fondly as she looked at the sleeping man. "Draw your chair nearer to him," she resumed, "and take his hand. You may speak freely in making your enquiries. Nothing that happens in this room ever goes out of it."

With those words she returned to her place, in the corner behind her son's chair.

The visitor took Doctor Lagarde's hand. As they touched each other, he was conscious of a faintly-titillating sensation in his own hand—a sensation which oddly reminded him of bygone experiments with an electrical machine, in the days when he was a boy at school!

"I wish to question you about my future life," he began. "How ought I to begin?"

The doctor spoke his first words in the monotonous tones of a man talking in his sleep.

"Own your true motive before you begin," he said. "Your interest in your future life is centred in a woman. She has not positively rejected you, and she has not openly encouraged you, in the

time that is past. You wish to know if her heart will be yours in the time that is to come—and there your interest in your future life ends."

This startling assertion of the sleeper's capacity to look, by sympathy, into his mind, and to see there his most secret thoughts, instead of convincing the stranger, excited his suspicions. "You have means of getting information," he said roughly, "that I don't understand."

The doctor laughed, as if the idea amused him. Madame Lagarde rose from her place, and interposed.

"Hundreds of strangers come here to consult my son," she said quietly. "If you believe that we know who those strangers are, and that we have the means of enquiring into their private lives before they enter this room, you believe in something much more incredible than the magnetic sleep!"

This was too manifestly true to be disputed. The visitor (a man of strong good sense, when his temper was not ruffled) made his apologies.

"I should like to have *some* explanation," he added. "The thing is so very extraordinary. How can I prevail upon Doctor Lagarde to enlighten me?"

"He can only tell you what he sees," Madame Lagarde answered; "ask him that, and you will get a direct reply. Say to him: 'Do you see the lady?'"

The stranger repeated the question. The reply followed at once, in these words:

"I see darkness all about me, except in one place, where there is light like the light of a dim moon. In the illuminated space, I see two figures standing side by side. One of them is your figure. The other is the figure of a lady. She only appears dimly. I can see nothing but that she is taller than women generally are, and that she is dressed in pale blue."

The stranger started at those last words. "Her favourite colour!" he thought to himself, forgetting that, while he held the doctor's hand, the doctor could think with *his* mind.

"Yes," added the sleeper, quietly, "her favourite colour, as you know. She fades and fades as I look at her," he went on. "She is gone. I only see you. Your hands are over your face; you are crying; you look like a man who is suffering from some dreadful disappointment. Wait a little. You too are growing indistinct; you too fade away altogether. The darkness gathers. I see nothing."

A pause of silence followed. Then the face of the sleeper began to show signs of disturbance for the first time. The stranger put the customary question to him: "What do you see?"

"I see you again. You have a pistol in your hand. Opposite to you, there stands the figure of another man. He, too, has a pistol in his hand. Are you enemies? Are you meeting to fight a duel? Is the lady the cause? I try, but I fail to see her."

"Can you describe the man?"

"Not yet. So far, he is only a shadow in the form of a man."

There was another interval. The appearance of disturbance grew more marked on the sleeper's face. Suddenly, he waved his free hand in the direction of the waiting-room.

"Send for the visitors who are there," he said. "They are all to come in. Each one of them is to take one of my hands in turn—while you remain where you are, holding the other. Don't let go of me, even for a moment. My mother will ring."

Madame Lagarde touched a bell on the table. The servant received his orders from her and retired. After a short absence, he appeared again in the consulting-room, with one visitor only waiting on the threshold behind him.

CHAPTER IV. THE MAN.

"The other three gentlemen have gone away, madam," the servant explained, addressing Madame Lagarde. "They were tired of waiting. I found *this* gentleman fast asleep; and I am afraid he is angry with me for taking the liberty of waking him."

"Sleep of the common sort is evidently not allowed in this house," the gentleman remarked at the door. "It isn't my fault—I couldn't mesmerise myself, could I?"

The speaker entered the room, and stood revealed as the original owner of the card numbered Fourteen. Viewed by the clear lamp-light, he was a tall, finely-made man, in the prime of life, with a florid complexion, golden-brown hair, and sparkling blue eyes. Noticing Madame Lagarde, he instantly checked the flow of his satire, with the instinctive good-breeding of a gentleman. "I beg your pardon," he said; "I have a great many faults, and a habit of making bad jokes is one of them. Is the servant right, madam, in telling me that I have the honour of presenting myself here at your request?"

Madame Lagarde briefly explained what had passed. The florid gentleman (still privately believing it to be all "humbug") was delighted to make himself of any use. "I congratulate you, sir," he said, with his easy humour, as he passed the visitor who had taken his card. "Number Fourteen seems to be a luckier number in your keeping than it was in mine."

As hespoke, he took Doctor Lagarde's disengaged hand. The instant they touched each other, the sleeper started. His voice rose; his face flushed. "You are the man!" he exclaimed. "I see you plainly, now!"

"What am I doing?"

"You are standing opposite to the gentleman here who is holding my other hand; and you are lifting a pistol to take aim at him."

The unbeliever cast a shrewd look at his companion in the consultation. His inveterate habit of taking the ironical view of everything got the better of him again.

"Considering that you and I are total strangers, sir," he said, "don't you think the doctor had better introduce us, before he goes any farther? We have got to fighting a duel already, and we may as well know who we are, before the pistols go off." He turned to Doctor Lagarde. "Dramatic situations don't amuse me out of the theatre," he resumed. "Let me put you to a very commonplace test. I want to be introduced to this gentleman. Has he told you his name?"

"No."

"Of course, you know it, without being told?"

"Certainly. I have only to look into your own knowledge of yourselves while I am in this trance, and while you have got my hands, to know both your names, as well as you do."

"Introduce us, then!" retorted the jesting gentleman. "And take my name first."

"Mr. Percy Linwood," replied the doctor; "I have the honour of presenting you to Captain Bervie, of the Artillery."

With one accord, the gentlemen both dropped Doctor Lagarde's hands, and looked at each other in blank amazement.

"Of course he has discovered our names somehow!" said Mr. Percy Linwood, cutting the Gordian knot to his own perfect satisfaction in that way.

Captain Bervie had not forgotten what Madame Lagarde had said to him, when he too had suspected a trick. He now

repeated it (quite ineffectually) for Mr. Linwood's benefit. "If you don't feel the force of that argument as I feel it," he added, "perhaps, as a favour to me, sir, you will not object to our each taking the doctor's hand again, and hearing what more he can tell us while he remains in the state of trance?"

"With the greatest pleasure!" answered good-humoured Mr. Linwood. "Our friend is beginning to amuse me; I am as anxious as you are to know what he is going to see next."

Captain Bervie put the next question.

"You have seen us fighting a duel—can you tell us the result?"

"I can tell you nothing more than I have told you already. The figures of the duellists have faded away, like the other figures that I saw before them. What I see now looks like the winding gravel path of a garden. A man and a woman are walking towards me. The man stops, and places a ring on the woman's finger, and kisses her."

Captain Bervie changed colour, and said no more. Mr. Linwood put the next question, in his usual flippant way.

"Who is the happy man?" he asked.

"You are the happy man," was the instantaneous reply.

"Who is the woman?" cried Captain Bervie, before Mr. Linwood could speak again.

"The same woman whom I saw before; dressed in the same way, in pale blue."

Captain Bervie was not satisfied. He insisted on receiving clearer information than this. "Surely, you can see *something* of her personal appearance?" he said sharply.

"I can see that she has long dark-brown hair, falling below her waist. I can see that she has lovely dark-brown eyes. Her complexion seems to be all of the same delicate pale colour: she has the look of a sensitive, nervous person. She is quite young. I can see no more."

"Is there any other man present in the garden?" was the captain's next question.

"I can see no other man."

"Look again at the man who is putting the ring on her finger. Are you sure that the face you see is the face of Mr. Percy Linwood?"

"I am absolutely sure."

Captain Bervie rose from his chair.

"Thank you, Doctor Lagarde," he said.

"I have heard enough."

He walked to the door. Mr. Percy

Linwood dropped the doctor's hand, and appealed to the retiring captain with a broad stare of astonishment.

"You don't really believe this?" he said.

"I only say I have heard enough," Captain Bervie answered irritably.

Mr. Linwood could hardly fail to see that any further attempt to treat the matter lightly might lead to undesirable results. "It is difficult to speak seriously of this kind of exhibition," he resumed quietly. "But I suppose I may mention a mere matter of fact without meaning, or giving offence. The description of the lady, I can positively declare, does not apply in any single particular to anyone whom I know."

Captain Bervie turned round sternly at the door, with the look of a man whose patience was completely exhausted. Mr. Linwood's unruffled composure, assisted in its influence by the presence of Madame Lagarde, seemed to remind him of the claims of politeness. He checked the rash words as they rose to his lips. "You may make new acquaintances, sir," was all that he said. "You have the future before you."

Upon that, he went out. Percy Linwood waited a little, reflecting on the captain's conduct. Had Doctor Lagarde's description of the lady accidentally answered the description of a living lady whom Captain Bervie knew? Was he by any chance in love with her; and had the doctor innocently reminded him that his love was not returned? Assuming this to be likely, was it also possible that he believed in the duel seen by the mesmerist? Did he seriously interpret his absence from the visionary love-scene in the garden, as an intimation that he was the duellist who was destined to fall? Nobody but a madman could go to those lengths. The captain's conduct was simply incomprehensible.

Pondering these questions, Percy decided on returning to his place by the doctor's chair. "Of one thing I'm certain, at any rate," he thought to himself. "I'll see the whole imposture out before I leave the house!"

He took Doctor Lagarde's hand. "Now, then! what is the next discovery?" he asked abruptly. "Anything more about the lady and gentleman in the garden?"

The answer was given in low, languid tones; the sleeper was evidently beginning to suffer from nervous fatigue.

"I see no more of the garden," he said, "or of the persons in it. What I see now is a small room, like a cottage parlour. The woman who has appeared to me throughout presents herself to me again. But, this time, the man who is with her is no longer Mr. Percy Linwood—the man is Captain Bervie!"

Percy smiled satirically. "Good news for the captain!" he said. "It's a thousand pities he went away. If he had waited he would have heard something personally interesting to him. May I ask, Doctor Lagarde, how Captain Bervie and the lady are occupied?"

The sleeper seemed to find some difficulty in answering the question. "I can only see," he said, "that the woman is painfully agitated by something that the captain is saying to her. He puts her arm in his—he seems to be trying to persuade her to leave the room with him. She hesitates; she asks him with tears to release her. He whispers something in her ear, which seems to persuade her. She considers; she says a few words on her side; she yields. He leads her out of the room. The darkness gathers behind them. I look and look, and I can see no more."

"Shall we wait awhile?" Percy suggested, "and then try again?"

Doctor Lagarde sighed, and reclined in his chair. "My head is heavy," he said; "my spirits are dull. I will try again to please you. Don't blame me if I fail."

After an interval, Percy put the customary question. The sleeper answered wearily.

"I see the inside of a travelling-carriage," he said. "The lady is one of the persons in it. There is a man with her. There is——" He stopped, and began to breathe heavily: the grasp of his hand relaxed.

"Am I the man this time?" Percy asked; "or is it Captain Bervie again?"

Doctor Lagarde roused himself by a last effort. "I can't tell you," he murmured drowsily. "My eyes are aching; the darkness baffles me. I have toiled long enough for you. Drop my hand and leave me to rest."

Hearing those words, Madame Lagarde approached her son's chair.

"It will be useless, sir, to ask him any more questions to-night," she said. "He has been weak and nervous all day, and he is worn out by the effort he has made. Pardon me, if I ask you to step aside for

a moment, while I give him the repose that he needs."

She laid her right hand gently on the doctor's head, and kept it there for a minute or so. "Are you at rest now?" she asked.

"I am at rest," he answered, in faint, drowsy tones.

Madame Lagarde returned to Percy. "If you are not yet satisfied," she said, "my son will be at your service to-morrow evening, sir."

"Thank you, madam, I have only one more question to ask, and you can no doubt answer it. When your son wakes, will he remember what he has said to Captain Bervie and to myself?"

"My son will be as absolutely ignorant of everything that he has seen, and of everything that he has said, in the trance, as if he had been at the other end of the world."

Percy Linwood swallowed this last outrageous assertion with an effort which he was quite unable to conceal. "Many thanks, madam," he said; "I wish you good-night."

Returning to the waiting-room, he noticed the money-box fixed to the table. "These people look poor," he thought to himself, "and I feel really indebted to them for an amusing evening. Besides, I can afford to be liberal, for I shall certainly never go back." He dropped a five-pound note into the money-box, and left the house.

Walking towards his club, Percy's natural serenity of mind was a little troubled by the remembrance of Captain Bervie's strange language and conduct. Something in the captain's manner, rudely as he had spoken on leaving the room, had interested Percy in spite of himself. He began to consider the propriety of reducing to writing Doctor Lagarde's description of the scenes in the cottage parlour and the travelling-carriage, in the event of another meeting between Captain Bervie and himself. If the captain persisted in taking the thing seriously, the memorandum might additionally enlighten him. If, on the other hand, he ended in adopting the rational view, the memorandum might confirm him in taking that sensible course.

Arrived at his club, Percy resolutely set to work in the writing-room. Unhappily for his chances of success, he was one of that large number of persons whose minds become confused the moment they

take a pen in their hands. First, he tried to report the doctor's language literally, and failed to remember it when he put the first words on paper. Then he attempted a brief summary, and lost the thread of his narrative at the second sentence. After spoiling many sheets of paper, and using every new pen within his reach, he gave up the struggle. "It's no use," he said, as he got up from the writing-table. "I am too great a fool to do it, and there's an end of the business!"

He never was more mistaken in his life. The end of the business was not to come for many a long day yet.

PART II. THE FULFILMENT.

CHAPTER IV. THE BALL-ROOM.

WHILE the consultation at Doctor Lagarde's was still fresh in the memory of the persons present at it, Chance or Destiny, occupied in sowing the seeds for the harvest of the future, discovered as one of its fit instruments a retired military officer named Major Much.

The major was a smart little man, who persisted in setting up the appearance of youth as a means of hiding the reality of fifty. After serving with distinction in many parts of the world, Major Much had become an independent man, by inheriting an estate in one of the midland counties. Being still a bachelor, and being always ready to make himself agreeable, he was generally popular in the society of women. In the ball-room he was a really welcome addition to the company. The German waltz had then been imported into England little more than three years since. The outcry raised against the dance, by persons skilled in the discovery of latent impropriety, had not yet lost its influence in certain quarters. Men who could waltz were scarce. Major Much had successfully grappled with the difficulties of learning the dance in mature life; and the young ladies rewarded him nobly for the effort, by taking the appearance of youth for granted, in the palpable presence of fifty.

Knowing everybody and being welcome everywhere, playing a good hand at whist, and having an inexhaustible fancy in the invention of a dinner, Major Much naturally belonged to all the best clubs of his time. Percy Linwood and he constantly met in the billiard-room or at the dinner-table. The major approved of the easy, handsome, pleasant-tempered young man. "I have lost the first freshness of youth," he used to say modestly of himself, "and

I see it revived, as it were, in Percy. Naturally I like Percy."

About three weeks after the memorable evening at Doctor Lagarde's, the two friends encountered each other on the steps of a club.

"Got anything to do to-night?" asked the major.

"Nothing that I know of," said Percy, "unless I go to the theatre."

"Let the theatre wait, my boy. My old regiment gives a ball at Woolwich to-night. I have got a ticket to spare; and I know several sweet girls who are going. Some of them waltz, Percy! Gather your rosebuds while you may. Come with me."

The invitation was accepted as readily as it was given. The major found the carriage, and Percy paid for the post-horses. They entered the ball-room among the earlier guests; and the first person whom they met, waiting near the door, was—Captain Bervie.

Percy bowed, a little uneasily. "I feel some doubt," he said, laughing, "whether we have been properly introduced to one another or not."

"Not properly introduced!" cried Major Much. "I'll set that right. My dear friend, Percy Linwood; my dear friend, Arthur Bervie—be known to each other! esteem each other!"

Captain Bervie acknowledged the introduction by a cold salute. Percy, yielding to the good-natured impulse of the moment, began to speak of the meretricious consultation.

"You missed something worth hearing when you left the doctor the other night," he said. "We continued the sitting; and *you* turned up again among the persons of the doctor's drama, in quite a new character. Imagine yourself, if you please, in a cottage parlour—"

"Excuse me for interrupting you," said Captain Bervie. "I am a member of the committee, charged with the arrangements of the ball, and I must really attend to my duties."

He withdrew without waiting for a reply. Percy looked round wonderingly at Major Much. "Strange!" he said, "I feel rather attracted towards Captain Bervie; and he seems so little attracted, on his side, that he can hardly behave to me with common civility. What does it mean?"

"I'll tell you," answered the major, con-

fidentially. "Arthur Bervie is madly in love—madly is really the word, my boy—with a Miss Bowmore. And (this is between ourselves) the young lady doesn't feel it quite in the same way. A sweet girl; I've often had her on my knee when she was a child. Her father and mother are old friends of mine. She is coming to the ball to-night. That's the true reason why Arthur left you just now. Look at him—waiting to be the first to speak to her. If he could have his way, he wouldn't let another man come near the poor girl all through the evening; he really persecutes her. I'll introduce you, Percy; and you will see how he looks at us for presuming to approach her. It's a great pity; she'll never marry him. Arthur Bervie is a high-minded, honourable fellow, a man in a thousand; but he's fast becoming a perfect bear under the strain on his temper. What's the matter? You don't seem to be listening to me."

This last remark was perfectly justified. In telling the captain's love-story, Major Much had revived his young friend's memory of the lady in the blue dress, who had haunted the mesmeric visions of Doctor Lagarde. "Tell me," said Percy, "what is Miss Bowmore like? Is there anything remarkable in her personal appearance? I have a reason for asking."

As he spoke, there arose among the guests in the rapidly-filling ball-room a low murmur of surprise and admiration. The major laid one hand on Percy's shoulder, and, lifting the other, pointed to the door.

"What is Miss Bowmore like?" he repeated. "There she is, my boy! Let her answer for herself."

Percy turned towards the lower end of the room. A young lady was entering, dressed in plain silk, and the colour of it was a pale blue! Excepting a white rose at her breast, she wore no ornament of any sort. Doubly distinguished by the perfect simplicity of her apparel, and by her tall, supple, commanding figure, she took rank at once as the most remarkable woman in the room. Moving nearer to her through the crowd, under the guidance of the complaisant major, young Linwood gained a clearer view of her hair, her complexion, and the colour of her eyes. In every one of these particulars, she was the living image of the woman described by Doctor Lagarde!

While Percy was absorbed over this strange discovery, Major Much had got

within speaking distance of the young lady and of her mother, as they stood together in conversation with Captain Bervie. "My dear Mrs. Bowmore, how well you are looking! My dear Miss Charlotte, what a sensation you have made already!" cried the cordial little man. "The glorious simplicity (if I may so express myself) of your dress is—is—what was I going to say?—the ideas come thronging on me; I merely want words."

Here Major Much waved his hand, with all the fingers well open, as if words were circulating in the air of the room, and he meant to catch them. Miss Charlotte burst into a little silvery laugh; her magnificent brown eyes, wandering from the major to Percy, rested on the young man with a modest and momentary interest, which Captain Bervie's jealous attention instantly detected.

"They are forming the dance, Miss Bowmore," he said, pressing forward impatiently. "If we don't take our places, we shall be too late."

"Stop! stop!" cried the major. "There is a time for everything, and this is the time for presenting my dear friend here, Mr. Percy Linwood. He is like me, Miss Charlotte—he has been struck by the glorious simplicity, and he wants words." At this part of the presentation, he happened to look toward the irate captain, and instantly gave him a hint on the subject of his temper. "I say, Arthur Bervie! we are all good-humoured people here. What have you got on your eyebrows? It looks like a frown; and it doesn't become you. Send for a skilled waiter, and have it brushed off and taken away directly!"

"May I ask, Miss Bowmore, if you are disengaged for the next dance?" said Percy, the moment the major gave him an opportunity of speaking.

"Miss Bowmore is engaged to me for the next dance," said the angry captain, before the young lady could answer.

"The third dance, then?" Percy persisted, in his quietest manner, and with his brightest smile.

"With pleasure, Mr. Linwood," said Miss Bowmore. She would have been no true woman if she had not resented the open exhibition of Arthur's jealousy; it was like asserting a right over her to which he had not the shadow of a claim. She threw a look at Percy as her partner led her away, which was the severest

punishment she could inflict on the man who ardently loved her.

The third dance stood in the programme as a waltz. In jealous distrust of Percy, the captain took the conductor aside, and used his authority as committeeman to substitute another dance. He had no sooner turned his back on the orchestra than the wife of the colonel of the regiment, who had heard him, spoke to the conductor in her turn, and insisted on the original programme being retained. "Quote the colonel's authority," said the lady, "if Captain Bervie ventures to object." In the meantime, the captain, on his way to rejoin Charlotte, was met by one of his brother-officers, who summoned him to an impending debate of the committee, charged with the administrative arrangements of the supper-table.

"Surely they can do without me?" Arthur suggested.

"No," said the officer. "In case of any difference of opinion, the colonel requests that all the committee will attend."

Under these circumstances, Arthur had no alternative but to follow his brother-officer to the committee-room. Barely a minute later the conductor appeared at his desk, and the first notes of the music rose low and plaintive, introducing the third dance.

"Percy, my boy!" cried the major, recognising the melody, "you're in luck's way—it's going to be a waltz!"

Almost as he spoke, the low, plaintive notes glided by subtle modulations into the inspiriting air of the waltz. Percy claimed his partner's hand. Miss Charlotte hesitated, and looked at her mother.

"Surely you waltz?" said Percy.

"I have learnt to waltz," she answered modestly; "but this is such a large room, sir, and there are so many people!"

"Once round," Percy pleaded; "only once round!"

She looked again at her mother; her foot was keeping time with the music under her dress; her heart was beating with a delicious excitement; kind-hearted Mrs. Bowmore smiled and said, "Once round, my dear, as Mr. Linwood suggests."

In another moment, Percy's arm took possession of her waist, and they were away on the wings of the waltz! Could words describe, could thought realise, the exquisite enjoyment of the dance? Enjoyment? It was more—it was an epoch in Charlotte's life—it was the first time she

had waltzed with a man. What a difference between the fervent clasp of Percy's arm and the cold, formal contact of the mistress who had taught her! How brightly his eyes looked down into hers, admiring her with such a tender restraint, that there could surely be no harm in looking up at him now and then in return. Round and round they glided, absorbed in the music and in themselves. Occasionally her bosom just touched his, at those critical moments when she was most in need of support. At other intervals, she almost let her head sink on his shoulder in trying to hide from him the smile which acknowledged his admiration too boldly. "Once round," Percy had suggested; "once round," her mother had said. They had been twenty, thirty, forty times round; they had never stopped to rest like the other dancers; they had had the eyes of the whole room on them—including the eyes of Captain Bervie—without knowing it; her delicately pale complexion had changed to rosy-red; the neat arrangement of her hair had become disturbed; her bosom was rising and falling faster and faster in the effort to breathe—before the fatigue and the heat overpowered her at last, and forced her to say to him faintly, "I'm very sorry—I can't dance any more!"

Percy led her into the cooler atmosphere of the refreshment-room, and revived her with a glass of lemonade. Her arm still rested on his—she was just about to thank him for the care he had taken of her—when Captain Bervie entered the room. He was pale, with the marked and sinister pallor of suppressed rage; but, when he spoke to Percy, he still preserved his self-control, and expressed himself with scrupulous politeness.

"Mrs. Bowmore wishes me to take you back to her," he said to Charlotte. Then, turning to Percy, he added: "Will you kindly wait here while I take Miss Bowmore to the ball-room? I have a word to say to you—I will return directly."

Left alone in the refreshment-room, Percy sat down to cool and rest himself. With his experience of the ways of men, he felt no surprise at the marked contrast between Captain Bervie's face and Captain Bervie's manner. "He has seen us waltzing, and he is coming back to pick a quarrel with me." Such was the interpretation which Mr. Linwood's knowledge of the world placed on Captain Bervie's politeness. In a minute or two

more the captain returned to the refreshment-room, and satisfied Percy that his anticipations had not deceived him.

CHAPTER V. LOVE AND POLITICS.

IT was the fourth day after the ball. Though it was no later in the year than the month of February, the sun was shining brightly, and the air was as soft as the air of a day in spring. Percy and Charlotte were walking together in the little garden at the back of Mr. Bowmore's cottage, near the town of Dartford, in Kent.

"Mr. Linwood," said Charlotte, "you were to have paid us your first visit the day after the ball. Why have you kept us waiting? Have you been too busy to remember your new friends?"

"I have counted the hours since we parted, Miss Charlotte. If I had not been detained by business——"

"I understand! For three days business has controlled you. On the fourth day, you have controlled business—and here you are?"

"That's it exactly, Miss Charlotte."

"I don't believe one word of it, Mr. Percy!"

There was no answering such a declaration as this. Guiltily conscious that Charlotte was right in refusing to accept his well-worn excuse, Percy made an awkward attempt to change the topic of conversation. They happened, at the moment, to be standing near a small conservatory at the end of the garden. The glass door was closed, and the few plants and shrubs inside had a lonely, neglected look. "Does nobody ever visit this secluded place?" Percy asked, jocosely, "or does it hide discoveries in the rearing of plants, which are forbidden mysteries to a stranger?"

"Satisfy your curiosity, Mr. Linwood, by all means," Charlotte answered in the same tone. "Open the door; and I will follow you. There is a bench still left, I think, inside, and a few minutes' rest will be welcome to me."

Percy obeyed. In passing through the doorway, he encountered the bare hanging branches of some creeping plant, long since dead and detached from its fastenings on the woodwork of the roof. He pushed aside the branches so that Charlotte could easily follow him in, without being aware that his own forced passage through them had a little deranged the folds of spotless white cambric which a well-dressed gentleman wore round his neck in those days.

Charlotte seated herself on the bench, and directed Percy's attention to the desolate conservatory with a sancy smile.

"The mystery which your lively imagination has associated with this place," she said, "means, being interpreted, that we are too poor to keep a gardener. Make the best of your disappointment, Mr. Linwood, and sit here by me. We are out of hearing and out of sight of mamma's other visitors. You have no excuse now for not satisfying my curiosity and telling me what has really kept you away from us."

She fixed her eyes on him as she said those words. Before Percy could think of another excuse, her quick observation detected the disordered condition of his cravat, and discovered the upper edge of a black plaster attached to one side of his neck. "You have been hurt in the neck!" she exclaimed. "That is why you have kept away from us for the last three days!"

"A mere trifle," said Percy, in great confusion; "please don't notice it!"

She neither heeded nor heard him. Her eyes, still resting on his face, assumed an expression of suspicious enquiry, which Percy was entirely at a loss to understand. Suddenly, she started to her feet, as if a new idea had occurred to her. "Wait here," she said, flushing with excitement, "till I come back: I insist on it!"

Before Percy could ask for an explanation, she had left the conservatory.

In a minute or two she returned, with a newspaper in her hand. "Read that," she said, pointing to a paragraph, distinguished by a line drawn round it in ink.

The passage that she indicated contained an account of a duel which had recently taken place in the neighbourhood of London. The names of the duellists were not mentioned. One was described as an officer and the other as a civilian. They had quarrelled at cards, and had fought with pistols. The civilian had had a narrow escape of his life. His antagonist's bullet had passed near enough to the side of his neck to tear the flesh, and had missed the vital parts, literally, by a hair's breadth.

Charlotte's eyes, riveted on Percy, detected a sudden change of colour in his face the moment he looked at the newspaper. That was enough for her. "You are the man!" she exclaimed. "Oh, for shame, for shame! To risk your life for a paltry dispute about cards."

"I would risk it again," said Percy, "to hear you speak as if you set some value on it."

She looked away from him quickly, without a word of reply. Her mind seemed to be busy again with its own thoughts. Did she meditate returning to the subject of the duel? Was she not satisfied with the discovery which she had just made? No such doubts as these troubled the mind of Percy Linwood. Intoxicated by the charm of her presence, emboldened by her innocent betrayal of the interest that she felt in him, he opened his whole heart to her as unreservedly as if they had known each other from the days of their childhood. There was but one excuse for him. Charlotte was his first love.

"You don't know how completely you have become a part of my life, since we met at the ball," he went on. "That one delightful dance seemed, by some magic which I can't explain, to draw us together in a few minutes as if we had known each other for years. Oh dear! I could make such a confession of what I felt, only I am afraid of offending you by speaking too soon! Women are so dreadfully difficult to understand. How is a man to know at what time it is considerate towards them to conceal his true feelings; and at what time it is equally considerate to express his true feelings? One doesn't know whether it is a matter of days or weeks or months—there ought to be a law to settle it. Dear Miss Charlotte, when a poor fellow loves you at first sight, as he has never loved any other woman, and when he is tormented by the fear that some other man may be preferred to him, can't you forgive him if he lets out the truth a little too soon?" He ventured, as he put that very downright question, to take her hand. "It really isn't my fault," he said, simply. "My heart is so full of you, I can talk of nothing else."

To Percy's surprise, the first experimental pressure of his hand, far from being resented, was suddenly returned. Charlotte looked at him again, with a new resolution in her face.

"I'll forgive you for talking nonsense, Mr. Linwood," she said; "and I will even permit you to come and see me again, on one condition—that you tell the whole truth about the duel. If you conceal the smallest circumstance, our acquaintance is at an end."

"Haven't I owned everything already?" Percy enquired, in great perplexity. "Did

I say No, when you told me I was the man?"

"Could you say No, with that plaster on your neck?" was the ready rejoinder. "I am determined to know more than the newspaper tells me. Will you declare, on your word of honour, that Captain Bervie had nothing to do with the duel? Can you look me in the face, and say that the real cause of the quarrel was a disagreement at cards? What did you say, when you were talking with me just before I left the ball, and when a gentleman asked you to make one at the whist-table? You said, 'I don't play at cards.' Ah! You thought I had forgotten that? Don't kiss my hand! Trust me with the whole truth, or say good-bye for ever."

"Only tell me what you wish to know, Miss Charlotte," said Percy, humbly. "If you will put the questions, I will give the answers—as well as I can."

On this understanding, Percy's evidence was extracted from him as follows:

"Was it Captain Bervie who quarrelled with you?" "Yes."—"Was it about me?" "Yes."—"What did he say?" "He said I had committed an impropriety in waltzing with you."—"Why?" "Because your parents disapproved of your waltzing in a public ball-room."—"That's not true! What did he say next?" "He said I had added tenfold to my offence, by waltzing with you in such a manner as to make you the subject of remark to the whole room."—"Oh! did you let him say that?" "No; I contradicted him instantly. And I said, besides, 'It's an insult to Miss Bowmore to suppose that she would permit any impropriety.'"—"Quite right! And what did he say?" "Well, he lost his temper; I would rather not repeat what he said, when he was mad with jealousy. There was nothing to be done with him but to give him his way."—"Give him his way. Does that mean fight a duel with him?" "Yes."—"And you kept my name out of it, by pretending to quarrel at the card-table?" "Yes. We managed it when the card-room was emptying at supper-time, and nobody was present but Major Much and another friend as witnesses."—"And when did you fight the duel?" "The next morning."—"You never thought of me, I suppose?" "Indeed, I did; I was very glad that you had no suspicion of what we were at."—"Was that all?" "No; I had your flower with me, the flower you gave me out of your nosegay,

at the ball."—"Well?" "Oh, never mind, it doesn't matter."—"It does matter. What did you do with my flower?" "I gave it a sly kiss while they were measuring the ground; and (don't tell anybody!) I put it next to my heart to bring me luck."—"Was that just before he shot at you?"—"Yes."—"How did he shoot?"—"He walked (as the seconds had arranged it) ten paces forward; and then he stopped, and lifted his pistol—"—"Don't tell me any more! Oh, to think of my being the miserable cause of such horrors! I'll never dance again as long as I live. Did you think he had killed you, when the bullet wounded your poor neck?"—"No; I hardly felt it at first."—"Hardly felt it? How he talks! And when the wretch had done his best to kill you, and when it came to your turn, what did you do?"—"Nothing."—"What! You didn't walk your ten paces forward?"—"No."—"And you never shot at him in return?"—"No; I had no quarrel with him, poor fellow; I just stood where I was, and fired in the air—"

The next words died away on his lips. Before he could stop her, Charlotte seized his hand, and kissed it with an hysterical fervour of admiration, which completely deprived him of his presence of mind.

"Why shouldn't I kiss the hand of a hero?" she cried, with tears of enthusiasm sparkling in her eyes. "Nobody but a hero would have given him his life; nobody but a hero would have pardoned him, while the blood was streaming from the wound that he had inflicted. I respect you, I admire you. Oh, don't think me bold!" she exclaimed, suddenly hiding her face in her hands. "I can't control myself when I hear of anything noble and good. You will make allowance for my being a strange girl? You will understand me better when we get to be old friends."

She spoke in low, sweet tones of entreaty. Percy's arm stole softly round her waist.

"Are we never to be nearer and dearer to each other than old friends?" he asked in a whisper. "I am not a hero — your goodness overrates me, dear Miss Charlotte. My one ambition is to be the happy man who is worthy enough to win you. At your own time! I wouldn't distress you, I wouldn't confuse you, I wouldn't for the whole world take advantage of the compliment which your sympathy has paid to me. If it offends you, I won't even ask if I may hope."

She sighed as he said the last words; trembled a little, and then silently looked at him. Percy read his answer in her eyes. Without meaning it on either side, their heads drew nearer together; their cheeks, then their lips, touched. She started back from him, and rose to leave the conservatory. At the same moment the sound of slowly-approaching footsteps became audible on the gravel walk of the garden. Charlotte hurried to the door. "It is my father," she said, turning to Percy. "Come, and be introduced to him."

Percy followed her into the garden.

Charlotte had inherited all that was most striking in her personal appearance from her mother. So far as the question of stature was concerned, her father was no taller than Major Much. Judging by appearances, Mr. Bowmore looked like a man prematurely wasted and worn by the cares of a troubled life. His eyes presented the one feature in which his daughter resembled him. In shape and colour they were exactly reproduced in Charlotte; the difference was in the expression. The father's look was habitually restless, eager, and suspicious: not a trace was to be seen in it of the truthfulness and gentleness which made the charm of the daughter's expression. A man whose bitter experience of the world had soured his temper and shaken his faith in his fellow-creatures—such was Mr. Bowmore as he presented himself on the surface. Whatever compensating virtues he might possess lay hidden deep in his nature, and were only discoverable by those who knew him in the closest relations of daily life.

He received Percy politely, but with a preoccupied air. Every now and then, his restless eyes wandered from his visitor to an open letter which he had in his hand. Charlotte, observing him, pointed to the letter. "Have you any bad news there, papa?" she asked.

"Dreadful news!" Mr. Bowmore answered. "Dreadful news, my child, to every Englishman who respects the liberties which his ancestors won. My correspondent is a man who is in the confidence of the Ministers," he continued, addressing Percy. "What do you think, sir, is the remedy that the Government proposes for the universal distress among the population, caused by an infamous and needless war? We are now at the 17th of Feb-

ruary. In a week's time (I have it on the authority of my correspondent) ministers will bring in a bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act!" He struck the letter with his open hand; his eyes brightened with indignation as they rested on Percy's face. "I don't know what your politics may be, sir. As an English citizen, you can hardly hear that the Parliament of England is about to change the free government of this country into an absolute despotism, without some feeling of indignation and alarm!"

Before Percy could answer, Charlotte put a question to her father, which appeared to amaze and distress him.

"What is the Habeas Corpus Act?" she asked.

"Good God!" cried Mr. Bowmore, "is it possible that a child of mine has grown up to womanhood, in ignorance of the palladium of English liberty? Oh, Charlotte! Charlotte!"

"I am very sorry, papa. If you will only tell me, I will never forget it."

Mr. Bowmore reverently uncovered his head: he took his daughter by the hand, with a certain parental sternness: his voice trembled with emotion as he spoke his next words:

"The Habeas Corpus Act, my child, forbids the imprisonment of an English subject, unless that imprisonment can be justified by law. Not even the order of the reigning monarch, not even the authority of the highest court in the country, can prevent us from appearing before the judges of the land, and summoning them to declare whether our committal to prison is legally just."

He put on his hat again. "Never forget what I have told you, Charlotte!" he said solemnly. "I would not remove my hat, sir," he continued, turning to Percy, "in the presence of the proudest autocrat that ever sat on a throne. I uncover in homage to the grand law which asserts the sacredness of human liberty. You are perhaps too young to know by experience what will happen if this infamous bill is sanctioned by Parliament. I can tell you what did happen, when the Habeas Corpus was suspended in England at the end of the last century. The friends of liberty were liable to imprisonment, and even to death on the scaffold, on warrants privately obtained by the paid spies and informers of Government, from justices who were the humble

servants of the terrified Ministry of the time. The same horrors will be repeated in a few weeks more, unless the people can force Parliament to defend their liberties. Does my indignation surprise you, Mr. Linwood? Are you, in these dreadful times, a lukewarm person who takes no interest in placing a really liberal Government in power?"

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Bowmore," Percy interposed. "I have reasons for feeling the strongest interest in supporting a liberal Government."

"What reasons?" cried Mr. Bowmore, eagerly.

"My late father had a claim on Government," Percy answered, "for money expended in foreign service. As his heir, I inherit the claim, which has been formally recognised by the present Ministry. My petition for a settlement (long since due) will be presented at the opening of Parliament, by friends of mine who can advocate my interests in the House of Commons."

Mr. Bowmore took Percy's hand and shook it warmly.

"In such a matter as this you cannot have too many friends to help you," he said. "I myself have some influence, as representing opinion outside the House; and I am entirely at your service. Come to-morrow, and let us talk over the details of your claim at my humble dinner-table. To-day I must attend a meeting of the Branch Hampden Club, of which I am vice-president, and to which I am bound to communicate the alarming news which my letter contains. In my little garden here," proceeded Mr. Bowmore, waving his hand over his modest property, "I am accustomed to consider the main points of my speeches at the club, in the necessary retirement. I have made some remarkable bursts of eloquence on this walk. Will you excuse me for to-day? and will you honour us with your company to-morrow?"

If Percy had not been in love, he might have felt some surprise at Mr. Bowmore's extraordinary devotion to his interests, after an acquaintance of about ten minutes' duration. As things were, the proposed meeting on the next day offered him an opportunity of seeing Charlotte again; and, on that account alone, he unhesitatingly accepted the invitation. Mr. Bowmore honoured him with another squeeze of his patriotic hand, and withdrew to meditate new bursts of elo-

quence in the suggestive solitude of the garden walk.

CHAPTER VI. THE WARNING.

"I HOPE you like my father?" said Charlotte, as she and Percy turned in the direction of the cottage. "He is such a great politician; we are so fond of him and so proud of him! All our friends say he ought to be in Parliament. He has tried twice. The expenses were dreadful; and each time the other man defeated him. The agent says he would be certainly elected if he tried again; but there is no money, and we mustn't think of it."

A man of a suspicious turn of mind might have discovered in those artless words the secret of Mr. Bowmore's interest in the success of his young friend's claim on the Government. One British subject, with a sum of ready money at his command, may be an inestimably useful person to another British subject (without ready money) who cannot sit comfortably unless he sits in Parliament! But honest Percy Linwood was not a man of a suspicious turn of mind. He only echoed Charlotte's filial glorification of her father; and Charlotte rewarded him by a smile and a look.

Just as they reached the garden entrance to the cottage, a shabbily-dressed manservant met them with a message, for which they were both alike unprepared. "Captain Bervie has called, miss, to say good-bye, and my mistress requests your company in the parlour."

Having delivered his little formula of words, the man cast a look of furtive curiosity at Percy and withdrew. Charlotte turned to her lover, with indignation sparkling in her eyes and flushing on her cheeks at the bare idea of seeing Captain Bervie again. "The wretch!" she exclaimed. "Does he think I will breathe the same air with the man who attempted to take your life?"

Percy checked the flow of her anger by taking her hand, and looking at her gravely.

"You are sadly mistaken," he said; "and I am glad of the opportunity of setting you right. Captain Bervie stood to receive my fire as fairly as I stood to receive his. When I discharged my pistol in the air, he was the first man who ran up to me, and asked if I was seriously hurt. They told him my wound was a trifle; and he fell on his knees and thanked

God for preserving my life from 'his guilty and miserable hand.' I myself saw the tears streaming down his cheeks. He said to me, 'You have shown me my vile temper as I have never seen it yet. I will get the better of it—I will go away somewhere by myself, and not return until my mind is purified from every feeling of hatred and jealousy towards the man who has forgiven me and spared my life.' He was not content with only making that promise—he held out his hand to me. 'I am no longer the rival who hates you,' he said. 'Give me a little time; and I will be *your* brother, and *her* brother. Am I worthy to take your hand?' We shook hands—we were friends. Whatever his faults may be, Charlotte, Arthur Bervie has a great heart. Go in, I entreat you, and be friends with him as I am."

Charlotte listened with downcast eyes and changing colour. "You believe him?" she asked, in low, trembling tones.

"I believe him as I believe you," Percy answered.

She secretly resented the comparison, she detested the captain more heartily than ever. "I will go in and see him, if you wish it," she said, with a sad submission in her voice. "But not by myself. I want you to come with me."

"Why?" Percy asked.

"I want to see his face, when you and he meet."

"Do you still doubt him, Charlotte?"

She looked up suddenly and made this strange reply: "Your mind sees him, penitent, on his knees. My mind sees him, pointing his pistol to take your life."

They went together into the cottage. Fixing her eyes steadily on the captain's face, Charlotte saw it turn deadly pale when Percy followed her into the parlour. The two men greeted one another cordially. Charlotte sat down by her mother, preserving her composure so far as appearances went. "I hear you have called to bid us good-bye," she said to Bervie. "Is it to be a long absence?"

"I have got two months' leave," the captain answered, without looking at her while he spoke.

"Are you going abroad?"

"Yes. I think so."

A pause followed that reply. Percy claimed the captain's attention by speaking to him next. Charlotte seized the opportunity of saying a word privately to her

mother. "Don't encourage Captain Bervie to prolong his visit," she whispered; "I like him less than ever."

Mrs. Bowmore, born and bred in the exercise of that patient politeness which has long since been reckoned among obsolete social accomplishments, was shocked at her daughter's inhospitable suggestion. In the confusion of the moment, the good lady actually interrupted Captain Bervie's conversation with his friend by offering him a cup of tea! He rose as he thanked her; and made the customary apologies for not prolonging his visit. To Charlotte's surprise, Percy also rose to go. "His carriage," he said, "was waiting at the door; and he had offered to take Captain Bervie back to London." Charlotte instantly suspected an arrangement between the two men for a confidential interview. Her obstinate distrust of Bervie strengthened tenfold. She reluctantly gave him her hand, as he parted from her at the parlour door. The effort of concealing her true feeling towards him, gave a colour and a vivacity to her face which made her irresistibly beautiful. Bervie looked at her with an immeasurable sadness in his eyes. "When we meet again," he said, "you will see me in a new character." He hurried out to the gate, without waiting to be answered, as if he feared to trust himself for a moment longer in her presence.

Percy took his leave next. Charlotte followed him into the passage. "I shall be here to-morrow, dearest!" he said, and tried to raise her hand to his lips. She abruptly drew it away. "Not that hand!" she answered. "Captain Bervie has just touched it. Kiss the other!"

"Do you still doubt the captain?" said Percy, amused by her petulance.

She put her arm over his shoulder, and touched the plaster on his neck gently with her finger. "I don't doubt," she said, "the captain did *that*!"

Percy left her, laughing. He was too happy to remonstrate seriously with her at that moment. At the front gate of the cottage he found Arthur Bervie in conversation with the same shabbily-dressed man-servant who had announced the captain's visit to Charlotte.

"What has become of the other servant?" Bervie asked. "I mean the old man who has been with Mr. Bowmore for so many years."

"He has left his situation, sir."

"Why?"

"As I understand, sir, he spoke disrespectfully to the master."

"Oh! And how came the master to hear of you?"

"I advertised; and Mr. Bowmore answered my advertisement."

Bervie looked hard at the man for a moment, and then joined Percy at the carriage door. The two gentlemen started for London.

"Did you notice Mr. Bowmore's new servant?" asked the captain, as they drove away from the cottage. "I don't like the look of the fellow."

"I didn't particularly notice him," Percy answered.

There was a pause. When the conversation was resumed, it turned on common-place subjects. The captain looked uneasily out of the carriage window. Percy looked uneasily at the captain.

They had left Dartford about two miles behind them, when Percy noticed an old gabled house, sheltered by magnificent trees, and standing on an eminence well removed from the high road. Carriages and saddle-horses were visible on the drive in front, and a flag was hoisted on a staff placed in the middle of the lawn.

"Something seems to be going on there," Percy remarked. "What a fine old house! Who does it belong to?"

Bervie smiled. "It belongs to my father," he said, simply. "He is chairman of the bench of local magistrates, and he receives his brother-justices to-day, to celebrate the opening of the sessions." He stopped, and looked at Percy with a certain embarrassment. "I am afraid I have surprised and disappointed you," he resumed, abruptly changing the subject. "I told you when we met just now at Mr. Bowmore's that I had something important to say to you; and I have not yet said it. The truth is, I don't feel sure, on reflection, whether I have been long enough your friend to take the liberty of advising you."

"You mean kindly towards me," Percy answered in his frank, hearty way. "Trust me, whatever your advice is, to take it kindly on my side."

Thus encouraged, the captain spoke out.

"You told me that you had been introduced to Mr. Bowmore to-day," he began; "and you said that he took a great interest in the success of your claim on the Govern-

ment. You will probably pass much of your time at the cottage, and you will be thrown a great deal into Mr. Bowmore's society. I have known him for many years. Speaking from that knowledge, I most seriously warn you against him as a thoroughly unprincipled and thoroughly dangerous man. Without entering into the question of his politics, I can tell you that the motive of everything he says and does is vanity—inordinate, devouring vanity. To the gratification of that one passion he would sacrifice you or me, his wife or his daughter, without hesitation and without remorse. His one desire is to get into Parliament. You are a wealthy man, and you can help him. He will leave no effort untried to make you help him; and if he gets you into political difficulties, he will desert you without scruple. I see I astonish and shock you. If you think me prejudiced, write to my father, who has official knowledge of the perilous position in which this man stands. I will forward your letter, and vouch for you as a gentleman who will respect any confidence placed in him. My father will confirm me, when I tell you that this Bowmore belongs to some of the most revolutionary clubs in England; that he has spoken rank sedition at public meetings; and that his name is already in the black book at the Home Office. If the rumour be true that Ministers, in fear of insurrectionary risings among the population, are about to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, Mr. Bowmore will certainly be in danger; and it may be my father's duty to grant the warrant that apprehends him. In your own best interests, decline resolutely to join him in any political conversation; refuse to accept his assistance in the matter of your claim on Parliament; and, above all things, stop him at the outset, when he tries to steal his way into your intimacy. I need not caution you to say nothing against him to his wife and daughter. They are infatuated about him; his wily tongue has long since deluded them. Don't let it delude *you*! If you were my brother, I could give you no sounder or better advice than this. Reflect on what I have said, at your leisure; and let us turn in the meantime to a more interesting subject. Have you thought any more of our evening at Doctor Lagarde's?"

"I hardly know," said Percy, still under the impression of the formidable warning which he had just received. "You have

given me far more serious things to think of than mesmerism."

"Let me jog your memory," the other continued. "You went on with the consultation by yourself, after I had left the doctor's house. It will be really doing me a favour, if you can call to mind what Lagarde saw in the trance, in my absence?"

Thus entreated, Percy roused himself. So long as he abstained from attempting to express them in writing, his recollections were perfectly ready to answer any reasonable call on them. He repeated in substance the doctor's description of the first of the two visions that had appeared to him after the captain's departure.

Bervie started. "A cottage parlour?" he repeated. "We have just left a cottage parlour! A man like me, trying to persuade a woman like——," he checked himself, as if he was afraid to let Charlotte's name pass his lips. "Trying to induce a woman to go away with me," he resumed, "and persuading her at last, in spite of her tears? Pray go on! What did the doctor see next?"

"He saw a travelling-carriage," Percy replied. "The lady was one of the persons in it. And there was a man with her. And there was something else—only the doctor couldn't see it."

"Could he tell you who the man was?"

"No. He was too much exhausted, he said, to see any more."

"Surely you returned to consult him again?"

"No. I had had enough of it."

"When we get to London," said the captain, "we shall pass along the Strand, on the way to your chambers. Will you kindly drop me at the turning that leads to the doctor's?"

Percy looked at him in amazement. "You still take it seriously?" he said.

"Is it *not* serious?" Bervie asked warmly. "Have you and I, so far, not done exactly what this man saw us doing? Have I not shed bitter tears of disappointment; and who was the cause of them but the woman whom he saw by my side? Did we not meet, in the days when we were rivals (as he saw us meet), with the pistols in our hands? Did you not recognise his description of the lady, when you met her at the ball, as I recognised it before you?"

"Mere coincidences!" Percy answered, quoting Charlotte's opinion when they

had spoken together of Doctor Lagarde, but taking care not to cite his authority. "How many thousand men have been crossed in love? How many thousand men have fought duels for love? How many thousand women choose blue for their favourite colour, and answer to the vague description of the lady whom the doctor pretended to see?"

"Say that it is so," Bervie rejoined. "The thing is remarkable, even from your point of view. And if more coincidences follow, the result will be more remarkable still."

The next coincidence, if it happened, would realise the love-scene with the ring. Was there anything remarkable—was it even worth calling a coincidence—if Percy put an engagement-ring on the finger of the woman who loved him, and if he kissed her afterwards? He considerably forbore, in this case, from communicating his thoughts to Bervie. "The thing that most surprised me in the doctor's performance," he said, "was his thinking with our thoughts, and finding out our own knowledge of our own names."

The captain shook his head. "A mere question of nervous sympathy and nervous insight," he answered. "Doctors meet with similar cases in cataleptic patients. I have seen them recorded in medical books."

Percy declined to follow his friend into the mysteries of medical literature. Arrived at the Strand, he set Bervie down at the turning which led to the doctor's lodgings. "You will call on me or write me word, if anything remarkable happens," he said.

"You shall hear from me without fail," Bervie replied.

That night, the captain's pen performed the captain's promise, in few and startling words:

"Melancholy news! Madame Lagarde is dead. Nothing is known of her son but that he has left England. If he has ventured back to France, it is barely possible that I may hear something of him. I have friends at the English embassy in Paris who will help me to make enquiries; and I start for the Continent to-morrow. Write to me while I am away, to the care of my father, at 'The Manor House, near Dartford.' He will always know my address abroad, and will forward your letters. For your own sake, remember the warning I gave you this afternoon! Your faithful friend, A. B."

CHAPTER VII. OFFICIAL SECRETS.

FROM PETER WEEMS TO JOHN JENNET, Esq.,
Secret Service Department, Home Office.
Private and Confidential.*

The Cottage, Dartford,
February 24th, 1817.

SIR,—I beg to inform you that there is no fear of my being compelled to leave my situation as servant in Mr. Bowmore's house, before I have completed the private investigations committed to my charge. The attempt made by Mrs. Bowmore and her daughter to have the old servant forgiven and taken back again has failed. He presumed, it seems, on his long and faithful service to warn the master that his political opinions might get him into trouble. Mr. Bowmore positively refuses to forgive the liberty that his servant has taken with him. I am accordingly left in possession of the footman's place; and not the slightest suspicion is felt of my true errand in the house.

My note-book contains nothing relating to the past week, mainly in consequence of the visits here of one Mr. Percy Linwood, which have a little disturbed the domestic routine. This gentleman's avowed object is to pay his court to Miss Bowmore. Whether he is, politically speaking, a person of any importance, I have yet to discover. Judging by appearances, though perfectly respectful to Mr. Bowmore, he is not particularly desirous of cultivating the society of his future father-in-law. Mr. Bowmore perceives this, and resents it. He has turned sulky, and for once he keeps his thoughts to himself. There was a family discussion on the subject of Mr. Linwood the other day, which is of no official interest so far. If it leads to anything, I will not fail to send you the necessary particulars.

March 3rd.—The family discussion *has* led to something.

At Mr. Linwood's next visit, the young lady (Miss Charlotte) had a long talk with him on the subject of his behaviour to her father. They usually meet in the

* Persons desirous of consulting the author's authority for passages which relate to the social and political condition of England at the date of the story, are referred to the Annual Register for the year 1817. In Chapters I. and II. they will find the Reports of the Secret Committees and the Debates in Parliament, which led to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Further on, at page 66, they will also find the employment of paid spies and informers by the English Government, openly acknowledged in the House of Lords, and openly defended in the speeches of Lord Redesdale and Lord Liverpool.

conservatory; I have broken a pane of glass at the back, and I can hear everything they say. The lady accused her lover of being set against her father by some slanderer. As her anger rose, she did not scruple to guess at the slanderer's name. She mentioned no less a person than Captain Bervie, son of Justice Bervie, of the Manor House. Mr. Linwood's defence was but a poor one; he could only declare that she was mistaken. She refused to believe this, and it ended in her giving him his dismissal, in these plain words: "You distrust my father, and you refuse to admit me into your confidence—you needn't trouble yourself to call here again."

The usual consequences followed upon this. Mr. Linwood is too fond of his young lady to resist her and lose her. He accepted any terms she chose to impose on him as the price of being restored to her favour. Half an hour later, he was walking with Mr. Bowmore in the garden, and was asking leave to consult him about a claim on Parliament for moneys due to his father's estate. Circumstances allowed me no opportunity of listening safely to what passed at the interview. I can only report, as one result of the conversation, that Mr. Linwood accompanied Mr. Bowmore, the same evening, to a meeting of the local Hampden Club. I suppose he had his reward the next day, by being permitted to put a ring on Miss Charlotte's finger in the garden, and to kiss her afterwards to his heart's content! For what took place at the club, I refer you to the special agent who attends there, in the character of one of the members.

March 10th.—Nothing to report, except the growing intimacy between Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood, and another visit of the two to the Hampden Club. Also the happy progress of the young gentleman's love affair. I only mention this latter trifle by way of necessary reference to Miss Charlotte. She has met old Justice Bervie out riding, and has heard from him of the unexpected return of his son the captain from foreign parts. From what I could pick up of the conversation at dinner, I gather that the justice has been informed of Mr. Linwood's visits to the revolutionary club; that he wrote word of it to his son; and that the captain has returned to set his influence over Mr. Linwood against Mr. Bowmore's

influence—if he can. Miss Charlotte is furious at the bare idea of his interference. Poor soul! she honestly believes her father to be the greatest statesman in England. See what it is to be *too* dutiful a daughter!

March 17th.—Being occupied with matters of serious importance, you may not have noticed that Mr. Linwood's claim has been brought before the House of Commons, and has been adjourned for further consideration in six months' time. When the country is threatened with a revolution, Parliament has something better to do than to trouble itself about private claims. It was simply absurd to bring such a matter forward at all.

This, however, is not the view taken by Mr. Linwood and Mr. Bowmore. They are both indignant—especially Mr. Bowmore. He has decided to call a special meeting of the Hampden Club to consider his friend's wrongs; and he has persuaded Mr. Linwood to have his name put down as a candidate for election into the society. Captain Bervie has attempted to interfere, personally, and by writing, and has been repelled. Not Miss Charlotte only, but even that peaceable lady her mother, is shocked at the captain's implied distrust of Mr. Bowmore and the club. Mr. Linwood has informed the captain that he will neither hear nor read one word from him in disparagement of Mr. Bowmore. Miss Charlotte is not ungrateful for this proof of confidence in her father. The gossip among the women in the kitchen informs me that she has consented to appoint the wedding-day.

March 26th.—A longer time than usual has elapsed since the date of my last report.

On reflection, I thought it best to decide our doubt, whether Mr. Bowmore is or is not the secret agent in England of a club of French Republicans, by writing myself to the fountain-head of information in Paris. As you wisely observe, the man himself is a vain fool, who can only give us any serious trouble as an instrument in the hands of others. No such complication as this need be apprehended. After waiting some days for my answer from Paris, I have ascertained that Mr. Bowmore did offer his services to the French club, but that the offer was declined with thanks. Either the Frenchmen made enquiries, or Mr. Bowmore's true character

was known to them when they received his proposal.

Nothing now remains to be decided, but the other question of stopping this man's flow of frothy eloquence (which undeniably has its influence on some thousands of ignorant people) by putting him in prison. If I rightly understand your last instructions, the main reason for delay is connected with the present position of Mr. Linwood. Has he, too, spoken or written seditiously of the Government? And is it desirable to include him in the arrest of Mr. Bowmore?

By way of replying to this, I enclose the shorthand notes of my colleague, charged with reporting the proceedings of the Hampden Club.

The note numbered One contains Mr. Linwood's speech at the debate, on the question of forcing his claim upon the attention of the Government. Judged as oratory, it is wretched stuff. Judged as sedition, it rivals the more elaborate efforts of Mr. Bowmore himself.

The note numbered Two reports the proceedings at a special sitting of the club this morning. The subject of debate is the recent decision of Parliament, suspending the Habeas Corpus Act at the pleasure of the Government. You will see that a public meeting, in "aid of British liberty," is to be summoned in a field near Dartford, on the 2nd of April; that the London societies are to receive the Committee of the Hampden Club on the next day; that they are to escort Mr. Bowmore to Westminster Hall, and to insist on his being heard at the bar of the House of Commons. You will also perceive that the person who seconds the final resolution submitted to the club—which declares that Parliament must be intimidated, if Parliament can be reached in no other way—is Mr. Percy Linwood himself.

I have further ascertained that Miss Charlotte was present among "the ladies in the gallery," who were permitted to attend the debate, and that she is to be married to Mr. Linwood on the 7th of April next. These circumstances sufficiently account, to my mind, for the extraordinary imprudence of which Mr. Linwood has been guilty. Mr. Bowmore declares that the "minions of Government dare not touch a hair of his head." Miss Charlotte believes Mr. Bowmore. And Mr. Linwood believes Miss Charlotte.

These particulars being communicated,

I have now the honour to wait your final instructions.

March 31st.—Your commands reached me yesterday at noon.

Two hours afterwards I obtained leave of absence, and waited privately on Justice Bervie. I had my wig and my other materials for disguise in the pockets of my greatcoat; and I found, in a deserted stone quarry, an excellent dressing-room for the needful changes, before I visited the justice, and before I returned to my footman's place.

Arrived at Squire Bervie's, I sent in your confidential letter, and had an interview with the justice, at which I laid my information in due form. On my asking next for warrants to arrest Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood, the justice retired to consider my application. But for your letter, I strongly suspect he would himself have applied to the Home Secretary before granting the warrant against Mr. Linwood. As things were, he had no choice but to do his duty; and even then he did it with a reservation, in the shape of a delay. He declined, on purely formal grounds, to date the warrants earlier than the 2nd of April. I represented that the public assemblage in the field was to take place on that day, and that the arrest of Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood a day or two earlier might prevent the meeting, by depriving it of its leaders. The justice's reply to this was not very polite: "I am acting in the exercise of my own discretion, sir. Good morning."

On leaving the house, I noticed three persons in a corner of the hall, who appeared to be interested in watching my departure. Two of them I recognised as Captain Bervie and Major Much, both friends of Mr. Linwood. The third was a lady, whom I have since ascertained to be the captain's sister. That the two gentlemen are interested in steering Mr. Linwood clear of political difficulties, I have no sort of doubt. As to Miss Bervie, I can only say that she was certainly in the company of the major and the captain, and to all appearance in their confidence also.

To-morrow evening (April 1st) there is to be a special session of the club, to make the final arrangements for the management of the public meeting on the 2nd. If my warrants had been dated on the 1st, I might quietly arrest Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood on their return from the club; and the news would be spread in

time to prevent the meeting. Under existing circumstances (unless I receive orders from you), I must decide for myself whether I make the arrest before the meeting or after.

In any case, you may rely on the affair being managed (as the Government wish it to be managed) with the strictest secrecy. Your letter to Justice Bervie, containing the Home Secretary's instructions to let no person about him—not even his clerk—know of my application for the warrants, evidently startled the old gentleman. If he ventures to take any living creature into his confidence—and if I discover it—the consequence will be his dismissal from the bench of magistrates. I believe he will hold his tongue. He is sharp enough to understand that Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood (who might otherwise be exhibited as martyrs in the Radical newspapers) are simply to disappear. What an invaluable aid to Government is the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act! Forgive my indulging in political reflection—I am in such high spirits at the approaching termination of my labours. At the same time, I pity Miss Charlotte. She is so happy, and so entirely unsuspecting of any misfortune hanging over her head. It is certainly hard to have her lover clapped into prison just before the wedding-day!

I will bring you word of the arrest myself; there will be plenty of time for me to catch the afternoon coach to London. Between this date and the 2nd, rely on my keeping a watchful eye on both the gentlemen; and on Mr. Bowmore especially. He is just the man, if he feels the faintest suspicion that he is in any danger, to provide for his own means of escape, and to leave Mr. Linwood to shift for himself. I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient humble servant,
PETER WEEMS.

CHAPTER VIII. THE ELOPEMENT.

ON the evening of the 1st of April, Mrs. Bowmore was left alone with the servants. Mr. Bowmore and Percy had gone out together to attend the special meeting of the club. Shortly afterwards Miss Charlotte had left the cottage, under very extraordinary circumstances.

A few minutes only after the departure of her father and Percy, she received a letter, which appeared to cause her the most violent agitation. She said to Mrs. Bowmore: "Mamma, I must see Captain Bervie for a few minutes in private, on

a matter of serious importance to all of us. He is waiting at the front gate, and he will come in if I show myself at the hall door." Upon this, Mrs. Bowmore had asked for an explanation. "There is no time for explanation" was the only answer she received; "I ask you to leave me for five minutes alone with the captain." Mrs. Bowmore, naturally enough, still hesitated. Charlotte snatched up her garden-hat, and declared wildly that she would go out to Captain Bervie, if she was not permitted to receive him at home. In the face of this declaration, Mrs. Bowmore yielded, and left the room.

In a minute more the captain was in the cottage parlour. Although she had given way to her daughter, Mrs. Bowmore was not disposed to trust her, without supervision, in the society of a man whom Charlotte herself had reviled as a slanderer and a false friend. She took up her position in the verandah outside the parlour, at a safe distance from one of the two windows of the room, which had been left partially open to admit the fresh air. Here she waited and listened.

The conversation was for some time carried on in whispers. As they became more and more excited, both Charlotte and Bervie ended in unconsciously raising their voices. "I swear it to you on my faith as a Christian!" Mrs. Bowmore heard the captain say. "I declare before God who hears me that I am speaking the truth!" And Charlotte had answered, with a burst of tears, "I can't believe you! I daren't believe you! Oh, how can you ask me to do such a thing? Let me go! let me go!" Alarmed at those words, Mrs. Bowmore advanced to the window, and looked in. Bervie had put Charlotte's arm in his arm, and was trying to induce her to leave the parlour with him. She resisted and implored him to release her. Mrs. Bowmore was on the point of entering the room to interfere—when Bervie suddenly dropped Charlotte's arm, and whispered in her ear. She started as she heard the words, looked at him keenly, and instantly made up her mind. "Let me tell my mother where I am going," she said; "and I will consent." "Be it so!" he answered, and hurried her out.

Mrs. Bowmore re-entered the cottage by the adjoining room, and met them in the passage. "Remember one thing," Bervie said, before Charlotte could speak. "Every minute is precious; the fewest words are the best."

In few words, Charlotte spoke. "I must go at once to Justice Bervie's house. Don't be afraid, mamma! I know what I am about, and I know that I am right."

"Going to Justice Bervie's!" cried Mrs. Bowmore, in the utmost extremity of astonishment. "What will your father say, what will Percy think, when they come back from the club?"

"My sister's carriage is waiting for me close by," Bervie answered. "It is entirely at Miss Charlotte's disposal. She can easily get back if she wishes to keep her visit a secret, before Mr. Bowmore and Mr. Linwood return."

He led the way to the door as he spoke. Charlotte kissed her mother tenderly, and followed him. Mrs. Bowmore called to them to wait. "I daren't let you go," she said to her daughter, "without your father's leave!" Charlotte seemed not to hear, the captain seemed not to hear. They ran across the front garden, and through the gate—and were out of sight in less than a minute.

More than two hours had passed; the sun had sunk below the horizon, and still there were no signs of Charlotte's return.

Feeling seriously uneasy, Mrs. Bowmore crossed the room to ring the bell, and send the man-servant to Justice Bervie's house to hasten her daughter's return. As she approached the fireplace, she was startled by a sound of stealthy footsteps in the hall, followed by a loud noise as of some heavy object that had dropped on the floor. She rang the bell violently, and then hurried to the door of the parlour. As she opened it, the footman passed her, running out, apparently in pursuit of somebody, at the top of his speed. She followed him as rapidly as she could, out of the cottage, and across the little front garden, to the gate. Arrived in the road, she was just in time to see him vault upon the luggage-board at the back of a post-chaise, which had apparently passed the cottage, and drawn up a little beyond it. Peter gained the board, just as the postillion started the horses on the way to London. He saw Mrs. Bowmore looking at him, before the carriage had greatly increased its distance from the cottage, and pointed, with an insolent nod of his head, first to the inside of the vehicle, and then over it to the high road; signing to her that he designed to accompany the person in the post-chaise to the end of the journey.

Turning to go back to the cottage, Mrs. Bowmore saw her own bewilderment reflected in the faces of the two female servants, who had followed her out.

"Who can Peter be after, ma'am?" asked the cook. "Do you think it's a thief?"

The housemaid pointed to the post-chaise, barely visible in the distance. "Simpleton!" she said. "Do thieves travel in that way? I wish my master had come back," she proceeded, speaking to herself, "I'm afraid there's something wrong."

Mrs. Bowmore, returning through the garden-gate, instantly stopped and looked at the woman.

"What makes you mention your master's name, Amelia, when you fear that something is wrong?" she asked.

Amelia changed colour, and looked confused.

"I am loath to alarm you, ma'am," she said; "and I can't rightly see what it is my duty to do."

Mrs. Bowmore's heart sank within her under the cruellest of all terrors—the terror of something unknown. "Don't keep me in suspense," she said faintly. "Whatever it is, let me know it."

She led the way back to the parlour. The housemaid followed her. The cook (declining to be left alone) followed the housemaid.

"It was something I heard this afternoon, ma'am," Amelia began. "Cook happened to be busy——"

The cook interposed: she had not forgiven the housemaid for calling her a simpleton. "No, Amelia! If you *must* bring me into it—not busy. Uneasy in my mind on the subject of the soup."

"I don't know that your mind makes much difference," Amelia proceeded. "What it comes to is this—it was I, and not you, who went into the kitchen-garden for the vegetables."

"Not by my wish, Heaven knows!" persisted the cook.

"Leave the room!" said Mrs. Bowmore. Even her patience had given way at last.

The cook looked as if she declined to believe her own ears. Mrs. Bowmore pointed to the door. The cook said "Oh?"—accenting it as a question. Mrs. Bowmore's finger still pointed. The cook, in solemn silence, yielded to circumstances, and banged the door.

"I was getting the vegetables, ma'am," Amelia resumed, "when I heard voices

on the other side of the paling. The wood is so old that one can see through the cracks easy enough. I saw my master and Mr. Linwood, and Captain Bervie. The captain seemed to have stopped the other two on the pathway that leads to the field; he stood, as it might be, between them and the back way to the house—and he spoke severely, that he did! ‘For the last time, Mr. Bowmore,’ says he, ‘will you understand that you are in danger, and that Mr. Linwood is in danger, unless you both leave this neighbourhood to-night?’ My master made light of it. ‘For the last time,’ says he, ‘will you refer us to a proof of what you say, and allow us to judge for ourselves?’ ‘I have told you already,’ says the captain, ‘I am bound by my duty towards another person to keep what I know a secret.’ ‘Very well,’ says my master, ‘I am bound by my duty to my country. And I tell you this,’ says he, in his high and mighty way, ‘neither Government, nor the spies of Government, dare touch a hair of my head: they know it, sir, for the head of the people’s friend!’ The captain lost his temper. ‘What stuff!’ says he; ‘there’s a Government spy in your house at this moment, disguised as your footman.’ My master looked at Mr. Linwood, and burst out laughing. ‘Peter a spy!’ says he; ‘poor Peter! You won’t beat that, captain, if you talk till doomsday.’ He turned about without a word more, and went home. The captain caught Mr. Linwood by the arm, as soon as they were alone. ‘For God’s sake,’ says he, ‘don’t follow that madman’s example! If you value your liberty, if you hope to become Charlotte’s husband, consult your own safety. I can give you a passport. Escape to France and wait till this trouble is over.’ Mr. Linwood was not in the best of tempers—Mr. Linwood shook him off. ‘Charlotte’s father will soon be my father,’ says he; ‘do you think I will desert him? My friends at the club have taken up my claim; do you think I will forsake them at the meeting to-morrow? You ask me to be unworthy of Charlotte, and unworthy of my friends—you insult me, if you say more.’ He whipped round on his heel, and followed my master. The captain lifted his hands to the heavens, and looked—I declare it turned my blood, ma’am, to see him. If there’s truth in mortal man, it’s my firm belief—”

What the housemaid’s belief was, remained unexpressed. Before she could

get to her next word, a shriek of horror from the hall announced that the cook’s powers of interruption were not exhausted yet.

Mistress and servant both hurried out, in terror of they knew not what. There stood the cook, alone in the hall, confronting the stand on which the overcoats and hats of the men of the family were placed. “Where’s the master’s travelling-coat?” cried the cook, staring wildly at an unoccupied peg. “And where’s his cap to match? Oh Lord, he’s off in the post-chaise! and Peter’s after him!”

Simpleton as she was, the woman (loitering about the hall) had blundered on a very serious discovery. Coat and cap—both made after a foreign pattern, and both strikingly remarkable in form and colour to English eyes—had unquestionably disappeared. It was equally certain that they were well known to Peter, as the coat and cap which his master used in travelling. Had Mr. Bowmore discovered that he was really in danger? Had the necessities of instant flight only allowed him time enough to snatch his coat and cap out of the hall? And had Peter seen him as he was making his escape to the post-chaise? The cook’s conclusion answered all these questions in the affirmative; and, if Captain Bervie’s words of warning were to be believed, the cook’s conclusion for once was not to be despised.

Under this last trial of her fortitude, Mrs. Bowmore’s feeble reserves of endurance completely gave way. The poor lady turned faint and giddy. Amelia placed her on a chair in the hall, and told the cook to open the front door and let in the fresh air. The cook obeyed; and instantly broke out with a second terrific scream; announcing nothing less, this time, than the appearance of Mr. Bowmore himself, alive and hearty, returning with Percy from the meeting at the club!

The inevitable enquiries and explanations followed. Fully assured as he had declared himself to be, of the sanctity of his person (politically speaking), Mr. Bowmore turned pale, nevertheless, when he looked at the unoccupied peg on his clothes’ stand. Had some man unknown personated him? And had a post-chaise been hired to lead an impending pursuit of him in the wrong direction? What did it mean? Who was the friend to whose services he was indebted? As for the proceedings of Peter, but one interpretation could now

be placed on them. They distinctly justified Captain Bervie's assertion, that the footman was a spy. Mr. Bowmore thought of the captain's other assertion, relating to the urgent necessity for making his escape; looked at Percy in silent dismay; and turned paler than ever.

Percy's thoughts, diverted for the moment only from the lady of his love, returned to her with renewed fidelity. "Let us hear what Charlotte thinks of it," he said. "Where is she?"

Another explanation followed this question. Terrified at the effect which it produced on Percy, helplessly ignorant when she was called upon to account for her daughter's absence, Mrs. Bowmore could only shed tears and express a devout trust in Providence. Her husband looked at the new misfortune from a political point of view. He sat down and slapped his forehead theatrically with the palm of his hand. "Thus far," said the patriot, "my political assailants have only struck at me through the newspapers. Now they strike at me through my child!" Percy made no speeches. There was a look in his eyes which boded ill for the captain, if the two met. "I am going to fetch her," was all he said, "as fast as a horse can carry me."

He hired his horse at an inn in the town, and set forth for Justice Bervie's house at a gallop.

During Percy's absence, Mr. Bowmore secured the front and back entrances to the cottage with his own hands. These first precautions taken, he ascended to his room and packed his travelling-bag. "Necessaries for my use in prison," he remarked. "The bloodhounds of Government are after me." "Are they after Percy too?" his wife ventured to ask. Mr. Bowmore looked up impatiently, and cried "Pooh!"—as if Percy was of no consequence. Mrs. Bowmore thought otherwise: the good woman privately packed a bag for Percy, in the sanctuary of her own room.

For an hour, and more than an hour, no event of any sort occurred. Mr. Bowmore stalked up and down the parlour, meditating. At intervals, ideas of flight presented themselves attractively to his mind. At intervals, ideas of the speech that he had prepared for the public meeting on the next day took their place. "If I fly to-night," he wisely observed, "what will become of my speech? I will *not* fly to-

night! Let them put me in prison—the people shall hear me!"

He sat down and crossed his arms fiercely. As he looked at his wife to see what effect he had produced on her, the sound of heavy carriage-wheels and the trampling of horses penetrated to the parlour from the garden-gate. Mr. Bowmore started to his feet, with every appearance of having suddenly altered his mind on the question of flight. Just as he reached the hall, Percy's voice was heard at the front door. "Let me in. Instantly! Instantly!"

Mrs. Bowmore drew back the bolts, before the servants could help her. "Where is Charlotte?" she cried, seeing Percy alone on the door-step.

"Gone!" Percy answered furiously. "Eloped to Paris, with Captain Bervie! Read her own confession. They were just sending the messenger with it, when I reached the house."

He handed a note to Mrs. Bowmore, and turned aside to speak to her husband while she read it. Charlotte wrote to her mother very briefly:

"DEAREST MOTHER,—I have left you for a few days. Pray don't be alarmed about me, and pray don't think ill of me. Everything shall be explained on my return. I am under the most careful protection; and I have a lady for my companion on the journey. I will write again from Paris.—Your loving daughter, CHARLOTTE."

Percy took Mr. Bowmore by the arm, and pointed to a carriage and four horses waiting at the garden-gate. "Do you come with me, and back me with your authority as her father?" he asked, briefly and sternly; "or do you leave me to go alone?"

Mr. Bowmore was famous among his admirers for his "happy replies." He made one now.

"I am not Brutus," he said. "I am only Bowmore. My daughter before everything. Fetch my travelling-bag."

While the travellers' bags were being placed in the chaise, Mr. Bowmore was struck by an idea. He produced from his coat-pocket a roll of many papers thickly covered with writing. On the blank leaf in which they were tied up, he wrote in the largest letters: "Frightful domestic calamity! Vice-President Bowmore obliged to leave England! Welfare of a beloved daughter! His speech will be read at the meeting by President Joskin, of the Club. (Private to Joskin. Have these lines

printed and posted everywhere. And, for God's sake, don't drop your voice at the ends of the sentences.)"

He threw down the pen, and embraced Mrs. Bowmore in the most summary manner. The poor woman was ordered to send the roll of paper to the club, without a word to comfort and sustain her from her husband's lips. Percy spoke to her hopefully and kindly, as he kissed her cheek at parting. In another moment lover and father had started on the first stage, from Dartford to Dover.

CHAPTER IX. PURSUIT AND DISCOVERY.

FEELING himself hurried away from all possible pursuit, as fast as four horses could carry him, Mr. Bowmore had leisure to criticise Percy's conduct, from his own purely selfish point of view.

"If you had listened to my advice," he said, "or, if you had only suffered yourself to be persuaded by my daughter (who inherits my unerring instincts), you would have treated that man Bervie like the hypocrite and villain that he is. But no! you trust to your own crude impressions. Having given him your hand after the duel (I would have given him the contents of my pistol!), you hesitated to withdraw it again, when that slanderer appealed to your friendship not to cast him off! Now you see the consequence!"

"Wait till we get to Paris!" All the ingenuity of Percy's travelling companion failed to extract from him any other answer than that.

Foiled so far, Mr. Bowmore began to start difficulties next. Had they money enough for the journey? Percy touched his pocket, and answered shortly, "Plenty." Had they passports? Percy sullenly showed a letter. "There is the necessary voucher from a magistrate," he said. "The consul at Dover will give us our passports. Mind this!" he added, in warning tones, "I have pledged my word of honour to Justice Bervie, that we have no political object in view in travelling to France. Keep your politics to yourself, on the other side of the Channel."

Mr. Bowmore listened in blank amazement. Charlotte's lover was appearing in a new character—the character of a man who was actually losing his respect for Charlotte's father!

It was useless to talk to him! He deliberately checked any further attempts at conversation, by leaning back in the carriage and closing his eyes. The truth

is, Mr. Bowmore's own language and conduct were insensibly producing the salutary impression on Percy's mind, which Bervie had vainly tried to convey, under the disadvantage of having Charlotte's influence against him. Throughout the journey, Percy did exactly what Bervie had once entreated him to do—he kept Mr. Bowmore at a distance.

At every stage they enquired after the fugitives. At every stage they were answered by a more or less intelligible description of Bervie and Charlotte, and of the lady who accompanied them. No disguise had been attempted; no person had in any case been bribed to conceal the truth.

When the first tumult of his emotions had in some degree subsided, this strange circumstance associated itself in Percy's mind with the equally unaccountable conduct of Justice Bervie, on his arrival at the Manor House. The old gentleman met his visitor in the hall, without expressing, and apparently without feeling, any indignation at his son's conduct. It was even useless to appeal to him for information. He only said, "I am not in Arthur's confidence; he is of age, and my daughter is of age; I have no claim to control them. I believe they have taken Miss Bowmore to Paris; and that is all I know about it." He had shown the same dense insensibility in giving his official voucher for the passports. Percy had only to satisfy him on the question of politics; and the document was drawn out as a matter of course. Such had been the father's behaviour; and the conduct of the son now exhibited the same shameless composure. To what conclusion did this discovery point? Over and over again, Percy asked himself that question; and, over and over again, he abandoned the attempt to answer it in despair.

They reached Dover towards two o'clock in the morning.

At the pier-head they found a coast-guard on duty, and more information. In 1817 the communication with France was still by sailing-vessels. Arriving long after the departure of the regular packet, Bervie had hired a lugger, and had sailed with the two ladies for Calais, having a fresh breeze in his favour. Percy's first angry impulse was to follow him instantly. The next moment he remembered the insurmountable obstacle of the passports. The consul would certainly not grant those essentially necessary documents at two in

the morning! The only alternative was to wait for the regular packet, which sailed some hours later—between eight and nine o'clock in the forenoon. In this case, they might apply for their passports before the regular office hours, if they explained the circumstances, backed by the authority of the magistrate's letter.

Mr. Bowmore followed Percy to the nearest inn that was open, with sublime indifference to the delays and difficulties of the journey. He ordered refreshments with the air of a man who was performing a melancholy duty to himself in the name of humanity. "When I think of my speech," he said, at supper, "my heart bleeds for the people. In a few hours more, they will assemble in their thousands, eager to hear me. And what will they see? Joskin in my place! Joskin with a manuscript in his hand! Joskin, who drops his voice at the ends of his sentences! I will never forgive Charlotte. Waiter, another glass of brandy and water."

Having succeeded in obtaining their passports, the travellers were troubled by no further difficulties. After an unusually quick passage across the Channel, they continued their journey by post as far as Amiens, and reached that city in time to take their places by the diligence to Paris.

Arriving in Paris on the 3rd of April, they encountered another incomprehensible proceeding on the part of Captain Bervie.

Among the persons assembled in the yard to see the arrival of the diligence was a man with a morsel of paper in his hand, evidently on the look-out for some person whom he expected to discover among the travellers. After consulting his bit of paper, he looked with steady attention at Percy and Mr. Bowmore, and suddenly approached them. "If you wish to see the captain," he said, in broken English, "you will find him at that hotel." He handed a printed card to Percy, and disappeared among the crowd before it was possible to question him.

Even Mr. Bowmore gave way to human weakness, and condescended to feel astonished in the face of such an event as this. "What next!" he exclaimed.

"Wait till we get to the hotel," said Percy.

In half an hour more they had got to the hotel.

Percy pushed aside the waiter, as soon as he saw the door before him, and burst into the room.

The captain was alone, sitting by the window, reading a newspaper. Before the first furious words had escaped Percy's lips, Bervie silenced him by pointing to a closed door on the right of the fireplace. "She is there," he said; "speak quietly, or you may frighten her. I know what you are going to say," he added, as Percy stepped nearer to him, determined to be heard. "Will you give me a minute to speak in my own defence, and then decide whether I am the greatest scoundrel living, or the best friend you ever had?"

He put the question earnestly and kindly, with something that was at once grave and tender in his look and manner. The extraordinary composure with which he acted and spoke had its tranquillising influence over Percy. For the moment at least, he felt himself surprised into giving Bervie a hearing.

"I will tell you first what I have done," Bervie proceeded, "and next why I did it. For reasons presently to be mentioned, I have taken it on myself, Mr. Linwood, to make an alteration in your wedding arrangements. Instead of being married at Dartford church, you will be married (if you see no objection) at the chapel of the Embassy in Paris, by my old college friend the chaplain."

This was too much for Percy's self-control. "Your audacity is beyond belief," he broke out. "Even granting that you speak the truth, how dare you interfere in my affairs without my permission?"

Bervie held up his hand for silence. "One minute's hearing isn't much to ask," he said. "Take that cane in the corner, and treat me as you would treat a dog that had bitten you, if I don't make you alter your opinion of me in one minute more by the clock!"

Percy hesitated. Mr. Bowmore seized the opportunity of making himself heard.

"This is all very well, Captain Bervie," he began. "But I, for one, object, under any circumstances, to be made the victim of a trick."

"You are the victim of your own obstinate refusal to profit by a plain warning," Bervie rejoined. "At the eleventh hour, I entreated you, and I entreated Mr. Linwood, to provide for your own safety; and I spoke in vain."

Percy's patience gave way once more. "Your minute by the clock is passing," he interposed; "and you have said nothing to justify yourself yet."

"Very well put!" Mr. Bowmore chimed

in. "Come to the point, sir! My daughter's reputation is in question."

"Miss Bowmore's reputation is not in question for a single instant," Bervie answered. "My sister has been the companion of her journey from first to last."

"Journey?" Mr. Bowmore repeated, indignantly. "I want to know, sir, what the journey means. As an outraged father, I ask one plain question. Why did you run away with my daughter?"

Instead of answering the "outraged father," Bervie took two slips of paper from his pocket, and handed them to Percy with a smile.

"I ran away with the bride," he said, coolly, "in the certain knowledge that you and Mr. Bowmore would run after me. If I had not forced you both to follow me out of England on the 1st of April, you would have been made State prisoners on the 2nd. Those slips of paper are copies of the warrants which my father's duty compelled him to issue for the arrest of Percy Linwood and Orlando Bowmore. I may divulge the secret *now*—warrants are waste paper here. Don't speak, Percy! the minute isn't quite at an end yet. Answer me one question, and I have done. I vowed I would be worthy of your generosity on the day when you spared my life. Have I kept my word?"

For once there was an Englishman who was not contented to express the noblest emotions that humanity can feel by the commonplace ceremony of shaking hands. Percy's heart overflowed. In an outburst of unutterable gratitude he threw himself on Bervie's breast. As brothers the two men embraced. As brothers they loved and trusted one another from that day forth.

The door on the right was softly opened from within. A charming face—the dark eyes bright with happy tears, the rosy lips just opening into a smile—peeped into the room. A low sweet voice, with an undertone of trembling in it, made this modest protest, in the form of an enquiry:

"When you have quite done with him, Percy, perhaps you will have something to say to me?"

LAST WORDS.

I.

THE letter which Charlotte wrote to her mother, on the day of Percy's arrival in Paris, contains certain facts which may be reproduced with advantage at the close of the story.

Failing to persuade her to consent to his daring stratagem on any other terms, Bervie had taken Charlotte to his father, and had prevailed upon the justice to run the risk of trusting her with the secret of the coming arrests. Having first promised to respect the confidence placed in her, until the 2nd of April was over and past, she had no choice left on the evening of the 1st, but to let her father and her lover go to prison, or to take her place with Captain Bervie and his sister in the travelling-carriage.

The person whose daring and dexterity had drawn the spy away in the wrong direction, exactly at the time when his absence was of the utmost importance, was no other than Major Much. That old campaigner being a guest at the Manor House when Charlotte arrived, and hearing that the false footman was the one obstacle in the way of his dear Arthur's success, hit on the bright idea of personating Mr. Bowmore. They were both of the same height and build. Dressed in the patriot's travelling coat and cap, the back view of Major Much (presented to Peter as soon as the necessary noise had brought the spy up from the kitchen to the hall) would have deceived anybody. At every stage on the way to London, the major was as careful to lie back like a sleeper, with his handkerchief over his face, as Peter was to look in at the carriage-window and make sure that his victim was inside. Arrived at his own lodgings, the old soldier rushed in under cover of the darkness, in admirable imitation of a man who was afraid to be seen. Keeping watch himself over the house, Peter sent for assistance to his superior officer, by the first unemployed man who would carry his letter. As soon as the church clocks, striking midnight, announced that the second day of April had lawfully begun, he and his assistants entered the house with their warrant, encountering no opposition on the part of the servant who opened the door. The first person whom they discovered was Major Much, smoking his pipe in his own character; and denying all knowledge of Mr. Bowmore's whereabouts, with such a judiciously-assumed appearance of confusion, that Peter and his men wasted hours in searching the house, and interrogating the inmates, from the kitchen to the garrets. By the time the spy had arrived at his first suspicion that he might have been imposed upon, and had made his way back to Dartford by the morning coach,

Percy and Mr. Bowmore were eating their breakfast at Dessain's Hotel in Calais.

Having relieved her mother's anxiety so far, Charlotte touched next on the subject of her marriage.

"Miss Bervie will be my bridesmaid" (she wrote), "and our dear captain will be Percy's 'best man;' and papa will 'give me away,' of course. But nothing can be done without you. An experienced courier has received Percy's instructions to escort you to Paris. You must come here, dearest mother, not only for my sake, but for your own sake too. Neither Percy nor papa can return to England; and your being left alone at Dartford is not to be thought of. Besides, you will help to quiet papa's mind. Do what we can to pacify him, he persists in being angry with Captain Bervie. When I remind him that he would have not been put into prison if the captain had not saved him, he smiles sorrowfully. 'I could have reconciled my mind to a prison,' he says. 'But what I can not endure is being made the victim of a trick!'"

With this domestic anecdote, and with sundry instructions relating to the packing of dresses, the letter came to an end.

A fortnight later the marriage took place. The persons immediately interested were the only persons present. At the little breakfast afterwards, Mr. Bowmore insisted on making a speech to a select audience of five—namely, the bride and bridegroom, the chaplain, the captain, and Mrs. Bowmore. But what does a small audience matter? The English frenzy for making speeches is not to be cooled by such a trifle as that. At the end of the world, the expiring forces of Nature will hear a dreadful voice—the voice of the last Englishman making the last speech. Mr. Bowmore spoke for half an hour. Subject of the discourse: How can I be most useful to my country at the present crisis? As an exile on the Continent, or as a martyr in prison? Answer to the question: My friends, let us leave it to time.

Percy wisely made his honeymoon a long one; he determined to be quite sure of his superior influence over his wife, before he trusted her within reach of her father again. Mr. and Mrs. Bowmore accompanied Captain Bervie on his way back to England, as far as Boulogne. In that pleasant town, the banished patriot set up his tent. It was a cheaper place to live in than Paris, and it was conveniently close to England, when he had quite made up

his mind whether to be exile or martyr. In the end, the course of events settled that question for him. Mr. Bowmore returned to England, with the return of the Habeas Corpus Act.

II.

THE years passed. Percy and Charlotte (judged from the romantic point of view) became two perfectly uninteresting married people. Bervie (always remaining a bachelor) rose steadily in his profession, through the higher grades of military rank. Mr. Bowmore, wisely overlooked by a new Government, sank back again into the obscurity from which shrewd ministers would never have assisted him to emerge. The one subject of interest left, among the persons of this little drama, was now represented by Doctor Lagarde. Thus far, not a trace had been discovered of the French physician, who had so strangely associated the visions of his magnetic sleep with the destinies of the two men who had consulted him.

Steadfastly maintaining his own opinion of the prediction and the fulfilment, Bervie persisted in believing that he and Lagarde (or Percy and Lagarde) were yet destined to meet, and resume the unfinished consultation at the point where it had been broken off. Persons, happy in the possession of "sound common sense," who declared the prediction to be skilled guess-work, and the fulfilment manifest coincidence—other persons, whose minds halted midway between the mystic and the rational view, and who set up a theory of "thought-reading" as the true solution of the problem—agreed, nevertheless, in ridiculing the idea of finding Doctor Lagarde as closely akin to that other celebrated idea of finding the needle in the bottle of hay. But Bervie's obstinacy was proverbial. Nothing shook his confidence in his own convictions.

More than thirteen years had elapsed since the consultation at the Doctor's lodgings, when Bervie went to Paris to spend a summer holiday with his friend the chaplain to the English embassy. His last words to Percy and Charlotte when he took his leave were: "Suppose I meet with Doctor Lagarde?"

It was then the year 1830. Bervie arrived at his friend's rooms on the 24th of July. On the 27th of the month, the famous revolution broke out which dethroned Charles the Tenth in three days.

On the second day Bervie and his host

ventured into the streets, watching the revolution (like other reckless Englishmen) at the risk of their lives. In the confusion around them, they were separated. Bervie, searching for his companion, found his progress stopped by a barricade, which had been desperately attacked, and desperately defended. Men in blouses, and men in uniform, lay dead and dying together: the tricoloured flag waved over them, in token of the victory of the people. Bervie had just revived a poor wretch with a drink from an overthrown bowl of water, which still had a few drops left in it, when he felt a hand laid on his shoulder from behind. He turned and discovered a National Guard, who had been watching his charitable action. "Give a hand to that poor fellow," said the citizen; "he wants someone to help him." He looked as he spoke at a workman standing near, grimed with blood and gunpowder. The tears were rolling down the man's cheeks. "I can't see my way, sir, for crying," he said. "Help me to carry that sad burden into the next street." He pointed to a rude wooden litter, on which lay a dead or wounded man, his face and breast covered with an old cloak. "There is the best friend the people ever had," the workman said. "He cured us, comforted us, respected us, loved us. And there he lies, shot dead while he was binding up the wounds of friends and enemies alike!"

"Whoever he is, he has died nobly," Bervie answered. "May I look at him?"

The workman signed that he might look.

Bervie lifted the cloak—and met with Doctor Lagarde once more.

ONE SPRINGTIME PAST.

BY THEO. GIFT.

A VERY small steamboat bobbing up and down on a very rough sea at the end of Portsmouth pier. On the deck a dozen men or so buttoned up in overcoats and ulsters, for, it is raining slightly, and there is a raw east wind. Half-way down the companion-ladder a girl of nineteen peering nervously into the small saloon beyond. There is no one there; that is one good thing, for, if I am to be ill, I would rather be so in privacy than struggle to ward it off in the fresher air above, with all those men staring at me. So I go below, and

make my way to one of the long red benches lining either side of the cabin.

Will anyone unused to the ways of the world believe that, though the owners are on deck, I find the only two available corner seats of those benches occupied by the newspapers, carpet-bags, umbrellas, &c., of some gentlemen who have been careful to retain seats for themselves against they require them? It doesn't much matter. I believe I do forget myself so far as to exclaim, sotto voce, "Selfish pigs!" but the motion of the boat is getting too violent to calculate one's words nicely, and in another moment I have swept a carpet-bag on to the floor, an umbrella and roll of papers to the farther end of the bench; and am ensconced in their place with my head on somebody's ulster for a pillow, and wishing very heartily that godfather would not live in the Isle of Wight, or that mother wouldn't go to stay with him and send for me to join her; or that it was possible for me to take a twenty minutes' voyage without feeling so helplessly ill: in the midst of which meditations I am disturbed by a sudden trampling, and become conscious, though my eyes are closed, that someone has come into the cabin, and after picking up the umbrella and other "impedimenta" is standing glaring at me. *Hateful man!* Why doesn't he go away again? but even with the thought another, far more horrible, occurs to me. I am lying on his ulster, and he wants it, and—oh dear! oh dear! the boat is rolling so terribly, that if I even move one half-inch I don't know what the consequences may be. In great misery of mind I open my eyes, see a big grim-looking man, (dripping with rain-drops, just retreating to the door, and say feebly:

"Please take it away. I am very sorry. I didn't think of its being yours; but—but I can't lift my head."

"Don't try then," he says shortly, and marches off, but only to return in a moment with a glass of wine, and a great bunch of sweet wax-white narcissi and dark red wallflowers. The wine he makes me drink, for the simple reason that I am too faint to refuse; and the flowers he lays beside me, saying, "Small these, they'll do you good;" after which he disappears, and I see him no more except for one half-minute after we have landed, when, though he puts me into a comfortable carriage and finds my handbag for me, he is so far from presuming on his kindness that he gets into a

smoking compartment himself without waiting to be thanked, or take back his flowers, which I am still holding in a grateful clutch.

That is how I first meet John Charlesford, and therefore, when on the very next morning he walks into my godfather's pretty gray stone cottage at Bonchurch, and is welcomed by that gentleman as one of his oldest friends, and a great traveller and botanist, it is little wonder that I flush up with pleasure, and stretch out my hand to him, as if he were an old friend of mine too; nor that I accept without grumbling the post—which, as we grow more intimate, soon devolves on me—of guide and cicerone to Mr. Charlesford in his wild-flower researches by cliff and wood and hedgerow, to aid him in his new work on the Flora of the South of England.

Not but what he is a somewhat formidable companion for a girl who has only been through her first season, and is as wild and full of spirits as a kitten; a man fifteen years my senior, and over six feet high, with one of those rugged faces which would be stern if the smile which lights it were not so sweet, and the frank blue eyes so kindly; and with the additional awe-inspiring element of being in mourning for his wife, who was killed in a railway accident near Paris, about six months ago, when he was away in England, laid up with fever.

He is quite well again now, however, and despite his recent widowhood no one dreams of looking on him as in any way bereaved, or requiring pity and consolation. The fact is, everyone who knows John Charlesford knows that his marriage was the one great folly of his life, expiated by three years of mutual misery and disgust; and repented during nine of solitude after the inevitable separation. Death has but broken the last link of a chain virtually shattered long ago; and only my quiet eyes, or girlish fancy, can see the traces of it in the rigid lines about the mouth and gravely sober brow—though even these lighten and fade before my light-hearted cheerfulness.

Is there anything in life like the colour and the sweetness of those woods in early spring? The tender, fresh green of feathery larches; the large, white, furry buds of the horse-chestnut, just parting to unfold their first fan-shaped leaves of a brighter and yellower verdure; the rounded tops of the beeches and elms still bare of leaves, but clothed with every variety of

tint, from reddish-brown and gray to delicate purple and rose-madder, and more resembling a cluster of feathery, tender-coloured seaweed seen through a powerful magnifying-glass than anything solid or umbrageous enough for a tree; the ground here a tangle of small, white-veined ivy and emerald moss, lit up now and again by a heap of pale yellow light, a clump of primroses in their rough crimped leaves; there broken away into banks purple with violets, or opening out into patches brilliant with the golden fire of the earlycelandine; glades, where the network of boughs is woven closely together in a delicate red tracery, through which the stainless blue of an April sky looks down on last year's burnt-out leaves, still clinging like a ruddy girdle round the knees of the young oak-trees, or lying on the brown earth in a light, rustling carpet, through which the wild hyacinth thrusts its deep blue bells, and the frail, rose-white cups of the wood-anemone sway like fairy blossoms on their slender stalk. Behind rise the cliffs, gray and seamed with age, silvery with lichen and red with moss, and broken here and there by a blackthorn springing from some unseen crevice, and filling the air with a snow of milk-white blossom; and beyond all is the sea! sometimes blue and calm as liquid glass, and shimmering through a mystic, opaline veil; sometimes green as the downs above it, crested with foam, and striped with broad dashes of brown and purple; alive with cloud reflections so beautiful, that for their sake one would almost chafe at the stiller beauty of a changeless sky. Is it wonderful that in such a scene, when one feels half in love with Nature herself, so sweetly does she smile in your face, and deck herself in green and rosy raiment for your greeting, that I should grow to love John and he me? And so it comes to pass that as the days wane, and the flowers bud and break, the flower of our love bursts into blossom too; and this is how I find it out.

We are botanising in the woods one day, our favourite Lucombe-woods between Bonchurch and the Chine. Our walk there has been wonderfully quiet, for John has had one of his fits of silence, walking along with set lips and blue, earnest eyes, looking far ahead as if trying to solve some knotty question in the distant coast-line; and I—I seem to have caught his mood. Certainly, mother says, I have been growing quieter and more

dreamy of late; and to-day I walk by his side rapt in a silent musing which is perfectly content to be *there*, even though he does not speak to me. But when we get to the woods, the first breath of the violets sends my girl spirits up to their wonted pitch, and I am soon bounding over the big boulders of rock, flung down from the hills above in the first landslip; and creeping under the trailing boughs of ash and thorn to fill my hat with the gay purple blossoms, calling out my whereabouts now and then to John, who is busy digging up some rare orchid roots, till by-and-by I come springing back to him, and hold up something for his admiration.

"No, not the violets; I know you don't care for the scentless ones; but this!" waving a tuft of young sycamore leaves, so vividly green as to almost pale the flowers. "Yes, now don't laugh at on me, Mr. Charlesford; I know it is only a twig, but, oh! isn't it fresh?"

"Exquisitely. Did you think I should laugh at you?" But as he speaks his eyes are turned not on the leaves but on me; and there is a look in them which somehow brings the blood burning into my cheeks. I think he sees it too; for the next moment he has taken my hands, full of leaves and flowers as they are, and lifted me down from the mossy stone on which I am standing, while, he admires my treasure, shaking his head reproachfully as he does so.

"For it will fade and die even before you get home; while, if you had left it on the bough, it would have gone on growing and deepening in colour, and have thrown out fresh shoots as green as itself for another spring."

"Would it? But it was too lovely to be only looked at on the tree. Don't you think it would live a few days in water?"

"No, child; these leaves are not like flowers. They will be as limp and colourless as your little hand would be if it were cut off from the arm, in another day. Don't you know that the green colouring which gives them their exquisite tint, is nothing more or less than the blood which runs in your hands and makes the finger-tips so pink and the veins so blue?"

He has kept my hand in his while he looks at the spray, and he holds it still. He has often held my hand before. What should there be in his doing so to-day that his touch should make my fingers tremble, and send the colour to my face

again? Suddenly his hand closes tightly over mine.

"Nellie," he says, looking straight into my eyes, and speaking very gravely, almost huskily, "I am like you after all. There is something I am not content to admire on the parent bough. I want to gather and have it for my own. I think it would not fade in my hand. Dear, will you give it me?"

Give it? Ah me! could I take it away, even if I wished, holding it as firmly as he does now? but I don't wish. I wish nothing but to let it rest where it is; and so I suppose he understands, for after a minute or so he lifts my head from the hiding-place it has found, and saying very softly, "God bless you, my darling," kisses me on the lips. And I look up at him, blushing very much, but not trembling any more—that has all passed away—and say, quite simply, "Thank you."

We walk home through the green, quiet woods very silently afterwards; but my hand is in his all the way, and though the much-prized orchids lie forgotten where they have been dug up, I know that my leaves, withered already, have been nestled carefully in his breast-pocket. I wonder—Oh John, I wonder if you have them with you still!

Nobody makes much objection when they hear of what has happened. In fact it almost troubles me that, seeing I think our love is true, the course of it should run so very smooth. My godfather indeed is pleased and kisses me, saying he wonders what such a clever, sensible fellow as Charlesford can find to care for in a silly little thing like Nell; and though mother says I am too young to marry at all, and wishes we were nearer of an age, and that he were not a widower; and my elder sister writes that I might have done much better if I had waited a little and gone into society with her and her husband; it occurs to me that, as Bess chose for herself, I may do likewise. John completely wins my mother over in their first tête-à-tête by that wonderful mixture of almost womanly tenderness with manly honesty which makes him so irresistibly lovable to those who can appreciate it; and though she sighs still, she is driven to confess that he is a very dear fellow, and she thinks the separation from his wife must have been all her fault; and as I am quite of the same opinion we are all satisfied.

And now begins that time in my life at which even now—so many years gone past

—I scarce can bear to look, so sharp is the pain its loss brings back to me to-day; that time in which I live too often now, so perfect was the joy it brought me then. We are to wait six months. Some fancy of my mother's, that people having seen the death of the first Mrs. Charlesford in the newspapers, may find occasion for gossip if his second marriage follows within the conventional year, has prompted a delay to which John is ill-inclined. And truly, seeing that his virtual widowhood has already lasted over nine years, it seems hard that he should have to wait longer for such a little gift as a young girl, who has so little dowry besides her first frank love, her freshness and inexperience, to bring with her!

But yet we never think of grumbling. There will be a little nest in Devonshire to furnish first, and mother and I are to go up to London by-and-by and help John to buy the things; and meanwhile are we not here together, making holiday, and so happy that even he hardly thinks that there could be anything better?

He has suffered so long and bitterly already from a woman's unworthiness, that the wonder is that he could ever trust or care for one again; and I feel as if I could never make up to him enough for choosing me, young and silly as I am, to put his confidence in anew. My one great aim is to make him happy, and myself a full and perfect companion for him; and though (being only a girl) I am sometimes cross, and give him the benefit of it, or wilful and mischievous, and tease him till many another man would lose his temper, it makes no difference. The crosser I am the gentler becomes John, shaming me by his patience and tenderness with "his little woman's" whims; while as for wilfulness or teasing, he either takes them as coolly as a big brown bear might the buzzing of a fly in the sunshine, or catches me in his great arms with a laugh, and kisses me into breathlessness and quiet. And all the while I am learning from him; learning how to class the pretty fragrant ferns just unrolling their green fronds in woodland hollows; how the flowers call by sweet scent messages the bees to help them make bright many a spot where never a blossom would blow without; and how the leaves that die out in a blaze of red, or gold and purple, in the autumn open with those same tints in early spring; learning these, and how many more things, in those long

rambles at John's side, when I listen eagerly to the lore he loves so well to teach, until he suddenly remembers that we have gone a long way and the little feet must be weary; and we sit down on some dry rock or fallen tree, where, with my head upon his shoulder, we rest and talk of happy springs to come, and all that we shall do in the days when I am his.

His! Ah God, did we ever think that that day might never come? Was it some heaven-sent warning which made me once break into a sob, and cling closer to him, crying out:

"Oh John, I hope God will let us live to be quite old people. I hope no one will ever take me from you. I couldn't live without you now, I love you so. Oh John, I do love you!"

And John laughed and folded me closer to him, stroking back my hair with tender touch, as he answered:

"My darling, I know you do. Isn't it the same with both of us? Why, Nellie, what's the matter? A likely notion, indeed, that I would let anyone take my pet from me!"

Likely! but it must have been God who sent the fear; though it was so soon dissipated, that in another minute we were quarrelling merrily over some argument, and walked home in such high spirits that, though John says twice that he ought to go home and write business letters, he cannot tear himself away; but stays, making me sing all his favourite Scotch songs for him, till eleven has struck, after one of the merriest evenings we have ever spent, the last—now God be merciful and strengthen me while I think of it!—that John and I shall ever spend together.

For next day is the end!

We were to have driven over to Godshill to get daffodils, this morning, and I am awake by six and watching the gray, mottled colour of the sky with anxious eyes, when I hear—can it be?—John's voice, speaking to a servant on the path below my window.

"Give this to Miss Brandron."

And next moment a letter is brought me.

It is from him, I see by the outside; and begin to fear that something has occurred to put off our excursion; but as I open it, it is not his writing on which my eyes fall first, but a stranger's; a letter to him, dated from Paris! This is what it says:

"MY DEAR CHARLESWORTH,—I have something to tell you which will, I fear, be a shock to you, and not a pleasant one; but

anyhow you must hear it, and it is an infamous shame that you should not have done so long before. I am not good at beating about the bush, so I will simply tell you that yesterday evening, coming out of the Palais Royal, I met face to face—your wife! You can guess my dismay. She herself burst out laughing when she saw it, and held out her hand, saying:

“Well, Major Burt, do you take me for a ghost? Looks like it, certainly; but you see it's only fair I should appear to haunt you, since it was you who buried me; and people do get out of their graves sometimes. How do you do?”

“I said, ‘Madam, do you know that Mr. Charlesford believes that you are dead; and that it was only because he was too ill to leave his bed, that I assisted at the interment of a person supposed to be yourself; and had a stone erected to her memory?’”

“She laughed out again. People passing turned to look at her.

“Ah! my dear friend, so kind of you! Yes, I've seen the stone. You might have given me more of an epitaph, though. But as the maid, not the mistress, lies beneath, it doesn't so much matter. Poor Josephine! People always said she was so like me. And how is my forlorn widower? Does he still hate “bonny Bohemia,” and love grubbing for weeds and beetles, and going to bed at ten o'clock, as much as ever? Do you know I've been almost hoping to see him announced as again a Benedick! It would have been such fun to put in an appearance; and now I suppose you won't give me the chance?”

“Charlesford, I need not repeat any more. In your last letter you hinted at—something. I can only hope it has not gone farther, so as to bring fresh pain into your life and another's. The post is going out, so will send all particulars to-morrow; and will merely add that the unfortunate mistake of maid for mistress—which, believe me, I can never sufficiently deplore or forgive myself—was occasioned by Mrs. Charlesford having stayed behind at a station en route, and sent this girl on with her boxes, thus escaping the accident! The subsequent concealment and deception was simply her own devilish mischief, and designed for your annoyance, the letters from her sister, demanding her clothes, &c., being positively dictated by herself.”

And then follow a few kind, warm-hearted words, but I hardly see them; nor a half-veiled hint about the practicability

of a divorce; for *his* writing is underneath, and it is that I am looking for. A great sea is opening and swallowing him up away from me; and I stretch out my hands to catch at any bit of him that remains. It is not much.

“I found this awaiting me when I reached home. All night I have been trying to think how I may best break it to you; and I cannot find a way. Will you come to me once again—but I know you will—where we have so often met before, in Luccombe-wood? Do not hurry, I shall be there all day—only if you can forgive me first. Would I had died before I brought this upon your innocent head!”

That is all. Not one word of what he is suffering, or of love for me; not even my name or his, the name that was to have been mine! There is no softening at all of this blow, more bitter than death. The great sea has rolled in and swept him away, and, with him, all I have in life; and yet I do not weep, there is not even one tear in my eyes as I throw on my clothes, dressing with feverish rapidity.

For I am going to him now. There is no thought of delay, not even of flying to mother first, and seeking comfort and soothing from her in the dull, hopeless agony, which seems as though it were crushing me to the ground. He has said, “Come to me,” and though, of course, he will not be there yet, I must go, and at once. Perhaps, if I waited, if I gave myself time to think, I might go mad, and then—! I dare not even kneel to say my prayers, or raise one cry to the Father who has laid this on me. There will be time enough for that, for that and all else, later.

The whitish, mottled clouds have settled into one sheet of dull, faint gray. The sea is gray too, a still, unrippling calm. The morning air strikes me with a damp, chilly breath as I hasten down the steep lane, past the old chapel at Bonchurch, where there is no sun to-day to cast the shadow of the iron cross upon the grave beneath, along the cliff path and down into the little wood, the wood where John first asked me to be his wife.

What am I going to do or say there? Is it wise to go at all when I do not even know what this is to him, he who once said to me: “Perhaps there were faults on my side too. She had a passionate nature; and she loved me once, I know. I do not care to blame her now that she is dead.”

And she is not dead! It is he who has

died to me. The words are ringing in my ears with a dull, fierce pain when I turn the corner of the huge gray rock which has so often been our trysting-place, and see—ah! why did I think it could be less to him than me?—John waiting for me.

John! but how changed! His hair was brown before, brown, with a golden glimmer in the sun; and now—oh! that long night, while I lay sleeping and he strove "how to break it to me!"

And even now his chief thought is for me; for, as I come into his view, a great light of tenderest love and pity fills all his worn face, and he makes but one step to me.

"My Nellie! My little girl!"

Only that word; but he has taken me into his arms; and the worst is ever then. How long we stand there I do not know. He does not speak, only holds me tightly, tightly in that strong clasp, and I cling to him as a child might if they were tearing it from its mother, trembling from head to foot with the silent, passionate weeping which the first sound of his voice had power to loose. A little cold breeze steals over the downs and breaks the vapoury clouds which hang like a pall over our head, letting the clear white light beyond rain through in broken, glimmering rifts. Far away on that leaden sheet of liquid glass, one single line of silver lies sharp as a glittering spear athwart its moveless breast. It has been raining in the night, and the drops hang like a broidery of diamonds over the feathery, deep green moss, and from the purple leaves of the honeysuckle; while somewhere from the damp earth rises a scent of cowslips, breaking my heart beneath its tale of happy spring days gone. I cannot bear it. My whole soul seems to rise up suddenly in passionate rebellion; and I throw back my head, looking with piteous, streaming eyes into John's face as I cry.

"Oh! why should it be? John, I cannot bear it, I *cannot*. I had rather you had killed me than this. She never loved you as I do. She was dead to you years ago. John, don't you care for me? John!"

Care? Writing this, years later, I bow my face upon my hands and pray to be forgiven for that moment's cruelty and injustice; but the blow had been so sudden, and at nineteen misery is apt to be unthinking. Even as it is, the sound of my own voice, harsh in rebellion, startles me

into sudden shame and penitence; for he never answers—I have cut too deep for that—only draws me closer to him and turns his face away; and I—when I feel the tall, muscular frame, which looks as if no storm could shake it, trembling like a reed—when I see great scalding tears falling through the fingers which hide John's bowed face from me—all the wickedness dies out of my heart at once and for ever in one great wave of love and pitying for him, and I nestle to him, trying, though timidly, to draw his hand away and beg him to forgive me. "I did not know what I was saying. I didn't mean it, indeed I did not."

"I know," he says gently. "Child, child, do you think I can ever forgive myself? Will you ever look as happy again as you did before I crossed your path? Sweet," his strong voice breaking with the intensity of its sorrowful tenderness, "it is my doing; mine, who loved you too well to let you be. I might have left the leaf upon the bough, and I plucked it, plucked it only to wither. May God forgive me for it!"

His eyes are looking into mine, haggard with a remorse which is so utterly selfless in its wistful reading of the white, tear-stained face lying on his breast, that strength not my own comes into me to meet and give it rest. How can I let him go away with the burden of a broken heart upon his soul, if any courage of mine can spare him?

"John," I say, trying to look up bravely, and dry the tears which dim my eyes from his, "they will not wither. Dear John, don't fret about me, please don't. There is nothing to forgive. You loved me. You have never been anything but good to me, and I thank Heaven for it. Yes, even now; for we have done no harm. How could we guess?"

"I might have waited," he says hoarsely, the anguish in his eyes all unappeased. "You were so happy. I might have left you so."

"No, for I loved you; and your love has made me happier than I ever was before, and—and for that," my voice strengthening as I see the tightened lines relax about his mouth, "I would rather have it as it is; I can bear it better so than if you had not loved me. John, won't you believe me? I was mad and wicked just now, and hurt you; but indeed I am stronger than you think. See, I am not crying now! I will try not to cry any

more; no, not even when you are gone. I know it is all over; that I can never, never be your wife now; but I love you all the same; and if it will comfort you, if it will only make you happier, I will try to bear it well, and—and not to break down any more."

I am near doing it then though; but his eyes are as full as mine, and I thank Heaven he cannot see.

"God bless you," he says then, very low and softly, "and strengthen you to keep your word, my own true love. 'If it will comfort me!' Don't you know that it is the one hope which can make my life tolerable to me? Nellie, will you give it me as a promise—to try and be happy?"

Happy! but he is looking at me so eagerly I dare not let my lips quiver as I answer, "I will try;" and he cannot speak at first to thank me; only, after a minute he takes my two hands, and bending his head low, kisses them, saying again, "God bless you."

And then for a little while we are silent. What is there more to say when all is said, or do when all is done? There is no thought with us but of the inevitableness of what has fallen upon us; no thought, despite Major Burt's hint, which might have shaken some minds less right and true than John's, that any wrong-doing of hers, anything but death itself, can bring us two together now; or that we shall ever stand hand-in-hand again, as for the last time we stand to-day.

The last time! Yes, does not the very tightening of John's fingers tell it as they stroke with lingering pressure the head bowed now upon his sheltering arms; while look and speech and even consciousness are all but swept away from me in the pitiful clutching at every second as it passes, in terror of that moment which must take me for ever from the heart which has been mine—the heart on which, even now, I lean for strength.

And I get it. When John says, in a whisper louder to me than the archangel's trump, "Nellie, kiss me," I know the time has come. I know too that every minute's delay only makes it worse for both of us; and there are only silent tears on my face when I lift it to his in that last, lingering kiss. The silver line has faded from the sea, and the hurrying clouds have broken into a small swift rain. John lifts my shawl, which has fallen to the ground, and wraps it round me with that anxious, loving care which once I thought would have made my life easy for evermore. Does he

think of that? Oh! my love, my love, no need, looking in your face, to ask or doubt, and yet through all his grief for me, his keen remorse, his bitter pain and tender, passionate love, not once has any word or sign for self crossed the stainless mirror of my lover's heart, or wrung one word of rebellion from the lips which will never touch mine again on this side of the grave.

To the last, his one thought is for me; and he knows how to use it, for when he leaves me at my own door he says:

"Darling, you have given me a promise. Remember, when I am gone, my last word to you. I, who love you more than life, who lose more than life in losing you, I trust you to keep that promise to me as you would have kept your marriage-vow."

And I have. It is fifteen years to-day since that April morning. Fifteen years! and in all that time I have never even seen John's face again, never heard his voice, or felt the touch of his hand in mine. Nay, and I never shall again till the Father of Mercy calls my tired feet to rest in the haven where, five long winters back, I saw my love had gone before me—gone in the prime of his life, and in the midst of those labours through which alone they, who hoped that silence would teach me to forget, have suffered me to learn that he still existed. And all this while I have gone on living; living from girlhood into womanhood; living as I may live on till old age; not unhappily—he "trusted" me for that. No, nor uselessly—or how could I be worthy to see his face again? only as the tree lives which, stripped by the lightning, yet holds the ivy on its branches, and shelters by its trunk the primroses which grow about its root.

There is no more "story" in my life.

FROM THE CLIFF'S EDGE.

IN THREE SCENES.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

THE FIRST SCENE.

I WAS young when it all happened. I am old now, but the recollection of it has never faded from my mind, and the details are as vividly and consecutively present to me, as on the sultry summer afternoon when I awoke from my sleep among the golden gorse, and heard the voices of a man and woman speaking close to the spot where I lay.

I had come to the place—a beautiful quiet spot on the coast of Devon—to enjoy a barrister's long vacation. I was wandering about, revelling in the beauty of rock, cliff, and swelling down; of many-coloured strand and sparkling wave-line; of gorgeous cloud and dancing sunshine; the lavish treasures of our fairest coast scenery being for the first time revealed to me. So I had rambled far, and was full of a pleasant weariness when I reached the grassy height of a great bluff, with a red-brown front to it, which stood out from the down, and had a fellow at a little distance, so that they held between them, formed by the inward course of the shore, a silent, shingly, sunny little bay, musical with the slow rhythm of the sun-tipped sea. For miles along and around, upon the land and upon the strand, no human form was visible. The birds and the bees and I had it all to ourselves, as I lay down on the far side of a huge bush whose deep gold blossoms sent forth their delicious perfume on the warm salted air, and after a lazy study of the stately procession of the clouds overhead, fell asleep.

Evening was near when I awoke, and heard the voices and saw the forms of the man and woman. I did not at first realise that I was awake: I could not get up and warn them of my presence. It seemed to me that only my mind awoke, while my limbs lay motionless on the crisp grass. The man and the woman were standing near the verge of the bluff, beyond the end of the bush of golden gorse, and between me and the descending sun-rays. They stood within arm's length of each other, but something in their respective attitudes told of division and dispute between them. The woman faced the man, and looked directly at him; she was quite motionless, and her hands were held in front of her, the fingers joined and the palms turned out. The man stood bareheaded, his hat in one hand, while he passed the other restlessly, and with a peculiar expression of distress, across his forehead and eyes. His figure was tall, his face dark, handsome, and melancholy. The woman was the fairest I had ever then, or have ever since, seen. The Italian painter, whom the people called "Angelic," never painted, when he knelt at his work, a purer, more radiant, more seraphic face than that into which the dark-browed and dark-eyed man gazed, with a look of despair; a face with clear blue eyes, a

broad white brow, rosy cheeks and lips, set in a frame of golden ringlets, which lay profusely on shoulders whose graceful form was set off by a simple white gown. There was a startling contrast between the face and form on which my drowsy eyes opened, and the first of this woman's words which distinctly met my ear.

"I tell you again, Philip, nothing can alter my resolution."

There was confirmation of the sense of the words in her clear, decisive tone.

"You doom me to despair, to—you do not know, you cannot think, what! And all for an idle rumour—you, Grace, promised to me for so long, promised to me with your dead father's consent."

"Not for an idle rumour, for you admit its truth. You have told me you are a gambler."

"I have told you; yes, I have not lied to you, as many a man would have done, and held it no dishonour, with such a terrible stake at risk as mine is—oh Grace, it's everything, it's everything—and am I to be condemned out of my own lips, and given no credit that I have confessed the truth?"

She looked away from him over the shining sea, and her face was paler as she answered him.

"I have said it, Philip—let the subject rest for ever. I marry no man whom I cannot honour. I can honour no man who owns a vice for his master."

"A fine formula, good cut-and-dried morality," he said, with scathing bitterness; "it would not stand a moment against one breath of real love—such love as mine—and well you know it! What could you own to that would make me give you up, or covet you less than I do—answer me that, if you can?"

"I cannot answer you that," she said calmly, "and it need not be answered. You are only making us both wretched. You would have done more wisely, Philip, if you had kept away, as I asked you, and taken my letter for what it meant."

"For my death-warrant!" he said fiercely. "I should have done more wisely! You were always as cold as a stone, Grace, but I declare I think there's some magic over you now, to make you so callously unable to understand what you are doing, to blind you to the fact that you are driving me to despair and ruin, and breaking your most sacred promises, in the name of duty and conscience."

He walked a few paces away from her,

and returned, but he did not attempt to approach her more nearly, and her attitude remained unaltered.

"There's no magic over me," she said. "There's nothing in what I do but common sense and self-knowledge. I could not honour the man who has brought another to ruin and disgrace—a mere boy, whose father trusted him to you, as my father trusted me—and I will never stand before the altar and swear to a lie."

"I owe this to Edward Heathcote, then?"

"You owe my knowledge of the truth to him, indeed, but it's a good debt. Philip. If I had married you and found it out, I should have been a miserable woman. What would you have been?"

"The happiest man on earth! But you never loved me; you never knew the meaning of love."

She said nothing, when he paused for a moment, but moved a step or two away.

"You want to leave me," he said, vehemently; "you grudge me the few minutes you would have denied me, had I not secured them by following you up the sea-road. You shall not leave me thus, Grace. You must give me some hope."

She shook her head sadly.

"By heavens!" he exclaimed, "I don't know what keeps me from pitching you off yonder cliff, and throwing myself after you. At least, no other man could then win what I have lost."

There was a wild look in his face, which might well have frightened a woman alone with him, as this one believed herself to be; but it did not frighten this woman.

"No man shall ever win me," she said, "and you know that. Though I do not indeed understand love as you mean it, I have been your promised wife—according to my father's wish, and I will never be the same to any other man."

"Then give me hope, Grace, give me hope. Let me come to you, a year hence, five years hence, and tell you that no vice is my master; that no man's ruin, nor my own, lies any more at my door. You know it was not I who won Edward Heathcote's money, I only induced him to risk it—"

"And with it all his widowed mother's livelihood!"

"Hush! What did I know about the boy's mother? Let him be; if I'm a gambler, so is he. Only say, Grace—once my own Grace—that I may come to you,

when this shall be the truth, and tell it to you."

His vehemence had changed to a pleading tone, which might have softened the sternest woman, had she but loved him even a little. It did not soften the fair-faced, passionless angel who stood, white-robed, on the grass above the sea. He saw that it did not, and in a moment he took in the whole truth.

"You are glad to be free," he said, in a cold, hard voice; "you are sorry for me, on my account, that I have furnished you with a reason which will satisfy your conscience, and the people whose standard of right and wrong is like your own; but on your own account, you are glad. You never loved me, even the little that you could love! Is this the truth, or is it not? Speak, I have told the truth, to my own destruction. Do you tell it now—it cannot harm you!"

There was not a gleam of colour in her face, but her eyes still looked at him steadily, while she replied:

"I will tell you the truth. I thought I loved you enough, but I have never been happy in the prospect of being your wife. I was afraid—not so much of you as of myself, and of the future. But—but I would have married you if I could."

"This is truth, and I thank you for it. Yes, you never loved me. You cannot conceive of love, neither can you comprehend despair. Well, well; it is no fault of yours. It is all over; I make no further prayer to you. I will go, Grace, and leave you in the peace you have asked me for; I will leave England at once."

"You need not, if you only wish to avoid me," she said, with a cold gentleness. "I am going to travel, with a companion—with Mrs. Heathcote."

He started as if he had been stung.

"That you may keep my ill-doing fresh in your memory! That one of my victims may be always before your eyes! Heathcote has well revenged himself on me."

"Not so, he has taken no revenge; the circumstances, not he, betrayed you. And I do not want to remember, but so far as I can, to undo what you have done."

He struck his heel deep into the springy grass, and went quickly away from her, then returned, and threw himself upon his knees at her feet, holding her white gown convulsively with one hand, and clutching with the other at her interlaced fingers. What did he read in the fair face, hidden from me for the first time, as it bent

slightly over him? Was it fear of him? Was it avoidance of him? I cannot tell; at least it was not hope for him, for he loosed his hold, and springing up from the ground, he rushed to the side of the cliff and disappeared, taking, I afterwards found, a steep, ladder-like path, of whose existence I had previously been unaware, to the sea-shore.

The beautiful woman stood still for a while where he had left her, and her face was turned away from me, but after a little she began to pace slowly to and fro on the side of the great bush of golden gorse opposite to where I lay, and I could see her features more plainly than before. As I lay and looked at her, wondering how the interview just ended had come about, how long it had lasted before I had borne my part in it of unintentional spy, she lifted her arms and spread them abroad, like one relieved of an oppression, and raising her blue eyes to the blue sky, she murmured, with a great sigh:

"Yes, he is right! I am glad to be free!"

Then, with a wave of her hand—unconscious, I am sure—towards the side on which the man had disappeared from her sight, she turned and walked with a swift and steady step along the sweep of the brow of the cliff, in the opposite direction, until a sudden dip in the graceful green line of the down hid her white-robed figure from my sight.

THE SECOND SCENE.

I TOOK great delight in the shingly strip of coast forming the little bay, with the brown-red fronted cliffs for its protecting arms. Studying it in every aspect, and under every light, I found myself, in the early morning, on the edge of the eastern cliff, lying along the grass, resting on my elbow, and gazing at the lovely lines of growing light upon the sea. The stillness of the morning was deeply impressive, and the solitude of the scene was complete. I leaned over the edge of the great bluff, and looked down; the clearness of the air was such that the many-tinted pebbles were all distinct beneath, and every ridge and hollow of the bluff was sharp-out to my sight. The cliff was sheer until within about twenty feet of the beach, where an irregular mass of reddish earth and creviced, sharp-pointed rock broke its uniformity, making a little picture all to itself. It had fallen, no doubt, at some immemorial period, and lay there, securely

above high-water mark, though sometimes, it might be, touched by the spray of winter seas, in storms which now seemed impossible of occurrence, mere bad dreams to the gazer on the serene loveliness revealing itself to the new-risen summer day.

A slight sound broke the silence—the sound of oars—and past the edge of the western cliff there glided into sight a small boat, in which three men were seated. One of them was rowing. In another minute the three men had landed, and were drawing the boat up on the beach. That done, one of them took out of the boat something which he placed under his arm, and the three walked slowly, and at a considerable distance from each other, across the beach in the direction of the eastern cliff. Two of the three men I had never seen before, but the figure and air of the third, who walked on the inner side nearest to the cliff over which I leant, were strangely familiar to me. His face I could not distinctly see, but his height and gait were those of the man who had talked with the fair woman, the man whom she had called Philip; and when he took his hat off, and carried it in his hand, I could see his dark, flowing hair, worn long, as was the fashion of those days. The man who walked upon the outer side, keeping near the sea, was younger, and slighter, and his hair was light; I could not distinguish his features. The third, who had rowed the boat, and now walked between the other two, was a stout, middle-aged person; and it seemed to me that the three maintained unbroken silence; for, if they had spoken, the voices, though not the words, would have reached me in the serene stillness.

The coming of the boat, the landing of the men, the passing of the three silent figures across the bright-lined little beach, had indeed broken up the still-life effect of the scene which I had been enjoying with an intensity that held me motionless, and seemed to suspend even thought itself; but they had invested it with a keener interest. Curiosity respecting the newly-aded human features of the scene awoke within me. Who were these three men, what were they doing there, and why had he whom the fair woman called Philip lingered in the place where he had suffered discomfiture, which he had held so crushing and complete? I asked myself these questions, feeling their idleness; and while they were passing through my mind, the

three men were nearing the foot of the eastern cliff. When they had reached it, they were no longer visible to me; and I supposed that they would pass beyond the jutting mass of rock below, and continue their walk along the curving shore. But a strange thing now happened. The young man only advanced on the right beyond the mass of rock; the man whom the fair woman had called Philip reappeared on the left of it, and retraced his steps for a short distance in the direction from which he had come. The third man remained invisible to me. The two stood motionless, their faces turned towards the sea, which now lay sparkling under the fully diffused morning light. Then the third man stepped out from the shelter of the rock upon the beach, and laying the object which he had hitherto carried under his arm upon the shingle—I could make out that it was a box—he knelt on one knee beside it, apparently examining its contents with careful closeness. While the three were thus severally within my vision, a glimpse of the significance of the scene came to me, undefined, dim, but startling; and without any conscious seeking for it. At the same moment, I became aware that a steep and difficult path, more narrow and undefended than that on the side of the western cliff, by which the man called Philip had descended to the beach after his interview with the fair woman, opened close upon the spot on which I lay, and led to the shingly strand; the lower end of it being only a few yards on the far side of the mass of rock at the foot of the projecting cliff. Now, for the first time, the sound of voices reached me, and I saw that the third man had set down the box upon the beach, had gone up to Philip, and was speaking earnestly with him. Eagerly, but in vain, I strained my ears to catch what was said, nothing but vague sounds reached me; and I glanced away from the two, to where, on the other side of the barrier of rock, the light-haired young man stood, his slim figure sharply defined, with his arms folded across his breast. A sea-bird flew overhead, and, as he lifted his face upwards, looking after its flight, I saw him distinctly for the first time. Then I returned to the effort to hear what the other two men were saying. It was vain, but I witnessed an action on the part of him whom I call, for clearness, the third man, which in an instant made my dim suspicion of the significance of the scene clear vision, and turned my idle curiosity into active

horror. The third man placed something in the hand of Philip, and immediately stepped out of sight, reappearing a moment later on the far side of the barrier of rock, and going up to the light-haired man. During the brief interval, Philip slowly lifted his right arm, and stretched it out laterally from the shoulder, thus enabling me to see that the object in his right hand was a pistol. He held the pistol thus, he being invisible to the other two, for a few seconds, then allowed his arm to drop slowly into its former position, and again stood perfectly motionless. A glance on the other side showed me the young man with light hair, also holding a pistol, and the third walking away from both down the beach.

This, then, was what the scene signified, this was the meaning of the human intrusion upon the gladness of the summer morning, shed over land and sea! These two men had come hither to set their respective lives upon the chance of a duel, to kill or to be killed; this was the outcome of a fierce and deadly quarrel. A horror of duelling was comparatively a new-fashioned sentiment when I was a young man, and I was hardly then a convert to it; but I was no less quick to perceive that this was a duel under improper conditions, than I was to discern the true state of the case. Here was an infringement of the laws of duelling itself, as well as a breach of the law of the land. Here was but one second! Was the man mad, to double thus his tremendous responsibility and risk? Was there even fair play in the case? At least I might secure that there should be; for I would hasten down by the cliff-path to the beach, and offer my services as second to the younger man.

With a last glance over the edge of the cliff, which showed me the solitary second, apparently selecting a space of level ground a few yards in advance of the rock, and the two principals, still invisible to each other and each in his former position, I began the steep and difficult descent. I had not called to the men below, but I thought it probable that the third man would have seen me as I sprang up from the grassy verge and began to scramble down, dislodging a quantity of small fragments of stone and earth, which went rumbling down before me. As I hurried on, I doubted the wisdom of my first impulse. How would my interference be taken? The man who was incurring this great risk was evidently in the

confidence of both the others equally, and must be perfectly well aware of what he was about. These second thoughts did not, however, lead me to pause for a moment in descending the path, which was much more difficult and winding than it had appeared from above, and whose sudden depth, sinking between rocky banks on either side, hid the scene below from my sight for several seconds—an interval of surprising length in such a situation. When the rough path lay again on the surface of the cliff face, and the three men came again into my sight, the scene had changed. The solitary second had chosen and stepped the ground, and was in the act of placing the principals. I threw myself forward, with some wild inexplicable impulse, to attract their attention, but the next instant recoiled in terror, natural and irresistible, for myself. A yawning gulf was beneath me; the cliff had been riven asunder at the point of the path which I had reached, and where it projected slightly, forming a narrow shelf; the rift was not noticeable from above, and I had taken no alarm or warning from the disused appearance of the footway. I had narrowly escaped destruction, but with the shock of the escape came its certainty, and came also the sense of my utter powerlessness as regarded the scene passing before my eyes. I must either scramble back to the top of the cliff, or remain upon the narrow shelf of rock which I had reached, and thence witness what was about to occur. My heart was beating too fast and my head was throbbing too giddily, for me to attempt to climb up again the path I had come down, and I steadied myself as well as I could against the shelving side of the declivity, and crooking my arm round a piece of stone which jutted out opportunely within my reach, I waited with a sickening sense of suspense and helplessness.

I had not long to wait. From my point of view I could see the face of the light-haired young man, and that of the second; but Philip's face I could not see. He was placed so that I saw his figure sideways, and the second stood between the principals, and beyond them on the sea-side. They were placed at an equal distance on either side of the mass of rock I have before described, which formed the immediate background of the terrible and ominous group. I had only a moment in which to take it all in with a glance, when a handkerchief dropped from the upraised

hand of the second, and two pistol-shots rang sharply on my ear. In that instant of time, I saw that the man called Philip had fired in the air, and that he was hit somewhere in the side, it seemed to me, by the ball from the light-haired man's pistol. For a space too brief to measure, he stood still, then swayed backwards, dropped his pistol, felt rapidly with the fingers of his left hand for the exact position of the wound, and, with inconceivable quickness, plunged with the right hand into the same spot some sharp weapon, drawn I could not tell from where. I saw the shining of the thin, skewer-like steel; the whole action was invisible to the two other spectators. I saw the sad, stricken face of the young man as he beheld his enemy stagger, just as the second ran up to him, and I saw the last movement by which, with a desperate exertion of his will, the self-murderer furtively flung the weapon which had served his dreadful purpose away from him. The weapon fell among the crevices of the mass of rock, and at the same instant the man dropped, in a heavy, senseless heap, upon the shingle beach. A little longer my strained senses served me, but when the two living men bent over the dead man, seeking for the life which had fled, they failed me; and I saw and heard no more.

THE THIRD SCENE.

I WAS in Paris. The season, late autumn, was one at which I had no business to be in Paris, but I was on my way back to England, after a spell of travel which had been rendered necessary by an illness whose effects hung about me, and made me unfit for my work. They made me indifferent to it also, I did not fret at my idleness, I gave in to it, and was pretty lethargic about everything, or had been until I reached Paris, and then I revived very much, and felt that I was going home to be all right again. But I had been especially forbidden to travel rapidly, or incur any unnecessary fatigue, and I contemplated a rest of fully a fortnight's duration before I should put myself into the malle poste for Calais. I write of the days before railroads on the other side of the Channel. Paris was in one of its peaceful intervals, so brief during the earlier years of this century, and though it had then most of its old characteristic features remaining, and was far from the elaborate modern prettiness which it put on with the Second Empire, it was the

most charming place within my knowledge. I had been rambling about for hours, and had turned into a then famous café in the Palais Royal to dine. The room was of the ordinary crimson and gold description, with plenty of light, and a sprinkling of foreigners among the habitués of the place. I had hardly taken possession of a little table in a corner, and ordered my dinner and wine, when I perceived that my nearest neighbour was also an Englishman. He was a jolly-looking, middle-aged man, dressed like a Briton of the period in every item, and he ate his dinner—he had reached its concluding stage—with a comical fortitude amusing to observe, while he kept up a subdued monologue of growl at everything; and yet he was plainly good-natured, and I saw that the liberality of his subsequent gratuity surprised even a Parisian waiter into an expression of genuine satisfaction. He had propped up an English newspaper against a water-bottle, secured it with a roll, and, regardless of observation, was reading as he ate. I had not seen an English newspaper for some days, and I suppose the covetousness that I felt expressed itself in my look, as I watched my neighbour while he paid the waiter, collected his hat, stick, and gloves, and folded up his newspaper prior to putting it in his pocket, for he paused in the latter action, and held out the paper to me. He had recognised my nationality, as I had recognised his.

"Perhaps you'd like to see an English newspaper?" he said, with the bashful abruptness with which a man of that peculiar type does a polite action.

"Thank you, I should, very much indeed; but you are going away, and I shall be depriving you of it."

"Not at all, not at all, I've read it through. There's nothing in it, but it is English—and that's something here. Very happy, I'm sure," and he departed with great rapidity; the very "moral" of an unwilling tourist, who packs all his prejudices in his portmanteau when he comes abroad.

The newspaper was four days old, but none the less was it new to me, and I, in my turn, perused its columns while I dined. There was no stirring public news in it, and it did not deal with legal business; so that I too might have considered that there was nothing in it, had not my attention been attracted by the name of the beautiful seaside place in Devonshire, where I had witnessed from

the edge of the cliff the tragic scene of the duel and the suicide. It was singular, perhaps, that I had not thought much about the circumstance ever since; but then I had been ill, and illness pushes everything else into the background. I remembered it clearly enough as I read; I could write the exact words of the paragraph here, but that would be needless; it was what used to be called a penny-a-liner's paragraph, and this was the simple substance of it.

The public were reminded that within the current week the accused persons in the famous duelling case at D—, who had been committed for trial by the local magistrate on a charge of murder, and in whose case true bills had been found, would be brought up for trial at Exeter. The circumstances were recapitulated. Edward Heathcote and John Jermyn had been arrested in the act of escaping from the country, after the discovery of the dead body of Sir Philip Trent, with whom they had left a certain village on the coast, on the morning of the same day, in a boat hired from the person who identified the two living men and the dead man. The public excitement about the matter was intense, as Sir Philip Trent was a well-known and popular man in the county, and the duel, if duel it were at all, had been not only illegal but irregular, there having been but one second present, and there being no evidence of any kind to corroborate the extraordinary story told by the prisoners. Mr. Jermyn, the person who had acted as second according to his own account, was unknown in Devonshire, a circumstance which seemed to tell against him rather unreasonably, and it was alleged that he had been solicited to act in the matter by both parties, but that the cause of the quarrel between Sir Philip Trent and Mr. Heathcote had been concealed from him by common consent. Concerning that cause, painful rumours, seriously affecting the character of the dead or murdered man, were rife, and the name of a young lady of great personal attractions, and whose family had long occupied a position of the highest respectability and consideration in the county, had been injuriously mentioned. In fact, Mr. Heathcote was charged with the doubly odious offence of having cheated Sir Philip Trent in love and at the gaming-table; and the public anxiety that an example should be made of offenders against the law which had

been passed against duelling, was much inflamed by the peculiarly treacherous and disgraceful features of the present case. Jermyn, the accessory to this crime, might or might not have been intimate with Sir Philip Trent—for that there was no evidence beyond his own assertion—that he was a constant associate of Heathcote could be amply proved. The young lady, so unfortunately implicated in this fatal affair, had undoubtedly been for some time engaged to be married to Sir Philip Trent, with the approbation of her relatives, and it was currently reported that the quarrel between Sir Philip and Mr. Heathcote had originated in the discovery made by the former that his betrothed was on the point of eloping with the latter. Public sympathy was entirely with the victim of this double treachery, and great curiosity was felt with respect to Miss Grace Durant. Was she or was she not to be summoned as a witness at the trial? Whether she would appear, summoned or not summoned, was another and an equally debated question, for she had left England immediately after the discovery of Sir Philip Trent's death, and before there was any mention of her in connection with the matter. The case was to be fought earnestly on both sides, the counsel for the Crown and for the defence being all gentlemen of great distinction in the profession of the law.

As I read this paragraph, all the clouds that had gathered over my memory dispersed themselves, and the events of the summer day, when I lay hidden alongside the bush of golden gorse, and those of the morning when I gazed over the cliff's edge at the scene on the beach at D—, came back to me with startling distinctness. These men were not murderers. The duel had been a fair duel; the solitary second had done his duty well; the dead man had been slain by his own hand; and more than all this, the tale of the provocation, of the origin of the quarrel which had had so deadly an issue, was false. The betrothed bride of Sir Philip Trent had broken with him for no other lover's sake; the accused man had been Sir Philip Trent's victim, not his betrayer. The theory of the circumstances was false throughout. And on the trial, human justice might prove as fallible as in all the preliminaries to it; public opinion had been mistaken and misguided. I sat pondering upon these things, after I had dined, so long that at last the waiters at the café

began to fidget about me, and to give me hints to which I could not remain inattentive, that I was occupying my red velvet corner, and monopolising my white marble table for an unreasonable time. All of a sudden it occurred to me that, the case being as I knew it to be, I had no business to stay any longer in Paris, my place was where all this error and misapprehension existed; to clear them away by telling the truth as I knew it to be; and to remove an unmerited stigma from innocent men. What did I here? A feverish impatience to get away seized upon me. I calculated the time within which, by travelling at a rate which would outrage all the proprieties of my own particular case, I could arrive at Exeter before the close of the trial. If the time for its commencement, announced in the newspaper I had just read, were correct, it would be impossible that I could arrive before it should have commenced. I returned to my lodgings, with the fullest sense of the absolute necessity of an immediate start upon me, made all my arrangements for leaving Paris at an early hour on the following morning, and had no sooner done so, than I felt an extraordinary lethargy creeping over me, which made me apprehend a physical impossibility of doing the thing I wanted and was resolved to do. How this determined itself, I cannot at this distance of time explain, nor did I very clearly know then. Suffice it that I carried out my intention. I did leave Paris on the following morning, and I did travel through to London, without an interval of rest; an achievement which meant a good deal at that time, though it is so insignificant nowadays.

After a brief delay, I left London for Exeter. Only a portion of the journey could then be performed by railway; and I had the satisfaction of learning, on my arrival in the Devonian capital, that the trial of Heathcote and Jermyn, for the murder of Sir Philip Trent, was not yet concluded. It was expected to come to an end in a few hours, and the excitement in the town was intense, public opinion setting dead against the prisoners. I enquired who was the judge trying the accused men, and learned that he was an acquaintance of my own. I hurried down to the court, and found myself hopelessly barred from the entrance by the crowd, and unable for some time to ascertain what was going on within. When at length the state of the

proceedings was reported to the multitude outside, among which I waited, the news was that the leading counsel for the Crown was replying on the case. Immediately afterwards would come the judge's charge, and the finding of the verdict. I recall nothing in all my life more distinctly than the feeling of desperation which took possession of me as I struggled and implored, raving myself hoarse in my appeals to someone in some sort of official place and authority to get me a hearing from the people inside, to get it made known that an important witness, an eye-witness was there, who could clear the accused men, not indeed of a breach of the letter of the law, but of the actual death of Sir Philip Trent. In the strife and confusion of the moment I did not know, and I never subsequently learned, who it was that snatched from my hand, lifted high among the swarming crowd, the paper on which I had written, and signed with my name, my earnest entreaty that the judge would order me a hearing; but someone was at length moved, by my unceasing appeals, to do this, and to send the memorandum, through scores of hands, into the court. It was done, and before I could make out how it happened clear to my perception, a way was made for me through the crowd by the constables in attendance, and I was led along the open space into the presence of the judge, the jury, the bar, the closely-packed audience, and the prisoners.

Yes, there they were, worn and altered by imprisonment, and dread, and the long-felt shadow of death; but the same men whom I had seen upon that fair summer's morning, from the cliff's edge, the stout middle-aged man who had carried the box under his arm, and the light-haired young man who had looked so sad and startled, when the shot he had intended to do but little harm, had apparently killed Sir Philip Trent. Every face in the crowd was turned towards me in enquiring surprise, and the same look was in their faces. Who is he? What has he to do with it? What brings him here, if even he has anything to do with it, at this time, the eleventh hour, indeed? All these questioning eyes confused and flurried me, but still I told my story, and intelligibly. I directed my narrative to the judge, and I remember that I kept to the point and preserved my composure only by concentrating my mind on him, so forcing myself to disregard the presence of all

the other people, that soon it seemed to me that he and I were alone in all that space, filled as it was. I told my story, and my astonishment was great when I perceived that its first effect was to produce incredulity, not only on the part of the judge, and the jury, and the bar, but on that of the prisoners. They looked at one another, and shook their heads, and the others shook their heads, and whispered, and looked at me. Then the questioning of me began. The judge admitted me as a witness, notwithstanding the irregularity of the proceeding, and I was sworn. I had not foreseen that there could be any difficulty in accepting so simple a statement as mine, terrible as were the facts, of what had happened before my eyes, but the difficulty was reasonably enough presented. The accused man and his companion had never pleaded any doubt that the shot fired from Heathcote's pistol had caused Sir Philip Trent's death, and the result of the coroner's inquest had been to that effect. The prisoners, who, if my account of my position were true, must have seen me, denied, through their counsel, any knowledge of my presence; and I had taken no steps at the time to make the truth, according to my version of it, known. I could not explain, I could only reiterate my statement. The three men, absorbed in their deadly task, and believing themselves secure from detection by any human eye, had not seen me, because they had not looked for me; the coroner and his jury, and the village doctor, who examined the slain man, had not seen anything in the wound beyond the hole made by a pistol ball, because they had not looked for anything beyond it; this was all I could suggest in explanation. It impressed the judge, and perhaps the counsel for the prisoners, but the spectators received it with murmurs of derision—which the court suppressed—and I could see that I was failing in my enterprise, and that the prisoners had not been inspired with any hope or confidence by what had taken place. There was a consultation between the bench and the bar, and I felt that I was about to be ordered to stand down, when a happy thought struck me.

"Would your lordship," I asked, "be better inclined to give credit to my story, if the weapon with which the man killed himself were found and produced in court?"

"That would make a great difference certainly, and be a strong confirmation of your narrative," replied the judge.

"The weapon, my lord, was flung into the mass of rock and earth in front of the foot of the cliff. The rock is full of crevices, and it is above high-water mark; the weapon is, in all probability, there still. Adjourn the trial, have the place searched. I will remain here, under the eyes of the authorities, while that is being done, and I venture to predict that the truth of my statement will be vindicated."

Another consultation took place, and the result was that my proposal was agreed to. The trial was adjourned, the prisoners were removed, wondering and incredulous, orders were given for the proper persons to proceed at once to D—, and commence their search early on the next morning, and I went to my hotel, escorted by a couple of constables, and followed by a mob more anxious than polite.

Early in the afternoon of the following day, the persons who had been sent to make search for the dagger among the rock crevices at D— returned, bringing with them a rusty dagger. The weapon was of the kind I had described, a thin piece of steel resembling a skewer, set in a silver cross-handle. When the handle was rubbed clean, the name and arms of Sir Philip Trent were found to be engraved upon it. When I entered the court on the resumption of the trial, this weapon was in the hands of the counsel for the younger prisoner, who was exhibiting it to the jury, with an air which happily combined confidence in its effect upon his own case, with contempt for the limited intelligence of the counsel for the Crown. The jury acquitted the prisoners, and the opportunity for a great moral lesson on the law against duelling was lost.

I am told that, though my story is a tolerably consecutive one, and my recollection of all its details is very clear, for the work of the memory of an old man like me, there are many incongruities in it, it is unfinished, and it has lapses in it, which need filling up. I cannot arrange those incongruities, nor fill those lapses, nor can I finish my story. Is any story ever finished? Especially when it is not a story but a dream. Nothing in all my life is more real to me than the scene which I saw from the cliff's edge at D—, and yet they assure me it is only a dream, a fever phantom of the time when I lay ill for weeks after a fall which I had in climbing up a sea road in that neighbourhood, on the very day which I cherish and

bless for ever in the calendar of my memory, beyond all days of my life, except one, my wedding-day. It was the 10th of June, and I had that morning seen for the first time the fairest woman in all the world, the white-robed angel of my story, my dream, and my life. Her name is Grace, and mine is Edward Heathcote.

THREE MONTHS AFTER DATE.

BY THE

AUTHORS OF "WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME."

THERE is, on high ground, a southern suburb, lying, as the auctioneers say, "well positioned" between Tooting Beck and Clapham Commons. The air is fresh, the soil gravel, the society eminently respectable. Bankers, merchants, and City men generally choose it for their home; but, from the number of them settled there, the locality would seem to exercise an especial claim over the produce brokers. The late Sir Francis Bigsby, Bart., alderman, having passed the chair, and produce broker of Mincing-lane, when he moved from Highbury, selected Clapham-park for his residence.

"The Limes," a square, well-built, in-artistic, most comfortable house, seated in the midst of some ten or a dozen acres of garden, grounds, and paddock, was one of the hereditaments he devised to his young and handsome widow; and to this house, after a couple of years of mourning for Sir Francis, she took home Mr. Farquhar, a quiet gentleman, who had left the army early in life, a widower, with one son, seventeen years of age.

Farquhar's friends thought he had made a good match, and so he had in taking himself and his four hundred a year to The Limes. After a short experience of the lady, he found his own level—the little smoking-room she allotted to him, and "that nasty pipe" he was so much attached to.

He attended her ladyship to the parties about Streatham, and Balham, and Clapham, and was very uncomfortable generally among the people he met there, reading the next Saturday morning in the local prints that Lady Bigsby and Mr. Farquhar were "observed" at Mrs. Alderman's garden-party, or were among the guests at Mrs. Turtle's fancy dress ball. An entertainment of this kind proved fatal. By his wife's command, Mr. Farquhar assumed

the character of Winter on a very cold night, as part of a quartet in which her ladyship appeared in a Roman peasant dress as Autumn, and her two nieces as Spring and Summer. The effect produced at the time was good, Lady Bigsby receiving the congratulations of her acquaintance upon one of her happiest ideas as she sailed about the rooms at the ball, with a basket of fruit on her arm, and a dress trimmed with autumn leaves, bunches of grapes, and miniature sheaves of corn. But, a fortnight after, her husband died of pleurisy, and she was a second time a widow with a stepson, aged thirty-one—"somewhere abroad"—and two nieces—one married and settled at Streatham, the other living with her aunt.

Lady Bigsby took the death of her second husband as resignedly as she did that of her first; but Rose Maxwell—a girl with a soft heart—mourned long the loss of her uncle.

Thus much by way of prologue. I will now divide my story into three scenes, which we will call, if you please, October, June, and September.

October: scene—the drawing-room at The Limes: present—Lady Bigsby, in a Marie Stuart cap, with long tulle streamers over her shoulders, and crape covered gown. Rose Maxwell, simply clad in merino of sombre tint; in fact, in what is called half-mourning.

They were expecting the arrival of Arthur Farquhar from South America.

Taking up a telegram which lies on a work-table near her, Lady Bigsby reads: "He says he shall 'arrive Clapham Junction 9.30.'"

Rose: "It is a quarter to ten now; he ought soon to be here."

"If he is like his poor father, child, he won't hurry; and the South-Western trains are generally late, too. I almost wish now I had sent the carriage, but I do not like having Robert waiting about at a station. A cab will do just as well."

"It would have looked attentive, aunt."

"Nonsense, child," said the matron, giving the folds of her gown an impatient shake; "young men who have been roughing it, as they call it, all over the world, and never, I daresay, seeing, much less riding in, a civilised vehicle, can ride in anything."

"I do wonder what he will be like," said Rose demurely, to herself more than

to her aunt, for she was a young lady who took a healthy interest in the affairs of life; and the prospect of seeing Cousin Arthur for the first time, and under circumstances into which, later on, some little element of romance might be imported, made her young heart beat quicker. She loved a bit of romance, as all honest young Englishwomen do, and here was a stranger dropping down from the clouds into the drawing-room at Clapham, who might turn out to be—anything. So she questioned her aunt to fill up time. "What do you think he will look like, aunt?"

"Heaven knows, child. When he went off—came in as cool as a cucumber one fine morning (I recollect as well as if it were yesterday) and told his father—he never honoured me with his conversation—that he did not like the City, though the late Sir Francis's partner took him at my request, and informed us he was going abroad. If I had been his father he would not have gone. I did not interfere between them, and his father, who always gave way to him, shed a few tears and let him go. Arthur said he did not like the City. I believe," said her ladyship, with some trace of hardness in her tone, "he did not like me!"

"Oh, dear aunt, that could not have been it."

"Perhaps not, my dear. I may be wrong," replied Lady Bigsby, in a tone that expressed injury and infallibility. "You asked me," she added, after a moment's pause, "what I thought he would be like."

"Yes, aunt; it is curious we have no likeness of him. You would have thought he would have sent his father a photograph or something."

"Nothing of the kind, my dear; I should never have thought it. It would be unlike a Farquhar to do it. His father thought photographs were folly. I had to make him sit, or he never would have done it. When Arthur went away he was a pasty-looking lad, just turned eighteen, a hobbledohoy, tall and clumsy; blushed if you asked him to ring the bell, and, like his poor father, was without the least taste for society or anything proper."

Rose's face fell. She said, "Oh dear, aunt, I'm afraid I shan't like him at all."

"It won't matter, my dear. He is only coming here till he gets his father's affairs settled, and some papers handed over to him—a business I can get through in ten minutes—he will go then. I never told

you much about him, for I felt sure he would never come back. I did not expect," wiping a dry eye, "to lose—his—poor—father—and nothing but that would have brought him back, I'm certain."

"Why, aunt?"

"Why, child, because when a Farquhar has been away from civilisation for twelve or thirteen years, he prefers the bush to society. I daresay he is married; perhaps to a negress, for anything we know."

"Oh!" sighed Rose, horror-stricken, having always pictured Cousin Arthur a little rough, perhaps, but a bachelor.

"She may be with him, and a batch of skewbald chickens into the bargain, for he never writes what I call a satisfactory letter, or tells you one word about his doings in a straightforward way."

Rose looked grave, for she felt she could not kiss black children or love them.

"He can't bring her here, my dear—if she exists that is—he knows me too well."

"What did he go to do abroad?" asked Rose.

"Hunt butterflies, my dear."

"Butterflies!" cried Rose in astonishment.

"Yes, those fine ones there are abroad, like the Suttons have got in all the glass cases in their music-room."

"What a queer thing to do."

"He meant to catch them and sell them. I recollect he showed his father some figures on a piece of paper; a sort of profit-and-loss account, with a large balance of profit of course. It was just the sort of wild-goose chase a Farquhar might be expected to set out on. When he was here he was always out at his knees and elbows with bird-nesting or something. I believe at school they called him Buffon."

"Did he succeed?"

"I don't know; but I know his father would have sent him two hundred a year, if I would have let him do it, but I explained that we really must put down the carriage if he persisted, and of course he gave in."

"Poor Uncle Farquhar!" sighed Rose, inconsequently; "a quarter-past ten, aunt, I wonder if he will come?"

"I should not be the least surprised, my dear, if he telegraphed from some outlandish place or other—his poor father had that trick of telegraphing—to say he would not come till to-morrow, or some other day, after giving us all this anxiety and trouble."

"Ah!" cried Rose, jumping up from her seat, "here he is."

The sound of a vehicle stopping on the gravel outside was heard, and Lady Bigsby and Rose went downstairs to the hall. At the door stood Arthur Farquhar. Rose, who had the quick perception of her sex, took this comer from foreign parts in at a glance, as she stood a few paces behind her aunt. Tall, strong, brown, with a bushy beard, large bright eyes, a big diamond ring, and a shooting-coat.

"Well, Arthur," said his stepmother, giving him her hand and holding a cheek in readiness, if required, for a filial kiss that was not forthcoming; "back at last. Welcome home—you will make this place your home."

Though young Farquhar did not kiss his relative, he shook hands with her in the heartiest fashion, taking both her hands in his strong grasp.

"I must introduce you, Arthur," said her ladyship, releasing herself, "to my niece, who, you know, lives with me. Rose, my dear, your cousin Arthur."

"Miss Maxwell," said Farquhar, "I am delighted, it is charming to see an English girl again."

The servant and the cabman were busy with a huge pile of luggage that covered the roof of the cab; the housemaid was fussily doing nothing behind her mistress's portly figure, after the fashion of those young ladies.

"Be careful with that case, give it to me. Snakes, aunt, beauties, present for the Zoo; never seen any like them before."

"Snakes!" screamed Lady Bigsby.

"Yes—perfectly harmless—in their cage."

"This," said he, disengaging a chain under the cab, "is a monkey for you; great pet of mine."

"A monkey for me! Oh Arthur, as well make the place a menagerie at once."

"With your permission I will," he answered coolly, but with perfect good humour. "I've a mongoose, and an armadillo, and all sorts of things coming along from Southampton, I promise you. My nigger will turn up with 'em all in town to-morrow."

"Nigger—in town—to-morrow!" gasped Lady Bigsby, overcomes. "I don't know what we shall do with them, or him."

"Here, Susan, take these rugs and sticks, my girl. There; all out. Now, cabby," said the traveller, standing on the steps, with the pet monkey, viciously

showing his teeth, crouched between his legs, "what's your fare?"

"Leave it to you, sir."

"I'll have nothing left to me. Legal fare, not a copper over."

"Four shillings, sir."

"Nonsense;" and he opened the door of the cab and studied the table of fares.

Lady Bigsby looked blank, and poor Rose was dreadfully disappointed with the new cousin.

"Inside the radius—outside the radius. Is Clapham inside or outside the radius, Lady Bigsby?"

"Upon my word I can't say," her ladyship replied with dignity. "I usually drive to the station in the carriage. Ask Robert."

"Quite so. Seven packages outside at twopence each, one-and-two. Fare two shillings, three-and-twopence, driver. You see I have not forgotten English money. And now," turning to Lady Bigsby, "what shall we do with the monkey? The snakes must be put by the kitchen fire, they'll take care of themselves. Where shall we put Pizarro?"

"Heaven knows," exclaimed the lady of the house. "Has he not got a cage?"

"Does not want one, do you, well-bred 'Zarro? If you will excuse me, ladies, Robert shall show me to my room. Bring up that bag. I'll take Pizarro with me, as Robert and Susan—is it Susan?"

"Mary, sir."

Robert and Mary look rather shy at him.

"And then I will bring him down, and he can have a bit of supper with us."

"With us!" exclaimed Lady Bigsby, as the traveller, led by Robert, strode up the stairs with his monkey on his shoulder; "well, my dear, what do you think of this? I declare I am nonplussed."

It was five minutes after twelve, when the two ladies found themselves seated before the fire in Lady Bigsby's dressing-room.

"Aunt!"

"Rose!"

And they pressed each other's hands in sympathy; but, being women, were not silent long.

"I declare I feel already as if I were not in my own house; he is awful, simply. The idea of my being set to crack nuts for that odious ape, and doing it."

"Mary says the cook will give notice in the morning, if the snakes remain on the premises, and of course Mary would go too."

"He shall not turn my establishment upside down, and make me the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood, I can promise you that. Mr. Farquhar must transact his business with me and go. I could not put up with it. I am not used to a menagerie or the habits of wild animals. What the Suttons will say when they hear of the monkey affair I don't know."

"I don't altogether dislike him though, aunt. He is outré, that I'll allow, but rather agreeable."

"Do you think it agreeable to have a wrangle going on with a cabman at your very door about a matter of sixpence?"

"No, aunt, certainly not, and I don't defend his conduct at all."

"I should hope not. Such a thing never occurred at my house before. What's that? I hope those snakes are not racing round my kitchen."

Rose listened at the door. "I think it is only Robert fastening the doors. What I was going to say was, I do not think he is mean at all. I think he is only determined not to be cheated, and—and—businesslike."

"Then he is the first of his family that ever was. Sir Francis Bigsby was businesslike, but then he was brought up to it. Arthur's father had not the remotest conception of it."

"Then I think he is very unlike his father."

"From what little he vouchsafed to tell us, it is pretty plain that he has not carried on a very profitable business abroad, Rose; and I believe, as soon as he has settled what there is to settle of his father's affairs, he will be off back again. And," said her ladyship, with severity, "as soon as he is gone I'll give the monkey to the first organ-man I meet who will take it. And now, child, it is time we left off talking; though I am sure I shan't close my eyes with boa-constrictors in the kitchen, a monkey in an adjoining room, and the prospect of an armadillo, a mongoose, and a negro to-morrow. I should like to know who could?"

"I think I can, aunt," said Rose, laughing. "Good-night." And she tripped lightly away to her own room, where she thought over all the wonders of the evening.

June.—It was the lovely month of roses, the trees, hedges, and greenswards of Clapham-park wore their most beautiful aspect, the gardens were bright with

flowers, the nightingale sang in the groves. It is evening, twilight is softening into darkness, soon to be lighted by many peeping stars and crescent moon. Two figures still linger on the lawn at The Limes, seated one at either end of a rustic seat—Arthur Farquhar and Rose Maxwell. For the butterfly-hunter has not gone away yet from his stepmother's house, though he has often talked of taking a run on the Continent, getting something to do, and so on. He is perfectly at home; Rose is very cousinly, and likes his society, and Lady Bigsby is most amiable. Pizarro is the pet of the establishment, being a monkey of the most uncommon talents.

The snakes did it, backed by the armadillo. Farquhar sent them to the Zoo, together with some humming-birds he had preserved, sundry reptiles in spirits, some butterflies and beetles; and all were new. The society was charmed, and gave him a field-night to help in discussing the objects he had presented. The doings of the evening were reported in the papers, Farquhar was invited to parties, dinners, and evenings—"West," as Lady Bigsby observed, sighing as she reflected on the glories of Sir Francis's year of lord mayoralty. She found all sorts of good in her stepson, and petted Pizarro. The nigger turned out to be an unobjectionable person, quite white, and an excellent cook and valet; but he was sent home to his friends at once, as Farquhar said he did not want any servant.

Of course you see why the naturalist had stayed on at The Limes. He was over head and ears in love with Rose Maxwell, and still in doubt whether she cared a row of pins for him except in a cousinly way; added to which there was another young fellow dangling after her, who, though he had not Farquhar's opportunities, had the advantage over him of prior right.

Lady Bigsby was receiving a few friends in a quiet way. The rooms were hot, and several of the guests had strolled round the grounds, enjoying the cool evening breeze. All had returned to the drawing-room, except Rose and Arthur. They sat on the terrace, with their backs to the French windows opening upon it. They could hear the buzz of conversation and the music, to rather better advantage than if they had been in the room.

Two young ladies sang a duet, then, after a pause, a man's voice was heard singing melodiously, a pretty song—a love-song—meant to catch the ear of Rose.

"That is Char—Mr. Smith," she said, half rising. "Had we not better go in? It is getting a little chilly."

"No, Rose; let us sit here. In the first place it is not chilly, and you know it is not; in the second, I don't want to see that fellow sing, I can hear him here. Rose, if I were in that room and saw him singing that stuff at you, I should—I should pitch him out of the window."

"Arthur!" said Rose, astonished, or feigning astonishment; for I think this young lady was not behind the rest of her sex in discovering the state of an honest man's heart.

"Rose," said her lover, drawing close up to her, while she turned her head from him, "I can bear this suspense no longer. I love you—no man ever loved a woman better. I live for you; I would die for you. I won't beat about the bush. I am eleven years older than you are. Can you love me? Will you have me?"

She sat with her head drooped, her back turned towards him, neither moving nor speaking.

"I am a little rougher, perhaps, than I should have been if I had stayed at home; but not worse, Rose—not worse; and I will make you happy, and I shall be the happiest man alive. Say you will take me?"

But she sat silent.

"When I came back to England, I never thought of marrying; but your beauty, your gentleness, have made me love you—oh, so well. Say yes, Rose."

And she said "Yes!" very softly, with her beautiful face averted in maiden modesty.

He clasped her in his arms, and imprinted manly kisses on her fair brow and cheek.

"I do love you, Arthur," she said, timidly; "but Aunt Bigsby has made me promise her I would never marry without her permission. I am afraid she will never give it to my marrying you. She has told me never to encourage you in the least—"

"The—the devil she has."

"And I shall never be happy again." Her head fell upon his broad chest, tears falling fast.

"Now then you people—Arthur, Rose!" It was the Bigsby at the French window, tapping the sash with her fan to call their attention. "We are going to supper."

Supper! Love wants no supper, though the Bigsby does.

"Come, Arthur," she says.

She is in the light, and they can see her distinctly. They are in the almost darkness of the summer evening, and she can only see they are sitting together.

"We will stroll once more round the gravel-walk by the roses, and then join you."

And at supper, Rose is pale but radiant, without any trace of tears.

Farquhar, as you have already discovered, is a determined fellow, and means to secure Lady Bigsby's consent without a day's delay. Smith, the pretendant to Rose's hand—with the prior claim, however—and one or two other people loiter about after supper; until the evening has got so late, when Lady Bigsby, Rose, and he are left together, that he concludes it is best to put the matter off till the morning.

Rose blushes a heavenly pink when they meet at the breakfast-table, as her eye rests on his. Lady Bigsby is rather late, giving the lovers time for an opportune tête-à-tête. When she makes her appearance, she is not in her best temper; she has in her hand a large blue envelope, which is presumably the cause of her annoyance.

The high spirits of the other two, however, soon revive her, and breakfast goes off smoothly, and even pleasantly, with a fair mixture in the conversation of good-humoured banter about the people at the party the night before. The only remark that gives trouble to Rose and makes her blush crimson, is when Lady Bigsby says: "You were very nonchalant in your behaviour to Mr. Smith last night, Rose. You must be very civil to him when you meet him to-morrow, and wipe out the remembrance of an unpleasant impression."

"You know, Arthur," said her ladyship, playfully tapping his arm with her fat white hand, "I have made up my mind to marry these two eligible parties. The Smiths are rich, Rose is poor—they are very nice people. You need not blush, my dear. I am sure that young fellow is on the eve of popping the question. I expect it every time he comes."

During this speech, a peony's were a pale colour compared with Rose's tell-tale cheek. Arthur simply drooped his eyelids after his own manner and wrinkled his forehead, at the same time giving Rose's foot a gentle pressure, intended to be reassuring and to mean, "I will make this right directly. You will see."

They were leaving the room together, when Lady Bigsby stopped him.

"You go, Rose," she said; "I want to speak to Arthur."

"I was just going to say I wished to have a word or two with you, Lady Bigsby."

"Come then, you begin."

"Ladies first."

"Well, I was going to ask your advice, Arthur, and I hope you will oblige me by attending to what I am saying, and not sit as you sometimes do when I begin to talk, staring into vacancy and thinking of something else all the while."

"I promise you my best attention," Arthur replied.

"Then I will premise by saying, that the late Sir Francis did not behave so well to me as he should have done. There was very little of his property settled on me, for, as I had no money of my own, my poor father at the time felt that the matter ought to be left to Sir Francis entirely. This was done, to my great regret afterwards, but I was too young and inexperienced then to know anything about it."

Arthur bowed, and Lady Bigsby proceeded.

"I took care when I married my niece from this house, that everything that was handsome was done. I shall take the same care in Rose's case. People say married and settled; I say settled, then married. If my own income were twice as large, I should not have a penny more than I could spend, living in the most careful way. It is true I have this house rent-free for my life, but I have come to the conclusion that, now your father's income has become yours, I must leave off keeping a carriage. It's very hard after so many years."

"Very hard," said Arthur.

"Well, now comes the tug of war," said her ladyship; "I have very rarely been fool enough to lend any money."

"I can quite believe it."

"Yes, but some time ago, under circumstances of a very peculiar kind, I lent an old friend, not money exactly, that was not asked, but my name, which had been asked for."

"You put your name on the back of a bill?"

"On the front: I am the acceptor. I am quite familiar with all these terms, and the routine of business. I used to help Sir Francis so much after he had his first stroke, and while he was able to attend at all to his affairs."

"A lady or a gentleman?"

"A lady—an old schoolfellow who had claims on me I could not resist very well."

"You will have to provide the money to meet it, I suppose."

"That is the tug of war I spoke of. I haven't got the money, Arthur."

"How much is it?"

"Six hundred pounds."

"Phe-w-w. Lady Bigsby, I respect the promptings of a generous heart, but be whipped if I thought you were the woman to have done it."

"I am not so hard as you think me," said her ladyship, graciously placing her hand on his shoulder. "Now advise me, Arthur, what is to be done? I only want your advice—I know out of your income you can't help me with the money. I spoke to my lawyer yesterday, and he said he hardly saw his way, which meant he did not want to lend me the money. I may tell you that the document bearing my name was given to a man to whom my friend was indebted for the sum it represented. She has got a friend who would endorse a new note at three months, and with two new names, the man would renew it for three months at moderate interest, which I think might be paid for the accommodation."

Arthur Farquhar sat pulling his long beard, without replying to the obvious hint.

"Arthur," said Lady Bigsby, in her sweetest tones, "I was—going—to ask—you."

He looked up, and was about to speak, when Lady Bigsby interrupted.

"There, there; don't begin to tell me you never did such a thing in your life—strong objection to put your name on stamped paper—could not possibly meet it—render yourself liable, etc. etc. My dear Arthur, there is really not the least risk in the world, as I know my friend will have the money ready long before the acceptance becomes due; and if there is an esolandre about it now, she is a ruined woman. You were going to say you wouldn't, I know you were; but do say yes, and oblige me for ever."

"Lady Bigsby, if you had permitted me, I was going to say I should do it with all the pleasure in the world."

"Arthur," taking his hand, "how kind of you!"

"Don't say a word more about it. After the great kindness I have received from you and from Rose since I have been back in England, the obligation still remains with me."

"If we have made you comfortable, we

are delighted. I am so much obliged to you; you have helped me out of a great difficulty.

"Then," said her ladyship firmly, fetching a pen and ink from the next room, "you shall write your name here now, and the thing will be done, and I will have it posted at once."

In half a minute "Arthur Farquhar" was scrawled across on the bill, and underneath it "Charlotte Bigsby" appeared, in the neat running hand the writer had learned at school—angular, with very sharp crosses and dots, such as young ladies were taught to make thirty years ago.

Having carefully blotted the signatures, Lady Bigsby rang the bell, and handing the letter to the maid who answered the summons, said, "Give that to Robert to post—tell him to take it at once."

"Now I shall ask you to give me a minute or two," said Arthur, rising, and standing with his back to the empty fireplace. "Lady Bigsby, I am going to ask your opinion, advice, and, I may say also, your consent, to a step I think of taking which will have an important effect upon my life after I have taken it."

"If it is anything about business or occupying your time, I shall say yes at once, Arthur; you are not in that way in the least like your poor father, for I am sure you have real aptitude for business."

"You think I have, Lady Bigsby?"

"I do. And if I were you I would not leave England again. Stay here, and we can hunt up somebody who can give you something suitable, no doubt, though without capital it's always difficult to start to advantage here, or, for the matter of that, I suppose anywhere else."

"I was not about to speak on that subject, my dear lady. In a matter of that kind I am old enough and sufficiently experienced to act for myself."

"Oh! I thought you said it was some step of importance you wanted my advice about, Arthur?"

"Quite so. I do."

"Well, I am all attention. I beg your pardon for having mistaken your meaning and wasted your time."

"I am thinking, Lady Bigsby, of—getting married."

"Married!" screamed her ladyship. "Married! Arthur, why, who in the world to? I know," she went on with her usual volubility, "to the girl you left behind you, and have been carrying on a

correspondence with ever since you have been with us, and never told us a word about. Rose will be surprised, upon my word. I really must tell her. It is a secret I can't keep, for the life of me."

"Rose knows all about it," said Farquhar, quietly.

"Rose knows; dear me, you have made her a confidante, and not me, eh, Master Arthur?"

"I had a reason for communicating my intention to Rose first, Lady Bigsby."

"Oh, no doubt, ha, ha! Well, come tell me am I right; is it a rich, young, and beautiful planter's daughter? Who is it? I am dying to hear."

"Rose—Miss Maxwell."

"Rose!" screamed the aunt, jumping up and taking her stand near the door; "I am dumfounded." This was purely a figure of speech. "I would not have had such a thing happen for the world."

"No, Lady Bigsby?" coldly closing his eyelids and wrinkling his brow.

"I mean Rose to have young Smith. He is madly in love with her, I know; and you know that his father has got fifteen thousand pounds a year, and that he and his sister will have it all."

"I had heard so."

"No, Arthur; come, let us be serious; you know you can't afford to marry a poor girl, and Rose hasn't a penny. What I have been thinking of I don't know, to let this be going on under my very eyes, and not see it. I am sure I never dreamt of this. I thought you were cousins, and nothing more. You do shock me. I hope you have not said a word of this to Rose."

"She returns my love and will marry me with your consent."

"Which I will never give, if I live to be as old as Methuselah. A girl with Rose's face and style to be almost a pauper, to be absolutely thrown away."

"Thank you, Lady Bigsby."

"Oh, I know I am in a fine fume, and not without cause. In common decency you know, Arthur, you can't stay any longer. You have really quite abused my hospitality."

"Yes; well, I am ready to pack up my traps now, if your ladyship will permit me to leave the room."

"Not till I have called Rose in and placed her face to face with you, and asked her what she means."

The door opened, and in walked Rose.

"What is all this, Rose?"

"I love him, aunt."

"But you shall never marry him if I can stop it. Arthur, you will go; Rose, you will forget him."

"Never, aunt."

"I will get that document back tomorrow, Arthur. I am dreadfully sorry now I ever sent it to the post."

"I will not stay now. I will send for my traps. Rose, you will not forget me, or love me less, if I go away for a short time?"

"Oh, don't go, Arthur; aunt will forgive me."

"Never!" said the worldly one, inexorably, "but I will try to bring you to your senses."

"Good-bye, Rose," said Farquhar.

"Good-bye, Lady Bigsby. I will come back, surely."

"When, Arthur, when," cried Rose, all tears, and looking supremely lovely through her grief, "when shall we see you again?"

"Three months after date."

Which reply almost gave Lady Bigsby a fit.

He kissed Rose, and bowing stiffly to her ladyship, he crossed the hall, slammed the door after him, and was gone.

September.—"Property. I had no idea he had any property to look after," said her ladyship, after Arthur's first letter to Rose arrived. "I did not give a Farquhar credit for having done any good for himself."

The three months passed slowly by on leaden wings for Rose, but a long letter every mail from Arthur did much to cheer her, and reconcile her to his absence. Having had much experience of her aunt's character, and really loving her, she listened, without comment, to the sermons delivered on the subject of pauper marriages, but secretly made up her mind to take Arthur for better or for worse when he came back to claim her, with her aunt's consent if she could get it, without it if she could not.

During the last two or three weeks before Arthur's return, Lady Bigsby fidgeted about the acceptance, which I need hardly say Farquhar paid.

"I hope you are not angry with me?" said her ladyship.

"Not the least; my dear aunty; it is not the smallest inconvenience to me."

"And you are quite rich. Dear me, wonders never cease. If I were younger

I would go out, butterfly hunting, and silver prospecting, and so on, myself. You will make him a good wife, Rose; he is just the man I always pictured you would have. I am not sorry to leave The Limes for a smaller house in the neighbourhood, and I promise you I shall very often come to see you."

"You can't come too often, dear aunt, after we come back," said Rose.

"And about when do you think that will be?"

"When will it be, Arthur?"

"Well, dearest, let us say three months after date."

MAJOR MACBETH.

BY DUTTON COOK.

It was a sea-port, and had claims to be accounted a fashionable watering-place, but in comparison with more famous resorts, it was quite of miniature dimensions; on the scale, let us say, of half an inch to the foot. It possessed a small wooden pier or jetty running out into the sea, but to no great distance, stopping short suddenly as though exhausted by the exertion; a confined harbour, which at low tide smelt as badly as if it had been of much larger size; a Place d'Armes; an Hôtel de Ville; an abattoir; an établissement; a market-place with a little fountain in its midst; and a building, diminutive, but yet of ornate and pretentious aspect, which you were requested to consider a cathedral, however much you might be disposed to think of it merely as a chapel of ease. Add uneven tiers of high, red-roofed, white-faced houses, with green blinds, climbing almost from the water's edge to the top of the steep hill at the back; sprinkle the streets and the shaded avenue leading up to what is called the High Town with clusters of lively children, guarded by cheery bonnes in the whitest of caps; with squads of red-trousered soldiers, low of stature but gallant of port; with groups of red-nightcapped fishermen and bare-legged fisherwomen; and dot here and there about the scene the rusty black, burly figure of a priest, with a red-edged breviary in his hand, a shovel-hat upon his head, and a green or purple cotton umbrella under his arm, and you have Blancheville-sur-Mer completely before you. Stay, there is just one thing more—the English boarding-house in the

Rue de l'Univers, kept however by a French lady, the widow of an Englishman, and calling herself Madame Wix, her husband having spelt the name Wicks. It was at the English boarding-house that I met Major Macbeth.

If you, being an Englishman, stayed at Blancheville-sur-Mer during the summer months, it was well understood that you came to enjoy the sea-air, to bathe, to pace the pier or the sands, to enjoy yourself generally. You were welcome, you paid your money, you took your departure; no questions were asked concerning you, and no further thought was bestowed upon you. But if you remained at Blancheville-sur-Mer during the winter, then the explanation was very simple. You were in debt and in difficulties, and you could not return to your native land for fear of creditors, arrest, writs of execution, imprisonment, and such like disasters and disagreeables.

It was admitted upon all hands that the major was a gentlemanly man and a well-informed man, who had travelled, who had seen life, who had served—it was not certain where, but Mexico, the Brazils, the territory of the Nizam, and other outlandish parts were vaguely hinted at. The major was not explicit upon the subject, but he had been known to mention that he had at no time held a commission in the service of the British crown. All the same, his belligerent figure and presence, the projection of his chest, the curve of his moustaches, the firmness of his step, the stiffness of his movements, fully justified his assumption of a military title. Indeed, if he had designated himself a colonel, or even a general, no one could reasonably have objected. There was a sort of modesty in his contentment with the simple rank of major.

That the major was poor was beyond question. Some means he undoubtedly possessed, but they must have been decidedly limited; and he was glad to supplement them by turning to pecuniary account his dexterity as a billiard-player and his skill at the whist-table. No one had ventured to impute to the major any unfairness of conduct, either with the cues or with the cards, but the advantages arising from long experience and constant practice he certainly enjoyed. He was very neat in his dress, but the seams of his garments were whitened by age and wear; his linen was clean always, but frayed as to its edges; his hat shone,

not with the gloss of youth, but with that rather woebegone lustre induced by the application of a wet brush.

He was a handsome man still, although no doubt his personal attractions were rather out of repair. His shapely features were a trifle pinched, his complexion had faded and sallowed, his eyes had dimmed, and round them had gathered a curious collection of wrinkles. His hair had thinned, and now needed careful combing, so as to form a sort of trellis-work over a large bald circle upon his crown. He had indeed a very worn and withered look. But he spoke pleasantly, and was very willing to converse; his manners were irreproachable, and his smile was really engaging; he seemed easily pleased himself, and showed alacrity in his efforts to please others. Indeed, he was voted generally to be quite an acquisition—that was the term we employed—an acquisition to the circle at the English boarding-house in the Rue de l'Univers, Blancheville-sur-Mer.

I was for a period—no matter on what account, that is a matter of detail we need not discuss—one of Madame Wix's "in-mates," as she preferred that we should call ourselves. Her charges were moderate, and her establishment was conducted with reasonable regard for cleanliness and comfort. She was really a clever woman. She kept up appearances wonderfully, and she had an admirable way of accepting the appearances kept up by others, of affecting not to penetrate their disguises, or to perceive the flimsiness of their pretexts. She took care to be paid, of course, but she was anxious at the same time that her establishment should be maintained in what I may call the odour of gentility. We might, or some of us might, be a little embarrassed pecuniarily, our clothes might not be of the newest gloss, or of the latest cut; still, from Madame Wix's point of view, we were all strictly ladies and gentlemen. She welcomed us to her drawing-room in the evening, regaling us, and inviting us to regale ourselves, with music, both vocal and instrumental. She herself was accustomed upon occasions to aling a guitar about her, and to bid it discourse after a feeble tinkling and twanging fashion, accompanying her voice, which was not perhaps what once it had been. There were whispers indeed that Madame Wix had early in life sung with applause at the opera-house; but the rumour did not meet with implicit belief, evidence in support of it being certainly indistinct.

She was one of those very plain French-women, who yet somehow justify a claim to good looks because of a certain slimness of figure, adroitness of movement, and skill in dress. She had bright eyes, white teeth, and unnaturally black hair, very smoothly banded across her forehead; she rouged a little, and the arch of her eyebrows was artificially defined; but the hard, tight look of her forehead, the dimensions of her mouth, the prominence of her cheek-bones, and the hollowness of her eyes, imparted to her face a skull-like appearance that was not attractive.

The most important of Madame Wix's boarders was unquestionably a Mrs. Berringer, understood to be a widow who had been left specially well provided for by her departed husband: She dressed very splendidly, and she was one of those women whose majesty of bearing and expanse of frame enable them to display dress to great advantage. She was about thirty, or she may have been some few years older; but the fat—and Mrs. Berringer was certainly to be so described—are often credited with more of age than is strictly their due. She was blessed with a hearty appetite, and with digestive powers that always seemed to be in perfect working order; and she fully appreciated the pleasures of the table. We inferred that Madame Wix received from Mrs. Berringer payment for her board after an increased scale. She frequently drank champagne when we poorer boarders were content with ordinaire, or with beer; but wine of course was an extra charge. She was always assisted to the choicest morsels of food, and her plate seemed to be supplied with particular liberality. Moreover, she was allotted a separate sitting-room; and she kept a private store of cognac in a chiffonier. But it was, I think, her diamonds that most impressed us all. It was only on gala occasions that she displayed her entire collection of precious stones; but when she did this, the effect in its starry splendour was certainly meteoric and planetary, if I may so express myself.

It was all very well to ridicule her as "a walking jeweller's shop." I have heard her so described; but, all the same, diamonds are things to be respected, and a woman who is rich in diamonds is almost a woman to be loved. Forthwith, many of Madame Wix's male boarders proceeded to profess love for Mrs. Berringer.

Her husband was said to have been a Peruvian merchant. She had journeyed

to Blancheville, intending to remain there a few weeks only; but she had suffered seriously on her voyage across the Channel. She had even believed that her life was gravely imperilled upon that occasion; and, finding herself very comfortable at the English boarding-house, she had remained there many months, and expressed no intention of speedy departure. She appeared to have no relatives or friends who could legitimately claim her presence in England.

My own name, I may mention, is Epps—Frank Epps. With that information concerning myself, I must ask the reader to be content. There is no necessity, indeed, for any further enunciation on the subject; for I am not the hero of this little narrative, if, indeed, it can be credited with a hero at all. Certainly, it has little to do with matters of an heroic quality.

We had been looking for some show of preference on the part of Mrs. Berringer. We felt persuaded that a woman encircled by suitors, as she was, must, sooner or later, disclose the state of her own feelings upon the subject. But certainly it was long before she made any sign or seemed to arrive at any decision. She was a good-natured woman, but her habits of mind were not active. She was always warm, and she was always fanning herself; that, indeed, was the only exercise in which she indulged; and, comfortably lodged in the easiest of chairs, warm and fanning herself, her face creased with smiles, she listened to us attentively, without according to any of us observations of an encouraging kind. I do not mean to say that we any of us addressed her formally with distinct offers of marriage; we proceeded vaguely, yet with a definite object in view, permitting ourselves looks and language which, by-and-by, might be conveniently treated as the foundation-stones, or the building materials, so to say, of manifest and positive courtship.

All at once we decided with curious unanimity that Mrs. Berringer had made her choice. There was no question in the matter. She had been impressed by the military deportment, the agreeable speech, and the handsome, if rather faded, looks of the major. Of course she had not made him the subject of any open avowal. But she reserved for him her best, or perhaps I should rather say her largest smiles; she, with some difficulty, made room for him beside her on the sofa. It was even said that her face had flushed at his approach.

I must remark, however, that her face was usually much suffused with colour, and could hardly under any circumstance know much increase in that respect.

Madame Wix had been heard to say that it would be an excellent thing for Major Macbeth. However, she had the feelings of her other inmates to consider, and she was careful to add a caution to the effect that people should not rush at conclusions, and that slips between cups and lips were of frequent occurrence.

To do him justice, the major had not been at all a pushing or a prominent suitor. Possibly to that fact he owed his success, if it were to be called success. His composed air, his calmness of manner, had perhaps attracted Mrs. Berringer much more than the effusiveness of others. People are usually prouder of a difficult conquest, than of one effected upon easy terms. We had hurried to the feet of Mrs. Berringer. The major had scarcely exerted himself to meet her half-way. Almost he had persuaded her to come to him the whole distance.

He spoke to me in regard to her with the utmost frankness. I remember it was just before I lent him five pounds to meet a pressing engagement, which had been suddenly brought to his recollection. We were very good friends, the major and I. We played billiards together frequently. Of course I was no match for him, but he allowed me points, and I have always held that it is decidedly improving to practice with a good player. But I found it expensive, I must own. As he said when I lent him that five pounds: "You know I am pretty sure to win that sum of you before the month is out."

As to Mrs. Berringer, he observed: "Never you mind what they say about the lady. It's all idle chatter—there's nothing settled. She likes me, I think; that seems to be generally acknowledged. But you know my consent has to be asked. You know the proverb, 'Once bit, twice shy.' Go in for the thing, if you like—and win if you can. I give you my word of honour I won't balk you. I'm in no hurry. I know all about it. I've been married before."

"A widower?"

He nodded significantly. "A man who has been once married, thinks twice about marrying again," he said sententially. "So Epps, my dear fellow, if you're inclined for this business, you shall have a fair field so far as I'm concerned. Walk

straight up to the lady; win and wear her, if you can, diamonds and all. And now we'll go and knock the balls about a bit."

He was a pleasant man; but I was never quite satisfied as to the perfect sincerity of Major Macbeth.

We were sitting at dinner one day—and we had generally very good dinners at Madame Wix's, although about French fowls there certainly is an inclination to be skinny, and yellow, and bony, to an extent I have never observed in English poultry—when Jules the waiter approached the major, handing upon his salver a crumpled note in the form of a cocked hat.

The major took it with an indifferent air and opened it leisurely. But presently, I noticed that his face had undergone an extraordinary change. He rose abruptly, and murmuring some confused words of apology, hurriedly quitted the room.

Madame Wix's inmates looked at each other. Someone asked Jules who had brought the letter? Jules answered simply, "a lady." Madame Wix's inmates smiled, winked, and shrugged their shoulders, with the exception of Mrs. Berringer, who laid down her knife and fork, and took up her champagne-glass.

Some hours passed; Major Macbeth did not return. "Poor man, to go away in the middle of his dinner!" said Madame Wix, pityingly. To do her justice, she was never disposed to stint her inmates; she liked to see them enjoy their meals, even though her profits might in such wise undergo diminution.

The wind was blowing rather hard, and I could hear from a considerable distance the sound of the waves beating upon the sands, or thumping against the timbers of the pier. The moon was shining brightly, however, if, every now and then, ragged and twisting scraps and patches of cloud were driven swiftly across its surface, dimming its radiance for the moment. I lighted a cigar, and buttoning up my coat to the neck, sallied forth for a brief walk before bed-time.

At first I kept well under the shadow and shelter of the houses. But presently I was drawn nearer to the sea by the attractions of the moon, the red and green gleams of the harbour and pier lights, and the clouds of steam of the packet puffing beside the jetty, only waiting for the mails to start on its midnight voyage across the Channel.

There were but four people on the pier;

it was very wet with spray, and in places the waves almost washed over it. Yet—surely I could not be mistaken—there stood, leaning against the luggage-crane, and partly sheltered by it from the wind, the figure of Major Macbeth. He was lightly clad for so rough and cold a night. Some thin sort of overcoat he wore, otherwise he was in evening dress. He was not alone. He was engaged in close conversation with a woman, wrapped in a heavy waterproof cloak. I could not see her face.

I walked rapidly away towards the lighthouse at the head of the pier. I did not want him to think that I was watching him, or trying to overhear anything he might say. But it was clear that I must, in returning, pass very close to him again. For a moment's deliberation I waited on the least windy side of the lighthouse.

"Hullo!" said some one. I recognised the voice. It belonged to one of my fellow-inmates of the English boarding-house. A quiet, prosaic, rather corpulent person, with a fat, unmeaning face, adorned by a neat pair of triangular whiskers. His name was Yallop. He had never said much about himself; I had always set him down as a retired London tradesman, anxious to see something of continental life, but too timid to venture far from Blancheville-sur-Mer.

"It's Epps, isn't it? I thought so. Did you see the major? Busily engaged, wasn't he? What would Mrs. Berringer say, I wonder. What a thing it is to be a favourite of the ladies."

But I did not want to discuss the subject with Yallop.

"It's no affair of ours, I take it," I observed rather sharply.

"Oh no, certainly not," Yallop said humbly: so humbly, indeed, that I was sorry then that I had been so quick with him.

"Good-night," and he left me standing under the shelter of the lighthouse. I watched him as he went struggling down the pier, wrestling with the wind.

Presently I followed him. As I came near the luggage-crane I heard the sound of voices engaged in dispute. I could distinguish the major's tones—they were hoarse and tremulous. His companion was clearly very angry. She was gesticulating vehemently. As I gathered, she was threatening him and reviling him. I hurried past. I was curious, I admit; but I did not desire to witness, or to take part in what was manifestly an unpleasant scene.

I hurried back to Madame Wix's; soon afterwards I lighted my candle and retired to my room. As I wound up my watch I noticed that it was very late, past midnight. I had not been in bed half an hour when there came a gentle tapping at my door.

"Are you awake, Epps?" It was the major who spoke. I admitted him.

"Do you happen to have such a thing as a drop of brandy?" he asked. "Everybody seems to have gone to bed."

"Are you ill?"

"I'm not very well." He was deadly pale, and trembling violently.

It chanced that there was some brandy left in a pocket-flask I was wont to carry with me when travelling.

"I've got cold, I think. There was a cruel wind on the pier, enough to cut a fellow to pieces. Did I see you there, Epps? I had a notion that I saw you there," and he looked at me suspiciously.

"Yes, I was there, for a short time only. It was blowing very hard. I was glad to come off."

"You saw me there, perhaps?"

"Yes, I saw you there."

"You didn't follow me? You didn't go there to spy upon me? But no, of course not. What am I thinking about? Why should I ask such silly questions?"

"Are you better now, major?" He had swallowed the brandy.

"Yes, thanks. I am rather susceptible of cold, from having lived many years in tropical climates."

His teeth chattered as he spoke. I observed that he kept on his gloves. He carried his hat in his hand and looked about with a helpless air, as though much troubled as to where he should deposit it. Finally, as though in a passion with it, he flung it into a corner of the room.

"You saw—her, I suppose?" he asked, presently. I nodded.

"Epps, I can trust you, I know," he said. "You're a dear, good fellow, and I've the greatest regard for you. I'm the most unfortunate wretch that ever existed." And he burst into tears.

I decided that he was not sober, that he had been drinking before paying me his nocturnal visit.

"I suppose you wouldn't know her again?" he enquired hastily.

"No. I scarcely looked at her. She seemed to be dark and tall; but she was much muffled up."

"Just so." After a pause he added:

"I'll tell you something, Epps; but in strict confidence, mind. That woman was my wife."

"Your wife?"

"Precisely. My wife; and the cause of every unhappiness I have ever known. If ever there was an incarnate fiend on earth, it's that woman."

"Major!" It was very clear that he was not sober.

"It's the simplest truth," he cried with an oath. "She's been my ruin—root and branch, body and soul. She's shamed me, and blighted me, and beggared me. I married when I was very young. She was a half-caste girl, born at Pondicherry. I was mad, of course. Who isn't mad at some time or other of his life? But I can't speak of the thing now. I've been heavily punished for my folly—my sin; for Heaven knows I don't pretend to be wholly blameless in the matter. Yet the utter misery, the suffering, that woman has brought upon me! We've been parted, of course, for years and years. But she has a way of reappearing every now and then; and she reappeared to-night. She had tracked me here, and she needed to be bought off again, as I've bought her off a score of times before. She has that to sell, you see, which I must buy of her—I mean her absence from me. Thank Heaven, Epps, you don't know what cruel havoc a wicked woman can make of a man's life!"

"But you've got rid of her once more, major?"

"Yes. I've got rid of her," he cried, with a wild laugh. "She left by the mail packet. I saw her safe on board. And indeed I hope I may never see her again." He laughed again; it seemed to me that he was fairly beside himself, that he did not know what he was saying or doing. "I had to pay her her price, of course. It was simply all I had in the world, with a promise to send more as soon as possible. Look here!"

He showed that his shirt was without studs; that his watch and chain and rings were gone; that his pockets were empty. He burst into tears again, hiding his face in his hands.

"Don't desert me, Epps. Don't turn your back upon me. You're the only friend I have in the world. Have you got a cigar? You won't mind my smoking here? I can't sleep. I hate my room. I can't bear to be alone in my present mood, and a cigar is such a comfort to a fellow."

I enjoyed little sleep that night. The

major could not rest himself, and he would not let me do so. It was daybreak before he quitted my room. He had emptied my cigar-case; he had drained my flask. For hours he had done nothing but walk up and down, up and down, at the foot of my bed, turning abruptly when he came to the wall on either side, like a wild beast in a cage.

He looked dreadfully ill, and haggard, and worn in the morning.

"Come out and breathe a little fresh air, major; it will do you good."

We went out together. I was turning in the direction of the pier, but he drew me towards the sands. "There's too much wind on the pier," he said. "What a night it was! How the wind blew! The sea is not so rough this morning, however. The heavy rain has beaten it down, I suppose."

"I wonder how the packet got across the Channel."

"Don't speak of it," he said with a shudder.

We walked briskly along the sands two miles or so, beyond the tall headland with the lighthouse on its crest, that protects Blancheville from the east wind. We had kept close to the sea all the way, having sometimes to pass over broken rocks, heaps of seaweed—brown, green, purple, and crimson, masses of shingle and shells. Suddenly our attention was attracted towards a group of figures some distance in front of us, that seemed standing with the sea over their ankles. There were men and boys in the long scarlet nightcaps of the country, in boots of the largest size, with flapping tops and the thickest of soles, in overalls of tarpaulin, and trousers that seemed made of sail-cloth liberally coated with tar; there were women in many-coloured petticoats, in tight-fitting blue worsted jackets, with bright handkerchiefs tied round their heads, with long and heavy gold rings in their ears, and nothing whatever on their calves or their feet; and in addition to these maritime folk, we could perceive, as we drew nearer, cocked hats, and white cross-belts, and shining black cartouche-boxes, and brass-hilted swords in glittering steel scabbards.

What was the matter?

Ah, monsieur, it was this. Ah, monsieur, it was that. Le bon Dieu only knew for certain. But after such a night, who could be surprised at anything? We could obtain little but exclamations, and unintelligible cries, and vague gestures from the outer circle of the group.

I peeped over the shoulder of one of the cocked hats, at the risk of being severely pricked by the pointed end of his moustache, had he turned suddenly.

The body of a woman lay upon the sands, yet partially raised upon a pillow of rock. She was plainly, rather poorly dressed, in a dress of dark substance, much smeared and stained by the action of the tide upon the sands. She was of middle age as I judged, tall, and symmetrical of figure, her complexion very swarthy, her hair black, yet streaked with gray. It was the general opinion that she had been in the water many hours, had been carried by the tide some distance, and finally flung upon the shore, where she had been found by the fishermen. They had duly communicated their discovery to the proper authorities, and forthwith the cocked hats had appeared upon the scene. There had been a wreck in the Channel it was conjectured: the stormy night justified belief that numerous wrecks had occurred. Yet many deemed it strange that no other bodies had been found, only this poor woman's: that no other evidence of wreck had come ashore, in the way of broken spars or shattered ship's furniture.

I felt my arm firmly gripped. The major drew me out of the crowd. His face was livid; he seemed gasping for breath.

"You're not well this morning, major, and this painful sight has rather upset you. I own it has given me a turn."

"Come away, Epps. Don't let us be overheard. We must take care what we do, or we shall rouse suspicion; at any rate we must have time to think."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Good heavens, don't you understand? That's her body. The woman of whom I told you last night. My wife."

"But she left by the mail. The packet's lost then."

"No, she did not go by the packet."

"You told me she did."

"I was wrong. I told you a lie."

He had removed his hat, and was dabbing his wet forehead with a cambric handkerchief. As it chanced, there was no glove this morning upon his long, thin, nervous white hand. My eyes rested upon certain long scratches that extended from his wrist to his knuckles. Was it to conceal these he had worn his gloves so persistently last night? Had he taken them off this morning in pure forgetfulness? He noticed the direction of my glance and winced perceptibly.

"Don't think that of me, Epps; for Heaven's sake, don't think that of me. I know what you suspect, but I swear to you that it isn't true. She was like a mad creature last night. She was often mad, really mad, I mean. She was beside herself with rage and vexation, with hatred and malice, and she tried to murder me last night, as she had tried more than once before. God knows I am speaking the truth, Epps. She drew me to the head of the pier, flung her arms tightly round me, and tried her best to throw me over the side. It was nothing to her that she must have died with me. So that my death was secured, she cared nothing for the rest. She was mad last night, I tell you, stark mad. It was all I could do to save myself—she tore at my flesh with her nails, as you see. I struggled only to get free. I did not push or strike her, I swear to you. But—we were on the edge of the pier, the boards were slippery with the rain. Suddenly there was a slight scream of surprise rather than of fear; she had lost her footing, she had gone over the side. I could not hear the splash of her fall below, the waves were beating too noisily against the pier. I was alone. There was no one near. I could do nothing to save her. Could anything have been done? Think what a night it was! And just then it was pitch-dark; the moon was thickly clouded over. I thought she must have been dashed to pieces against the piles. I had forgotten that the tide had turned and was running out. She was carried away, you see, and then brought back and tossed on shore more than two miles away from the pier."

We were startled by a footstep behind us, and the sound of a cough. The man Yallop was following us. We had not noticed his approach, the wet sand had so deadened the sound of his tread. We certainly did not want his dull company, but he was, we all considered, a harmless sort of man, and we were almost bound to be civil to him, seeing that he was a fallow-boarder at Madame Wix's.

"Fine fresh morning after the rain and the wind, isn't it?" he said. "I thought I'd take a constitutional, but I certainly did not expect to come in for such a sight as that yonder. How do they manage things of this sort in France, I wonder? Do they have an inquest on the body as we do, and a verdict of 'Found Drowned?' It always seems to me so odd that the police should wear cocked hats. Some-

how you never can go on the Continent without coming across cocked hats. I suppose they'll try and get the body identified—that's our way—you know. At Paris"—he called it Parry—"they have what they call the Morgue expressly for the exhibition of dead bodies. I don't know whether they've got anything of a morgue here. None of that lot there seemed to recognise the woman; and, of course, it might be that there's been a wreck in the Channel, and that's one of the poor unfortunates floated ashore. But it strikes me that I saw a woman very like that on the pier last night."

"He suspects me," whispered the major. "You were on the pier, too, Epps. Now, didn't you see a woman like that on the pier, just before we met by the lighthouse?"

"No," I said, for I did not choose to be interrogated by Yallop. "I think not. I can't say. I don't remember. One couldn't see faces well such a night as last night was."

"Well, it was night, but the moon was shining."

"Have you got any cigar-lights about you?" I asked, to get rid of the subject.

The major was really in a pitiable condition. Returned to Madame Wix's, I obtained some more brandy for him, which he drank in my room. He was half-dead with fatigue and exhaustion and absolute panic. It seemed to me that his mind was giving way. What was he to do? he asked over and over again. What was to become of him? I undertook to assist him with money, so far as I was able, until he could obtain further supplies, or bring his affairs to a more regular condition. And I strongly advised him to meet the matter boldly; to tell his story and identify the body, and trust to the justice of his case. Only it was very necessary that he should lose no more time. But his nervous system seemed to be completely shattered. I led him to his room, partly undressed him, and left him disposed to sleep, lying upon his bed.

At dinner he did not appear. I judged that he was too unwell; but to my surprise I learnt that he had quitted the house, and had been seen walking inland. There was some wondering as to his non-appearance, for the boarders were usually very punctual in their attendance at meals. Mrs. Berringer expressed a hope that the major had not been taken ill, and then resumed energetic exercise of her knife and

fork—completed, indeed, a very ample dinner.

Hours passed, and still the major did not return. I hardly felt alarm on his account, although I must own to some uneasiness, even while endeavouring to brace myself up with the cynical, selfish argument that the matter did not really concern me in any way, that I had nothing whatever to do with it. I went to bed early, for I had enjoyed little sleep the night before, and I was altogether exceedingly tired.

“May I come in?”

I was awake. It was morning; the sun was streaming into the room. I did not immediately recognise the voice.

“Come in.”

“The major? No; Yallop!”

“I’m afraid you’ll think this a liberty, Mr. Epps.”

I did think so. All the same, I did not say that I thought so. On the contrary, I said: “Not at all, Yallop. What is it? What can I do for you? Take a chair.”

“Thank you, I will.”

I was struck by a change I perceived in Yallop. I had thought him rather a fool, to tell the truth, and had dealt with him in an off-hand, upper-hand sort of way. But I now discerned in his fat flat face a curiously sharp, shrewd look, and about his heavy square jaw there was really a sense of power, an air of command. If I had ever felt disposed to patronise him, it was certainly his turn now to patronise me.

“Any news of the major?” I asked.

“No, no news of the major,” he answered. “Yet, curiously enough, it was partly about the major I came to speak to you.”

“What about him? He came back last night?”

“No, he didn’t come back last night, and it’s my firm belief that he won’t come back again; but you’re entitled to consider it a matter of opinion either way. Only look here, Mr. Epps. My room happens to be next to yours; there’s only a thin wooden partition between us. I could not help hearing, therefore, a good deal that went on here, and particularly your conversation with the major. Now, you’ve behaved very well all through, I’ll say that for you. Indeed, there isn’t a word to be urged against you. Don’t be alarmed; I’m not in the police, not now, and I’ve nothing to do with this matter officially. But between ourselves, now, as friends, it looks ugly; now doesn’t it? Wouldn’t

a jury call it wilful murder? I put it to you. Take the facts. Here’s a gent that hates his wife—with good reason, but that doesn’t signify—that has always hated her, that has never met her for many a long year but to quarrel with her almost to fighting. I heard him tell you the whole business last night. Well, they’re seen together on the pier, at eleven o’clock at night; they’re seen and they’re heard wrangling and jangling together heavens hard. You saw and heard them, you know, Mr. Epps, and so did I. Well, he comes off the pier, alone, terrible pale, and trembling, asking for brandy, and with his hands very much scratched! Nothing more is seen of the woman until her body’s found thrown up by the tide, on the shore nearly three miles away. Now, what do you say? Which does it look like? Did she fall off the pier by accident; did she jump off of her own accord, in one of those fits of temper to which women—some women, we’ll say—are subject; or was she chucked over by the husband who hated her, and who wanted to marry someone else? You can’t make it look comfortable, you know, Mr. Epps, turn it which way you will. And what does the major do? He finds she’s gone over; does he make any stir? does he call for drags and ropes, or ask them to put out in a boat? They couldn’t have done it, the weather being what it was, but he didn’t ask them. No, he says nothing to nobody. He comes home quietly, and tells you his wife went away in the packet. Then when her body is found, still he doesn’t say a word! He looks at her, makes sure of her, and then walks away holding his tongue. Do you think he doubts her identity? Not a bit of it; for, indeed, there can be no question as to that. They’ve found upon the body the rings and studs, the watch and chain, he gave her over-night. Which you could identify if need be, Mr. Epps, and certainly I could, for we’ve often seen them in the major’s possession. Altogether, it’s not at all surprising to me that the major’s off. He was last seen walking towards the railway. Take my word for it, Mr. Epps. We shall see nothing more of Major Macbeth.

“But it wasn’t altogether about him that I took the liberty of stepping in here,” he resumed presently; “you seem to me a nice sort of young man, Mr. Epps, though your head mayn’t be so strong, nor your intellect so fully developed as it might be.

Excuse my frankness. I want to do you a service, I really do. Now, as I said, I'm no longer in the police; moreover, I'm in foreign parts; and such a case as that of our friend the major's I can deal with now only in an amateur way. Still, I'm here on business, for I'm in what we call the Private Enquiry Agency line. And I'm here to keep my eye on certain diamonds—they may be wanted or they mayn't—it's my duty to know in any case where they are and where they go. She's a fine woman, I quite agree, and I don't say she isn't a nice woman in her way, and taking her size and her appetite into consideration. But, drop it; that's my advice, Mr. Epps. You're all of you sold, and that's the truth, Mr. Epps. The widow of a Peruvian merchant! Nonsense. She's not a widow at all. She's the wife of a jeweller in Barbican, who's gone bankrupt. His name's Burrage, not Berringer, and he's suspected of what we call fraudulent concealment of property. The fact is, he started his wife for the Continent, loaded with all his stock-in-trade, so far as he could lay hands on it. They're real stones, all of them, and some of them are great beauties. Womanlike, you know, she can't help sporting them; and I own they're very becoming, and she's a fine woman, as I said. There's no criminal charge; there's no warrant out; and not being in the force, I could do nothing with it if there was; but I'm employed by the creditors to keep my eye on those diamonds, and that's what I'm doing and going to keep on doing."

"But Madame Wix said she was a widow."

"Well, you know it may be that Madame—don't be hard upon her, she's an agreeable woman—but perhaps she did not really know the truth; or perhaps she thought it would be more cheerful for you gentlemen to think that she had a rich widow, the widow of a diamond merchant, among her boarders."

I decided that I would quit Blancheville very shortly.

"Perhaps it would be better," said Yallop. "It seems to me that you've had rather a shock."

But he was to give me another shock some hours later.

"You haven't heard?" he said. "But no, of course you haven't. The body of a man has been discovered—cut to pieces, almost—upon the down-line of the railway. It was supposed, at first, that a passenger

had thrown himself or been thrown from the Paris train; but that seems not to have been the case. That he was insane, there can be little doubt. He had thrown away his hat, taken off his shoes and stockings, and emptied his pockets. Could he have thought that he was going to bed? He had laid himself down upon the metals. Can you guess who the man was?"

"Major——?"

Yallop nodded with grim significance, placed his forefinger upon his lip, and withdrew.

Poor Major Macbeth!

PAN.

BY R. E. FRANCOLLON.

"Yes; I do wish old Mark Waterman was back again," said Jack Andrews, one morning as he stood, palette on thumb and brush in hand, before an unfinished picture that promised, if not to be famous, at any rate to be wonderful. "It's queer; but I do. Not that I'd let him know it! That would never do. Vanity's not a thing to be encouraged. There—I flatter myself that picture will do pretty considerably; there's genius there, as well as burnt umber. Holloa!"

The young man in the ragged velvet jacket, with the rough head, unshorn face, and wooden pipe, turned round so suddenly at the sound of a footstep behind him as nearly to overturn his easel. As it was, he had to drop brush and palette on the half-inch of dust that hid the floor of the small and chaotic studio, in order to hold out both hands to another young man who strode in without knocking.

"Why—Mark, old boy!—Hurrah! I was just saying to myself—no, I wasn't, I was just thinking—I hope you've brought your own bird's-eye? I can offer you an empty pipe and the relics of a chair, so sit down and make yourself at home."

"Considering I am at home, I will, Jack. And how are you getting on? You're on a new thing, I see."

Mark Waterman was not like his friend Jack Andrews. Friendship is a case of harmonies—not of unisons. Jack was a rough-and-tumbled little man, whose growth had run to breadth and thickness, with a round, twinkling, comically ugly face and stumpy hands, all of which might have been, and certainly should have been cleaner, and a most extraordinary head of

hair—extraordinary in this, that every hair of it seemed to possess an individuality of its own, and, by standing out separately and on end, to express hatred and defiance of its companions. Mark, on the other hand, carried but few signs of that province of outer Bohemia to which both his home and his friend unquestionably belonged. He was at the first sight a man, and at the second a gentleman; by using which word of him I do not mean that Jack was otherwise, or that there are no gentlemen in Bohemia, but simply that he looked what thousands are in spite of seeming. He needed no eccentricities of aspect, and used none, to give him distinction. His features, without being conspicuously labelled handsome, were marked by the better qualities of strength and energy; his gray eyes were grave and kind, and his full moustache and thick brown beard seemed to cover like promises, unless the all-important lips strangely contradicted the eyes. The touch of humour in his smile when his friend welcomed him with the sudden withdrawal of a first impulse to grasp both his hands did not contradict his general gravity of expression; and there was yet a third look in his face—a preoccupied expression: one of mingled pride and despondency without weakness; a subtle combination, and hard to describe.

"Yes," said Jack, "I'm on a new thing. And it's one of two—it's either infernally bad, or infernally good. I'm rather inclined to think it's infernally good; but if I'm wrong, it's nothing between. What do you say—my uncle's, or the line?"

"If it's good, your uncle's; if it's bad, the line. But what's it all about, Jack? It looks to me like an experiment with a syringe."

"Well, you are dull. Do you mean to say you can't tell?"

"Dull? You're right enough there. Treat me accordingly. Fancy me an R.A. What is it?"

"Pan!"

"Pan?"

"Of course! Pan."

"I don't see him, Jack. Where are his pipe, and his hoofs, and his horns, and the rest of it? Where, in short, is Pan?"

"Well; of all the—and I thought you were a poet, if you weren't a painter! Of course you don't see Pan. That's only a subject—a detail. One must leave something to the imagination, don't you know.

There'd be no occasion to call it Pan, if Pan were bodily in the picture. That's part of the idea. It's where he's in love with Echo, don't you know, after she's turned to a sound—*vox et præterea nihil*. That's my picture. You don't see Pan, because he's understood, and you don't see Echo, because she's invisible by nature. But you see the bulrushes and you see the wind. Wh—e—ew! Doesn't it seem to whistle through your bones!"

"So—those are bulrushes? I thought they were area-railings."

"Rather! But there—I've had enough of it to-day. How've you been getting on? Sold anything? Been paid anything? Say yes—for, hang me, Mark, if you haven't, the wind will have to whistle through my bones, for want of flesh to whistle through. Yes, Mark; you're Mother Hubbard, and I'm the dog. The cupboard's bare. Have you found anything?"

"Well—yes, Jack."

"Hurrah! Landscape-painting for ever!"

"Wait a bit, before you say hurrah. I went out poor, and I come back—no, not poorer! I won't mind you're calling me a fool. I'm—engaged."

"What—to paint a dozen pictures for a duke—for a dealer? To—"

"To be married, Jack. To the best girl in the world."

"Oh!" Every twinkle went out of Jack's face.

"Never mind, old fellow. It's the best thing that could happen. I've got to work for Nelly—for her, now; not for myself any more."

"Money?" growled Jack, savagely; taking up his palette again, and recklessly dashing in another gust of white wind over the area railings.

"Not a penny."

Jack Andrews faced round again. "Mark Waterman," he said, with stern solemnity, "of all the fools in all creation, you're the—best of them. No; I don't congratulate you. It's bad enough to marry. But if you'd married for money, I'd—I'd have kicked you out of the studio, though it's your own, and you're the bigger man. You've got a shilling, I suppose? Come along, then. I suppose I've lost a friend, but never mind, old boy—you didn't invent women. Let's drink, anyhow. I didn't invent drink. So it comes square."

"Jack! Who—what's that? Listen!" They were already leaving the studio—

which was among the very attics, by the way—when Mark Waterman suddenly stood still, as if spell-bound. From immediately below them, and through the open door, flowed up the sound of a voice in song—the richest, most divine contralto into which the soul of music could ever have been breathed. No wonder that any man with the poorest ghost of a soul in him should be caught as by a sudden charm. It was not in the music, but in the voice of the singer that the wonderful magic lay. There are voices that can transmute the veriest dross of music into pure gold; and this was one of them. And to be heard here, in this poor Bohemian corner, was as if the golden sunshine had been turned into sound. Mark Waterman, who was country bred, felt for the moment as men feel when they catch the scent of lilac in the air, in the first days of spring.

“Oh, never mind that,” said Jack Andrews, impatiently. “I expect it’s a young woman; nothing more. Yes—she sings every day; confound her!”

“It’s a wonderful voice!”

“So much the better for her. It’s not for nothing that fortune ends in tune. I wish it began in paint.” And as he spoke, tragedy, in the shape of a frown, entered the comedy of his face, and his voice took a deeper growl.

The voice was a wonder. But it was nothing to the fact that Mark Waterman was really engaged, he of all men; and to Nelly Vincent, of all women in the world. He was a painter, and a better painter than his incongruous friend and comrade, Jack Andrews, though he looked less like one. At any rate, though at the age of thirty he might not deserve the success that he certainly did not obtain, he was an artist in mind and soul. He was a professed worshipper of beauty, wherever it is to be found apart from women; but—because he was a painter—in music, beyond all other things. People always keep the deepest corners of their hearts for the art that is not their own; for fear they should turn into monomaniacs, I suppose. As to what is supposed to follow from beauty—love—he had been saved from any but the most light and easy touches of that, by the possession of an ideal. He had never—like the man in the song—doubted what sort of creature his queen was to be; but he was a great deal less sure that her coming was inevitable.

With imaginary chalks and colours he had painted a portrait on the canvas of the air, as the type of the Helen for whose sake alone he would count the world well lost—not much of a loss indeed as yet, but even a penniless painter in a London attic has a world to lose, though it consists but of an easel, a few unsaleable pictures, one pipe, one comrade, a thousand hopes, and ten thousand despairs. Once Jack Andrews had found, in the studio which he shared at less than a peppercorn-rent—for Mark never took money from his friends any more than from his enemies the dealers, and Jack never had any to be taken—the half-painted head of a woman, whom he could not identify with any professional model of his acquaintance, and which therefore puzzled him. It must have belonged to a royal full-length, indeed, with its contour of Juno, its Titianesque glory of sombre hair, its large calm brown eyes, and the lips that looked fashioned for the grander and deeper part of song.

But the miracle was a reality. Mark, as a professed landscape-painter—that ideal face was his solitary slip into portraiture—had one summer made a tour afoot, in the quiet country round Gressford. There, in one of the half-adventurous chance encounters to which foot travellers are subject, he had made the acquaintance of the Vincents. Mr. Vincent, as the chief brewer in that country, was a very great man out of doors; at home, he was a sort of pasha. He was exceptionally blessed in the absolute obedience of a wife, six daughters, and a niece. The six daughters were heiresses; all were charming girls, and four of them were engaged. There were still two to spare, and Mark Waterman, the slave of an ideal Helen, within one month of his first acquaintance found himself in love with the niece, Nelly. And even he, in the midst of the rose-light of that first discovery, could only ask why?

“Why,” indeed! She was no more like his ideal than a leaf is like a flower, though both may grow from the heart of the same tree. She was small and not beautiful, without even the charming piquancy that more than outbalances beauty in such matters. I doubt if anybody had ever called her so much as nice-looking. She had the common prettiness of youth indeed, and the less common grace of gentle ways and kind eyes, but there she seemed to end. Even in details she was not Mark’s

Helen. Her hair had not the sombre glory of Titian, nor her colour the morning sunlight of Guido. Her bearing had the quiet of shrinking shyness, instead of royal dignity. She did not pretend to be clever, and had but little to say. She could not help suggesting the idea, not of a goddess, but of a little human mouse which might be tamed even to eat off one's finger, but could never cease to be timid and shy. Last contrast of all, she could no more sing than a mouse. Mark had never heard her try even to hum a tune.

But if their love-story seemed wonderful to Mark, what did it not seem to her? Quiet Gressford lay beside its river, in a sort of chronic, dull wonder that the ripples should run by it in such perpetual hurry to get from nowhere to nowhere. Even so Nelly Vincent looked out from the narrow windows of her wisdom, over the intensely exciting life—such it was to her—of dull Gressford, and took for granted that life contained a great deal of interest—for others. Nothing of that sort ever came to her, or was likely to come. Why should it, indeed? She was no Cinderella, pining among the ashes, and filled with unattainable longings for dances at Gressford, and for princes, in the shape of young lawyers and bank clerks, for partners. They were her cousins' property, by right of wealth and beauty; discontent in her case would have been envy. I am half ashamed to say it, but she was not unhappy, though dependent, even for her livelihood, on kindness, which even to a mouse of any spirit is supposed to be the sorest of trials. I fear she was poor-spirited enough to like to think that people were kind to her, and to feel that her dependence on her uncle's family was proof positive that there are good and warm hearts in the world.

So she waited—for nothing; finding plenty of daily occupation in smoothing the smaller wheels of life for her cousins to roll upon, and finding her reward. But all things come to those who know how to wait; and one fine August day came the change. The wandering painter from far-off Bohemia, whom chance made a guest in Gressford for awhile, did not, as was natural, fall in love with one of her rich and pretty cousins, but with her. The few summer days that followed were a poem of a quiet heart trembling into life; it was summer in Gressford, but lilac-time with Nelly. It was wonderful;

she could hardly believe her own heart, even when it told her so plainly. But when Mark came down again to Gressford, and told her so with his own lips, then she believed—I was almost about to say, as woman never believed man before. Nelly, at least, thought so.

Now it is all very well for a man to follow his own heart, let it lead him where it may. But he cannot expect all the rest of the world to follow him, as in the goose-chase of the story, where Dümmling carried the golden goose and was run after by all who saw it, in spite of themselves, till he made the king's daughter laugh and so won her. Nelly, in Mark, saw her own and the whole world's hero. Her uncle, the brewer, saw a poor painter, with threadbare coat and empty pockets, who had made a little mistake in making love to the only girl in the house who was not able to fill them. Naturally, he was angry. He was fond of Nelly; and was not willing to throw her away on a Bohemian adventurer.

But Nelly had been firm, as firm as only those quiet little women can be. She knew well enough that if Mark had made any mistake at all, it was in thinking her worthy of him. Once, even, she summoned up courage enough to blush and tell him so.

"How can you care about a girl like me, poor, stupid, plain, who can do nothing at all to help you?"

"Not help me, Nelly! Can't you love me?"

"That isn't helping you, Mark. That's dragging you down. It's half wicked of me to—to let you love me! Oh, if I could only do something in the world! Tell me what I can do."

"Well, of all the forgiving souls—I ask you to be a poor man's wife; to give up everybody who has been kind to you; to leave home and comfort and more, and all you could ever look for; and you say you are dragging down me! Don't you know you are giving up everything for me?"

"Everything's nothing! Tell me, what can I do?"

"Only wait, Nelly! Wait a year. Your uncle won't refuse you to me then."

Why should a woman's first great joy for ever mean a woman's first great sorrow? For him to work, and for her to wait—it was worse than weeping. But she did wait; and the months passed, and letters came. At first they were as brave as his parting words had been, when he kissed

her and said good-bye. Then, little by little, she read between the lines how courage was turning into the recklessness of a battle, first doubtful, then desperate. Work as he would, and he did work, starve as he might, and he did starve (she knew it without his telling), that first success, which is the only hard one, always seemed farther and farther away. By-and-by the letters became shorter, then fewer. Then they ceased for awhile; and then, at last, came one which, though as loving as ever, was written in so changed a tone that Nelly, whose heart was quicker than her brain, could read in it nothing but defeat from which hope was gone, without even enough courage left to tell her so.

"He is killing himself for me," thought poor Nelly. "What in the world can I do?"

It was at this last ebb of fortune that Mark Waterman came back from Paris to his London attic, and for the first time told his unprofitable tenant, Jack Andrews, that he was engaged. He was not a man to talk about such things, far less to write of them, to any man; his love for Nelly was so strange and uncharacteristic of him that he could not account for it even to himself; nay, could hardly altogether realise it at times. Mark Waterman the painter, Mark Waterman, Nelly's lover, seemed to be two distinct people only accidentally combined. Whenever he thought of Nelly he could forget his work; but when he was plunged heart-deep into one of his pictures—well, he could forget Nelly. She never went out of his heart, but she did at times slip out of his brain when it was very full.

The morning after his return from Paris he received a letter from Nelly, who was still waiting at Gressford. Hers were always pleasant and loving letters, with bright touches here and there, not to be expected from her conversation. Above all things, they were pathetic for the utter trust and belief in him that filled every line, and gave an intenser meaning even to her commonest words. He had just finished reading this last letter, when Jack Andrews lounged in, with an extra look of civil war in his head of hair. It always looked most combative in the morning; from which it was surmised by some that even he, great genius as he was, was not exempt from the universal law that leads little men to make use of the toilette as a means of looking taller than Nature made them.

"Now for another go in at Pan," he said, defiantly, as he filled his pipe lazily. "What are you putting on the stocks? By the great god Pan himself, I wish I had half-a-crown to put in 'em. What are you going to do for the line? Fontainebleau?"

"I don't know. One thing's as good to fail in as another, I suppose. You go in for another gust of wind; I'll look on."

"Did I dream somebody said yesterday, 'I've got to work for Nelly?' Come, drink some beer, take off your coat, and begin."

"Jack, you and I are old friends. I talked big last night, but it's easy talking. I've been talking to myself, just like that, for the whole year I haven't seen you. No, I'll look on. I feel like giving in."

"Hollo!"

"Yes, if it wasn't for Nelly, poor girl, whose life I'm spoiling as hard as a man can, I'd throw up the whole thing, and break stones, or something of that kind. I'm pretty strong with my arms. I've half a mind to do it now. Love in a cottage is better than love in an attic; and Nelly doesn't care much about art, poor girl. They don't see pictures down at Gressford—nothing but nature."

"Happy mortals!"

"And, I don't know, I talk of working, but my hand doesn't seem to follow my head, now. Working's no good without hoping. I think I could do something still if I had an idea. It's the fancy that's gone, and without that I'm nowhere."

"High-flown bosh. Wait till it comes back again, and fill up with pot-boilers. Ideas indeed! Why they're lying all about this very room. Take any one you please. No landscapes of course—chimney-pots aren't suggestive, at least to my mind; but I know you did a head once, and you can do it again. There's Ophelia, there's Titania, there's Lady Godiva, there's Mary Queen of Scots—all my own ideas, and all good ones, and you're welcome to the best of them. Confound it all! There's that singing woman at it again!"

And, as he spoke, the same wonderful voice of yesterday rose up through the floor.

The same voice sounds differently to different ears. However it might be with Jack Andrews, to Mark this divine contralto, rendered more divine by mystery, came like the gradual unveiling of a thousand secret things. He sat, and smoked, and listened, in a dream whence the twin nightmares of poverty and love

without fruit or blossom gradually faded away. He began to understand the history of David playing before Saul. She—for the voice, though invisible as Echo herself, must be personified—was singing "Che farò," as he had never dreamed of hearing it sung, and filling every note of it with a fresh soul. Jack Andrews was still dashing in winds and rushes, growling the while half audibly; but Mark was not aware of his presence, so entranced was he in the clear, deep river of song that was rolling through and over him. The song ended, all too soon; but it began again.

Gradually—for he was a painter, who must needs transform all things into form—the song took shape in the eyes of his mind. What voice indeed, even to those of us who are not painters, does not suggest its own fitting outward form? He saw a statue of Juno changed into life, breath, and colour, with a Titian's glory of sombre hair, large, calm, brown eyes, full of a fire too deep to flame, and a mouth as sweet as it was royal—in one word, the very Helen of his old dreams. He knew her at once.

"Who is she, in Heaven's name?" he asked, as the song, at last, came to an end.

"That's what the sultan used to say—'Who is she?'—when he heard of any mischief done. I shall indict her for a nuisance."

"But who——"

"How the deuce should I know? Am I the Post-office Directory?" But he growled in such a way that Mark, who knew his friend pretty well by this time, felt sure that, if he did not know, he cared.

The next day Mark Waterman went straight to his easel—he had had no letter from Nelly that morning. And, at precisely the same hour, the voice began its music again. And, remember that we are hearing with his ears. We might not thus have been entranced by the music of that voice, though alas for us if we have never been thus entranced by some other, either in speech or in song. But to-day he did not merely listen. He painted in the midst of a dream of music which to-day was more fully Helen—he even thought of it by its ideal name. At first he worked idly and vaguely, as if feeling about among preludes. But twilight came upon him before he was conscious that he had worked an hour, or that his friend had gone out, or that the voice had ceased to sing in any ears but those of his fancy.

He scarcely looked at what his hand had done during the day. He went out into the street, feeling as if some great load had been lifted from him. He was as poor, and as far off from Nelly as ever; but he felt as if a gate in his life had been thrown open, through which he had walked out into the fresh air.

It was with a feeling well-nigh akin to profanity, that he tried to satisfy his mere curiosity by asking the woman of the house who the lady was that sang there every day, for he soon convinced himself that Jack Andrews really did not know. And the reason was simple enough—nobody knew. A foreign lady who never went out of doors lived, as they knew, on the floor below them, and she kept a piano; but she was elderly, and could not, at her time of life, have suddenly developed a voice of such wonderful beauty. It must be the younger lady, dressed in black and always closely veiled, who—so he learned—came and went every day at certain regular hours. One day he thought of trying to pass her on the stairs as she went up or down. But he dismissed that plan as soon as it was formed. He had had enough of associating such a vulgar thing as curiosity with the idea of Helen. Might not her charm depend, like that of nymphs and fairies, upon her very mystery? So he satisfied himself with this voice in the air and worked on with a will.

In some subtle fashion it seemed to him now as if he were hardly conscious of his work, but as if his hands went of themselves, without help from his brain. It was the same story day after day, and while the days were lengthening out once more into August, the hours of daylight seemed to grow shorter and fewer. He saw wonderfully little of Jack Andrews now; that eccentric genius, having finished—as he called it—his own picture, was no doubt taking a holiday. But Mark missed neither him nor anybody. The song came to him daily; and, during the hours of its silence, left the vision of Helen with him.

Meanwhile, how did he live? How do hundreds of men live every day, without money, without credit, and yet without dishonour? But they do—and it is useless to ask of them, for they never know themselves. Some of them, it is true, and those not always the worst, do literally starve. All starve comparatively—not only with bodily famine, but

with art-hunger, or love-hunger, or some other terrible form in which the famine-fiend knows how to appear. There are men who live thus all their lives, and yet die at a good old age—and who enjoy their starvation as a few of us manage to enjoy feasting, and with less repentance. Mark was very far indeed from being one of these hardened Bohemians; but he was compelled to live like them; that is to say, without knowing how. And, if at that moment someone had said to him, throw down your palette and be rich, he would assuredly have answered No, had it not been for Nelly in Gressford, who was waiting for him.

So the days and the weeks passed on in misery and joy. At last, one afternoon when the day's song was over, but its influence still upon him—it was an everyday story now, and he never gave it a single conscious thought—Jack Andrews came in, for a wonder, and, for another wonder, not alone. Mark looked up, not over-courteously; for his work was not to be interrupted lightly. He was just giving it the last touches of such an approach to perfection as he could dare to think of; and that was the moment to be least interrupted of all. But the stranger took the want of courtesy very indifferently. Perhaps, he was used to painters' oddities. Jack Andrews introduced him in an elaborately inaudible growl, stood with him for a silent ten minutes beside the painter and before the picture, and then went off with him.

That evening he received this letter:

"DEAR SIR,—I will give you five hundred pounds for your Helen; on condition that you paint a companion picture, for which I will give the same sum. Yours faithfully,
DERESFIELD."

His heart gave a bound. Lord Deresfield was a peer, less noted even as a great picture-buyer than for laconics and liberality. At last his time had come! Nelly Vincent, though all the way off at Gressford, was very near him now.

"So I've got to thank you for this, Jack!" he said, with all his gloom and his fever gone out of him, and only the bright smile left that Nelly had seen a year ago. "How in the world did you manage to get hold of old Deresfield?"

"Hem! Well, the fact is, I don't think much of old Deresfield. By some hook or crook, or something of that sort, I got him to see Pan. Well, he didn't speak; he

never does, you know; but he turned up his nose—he can do that uncommonly well. However, I said I knew of a pretty good picture he might like; I said it was a work of genius by way of a puff; so he nodded, somehow managed to find words enough to make an appointment, and came. The rest's his own affair. Voilà tout."

"No, you don't take me in like that, old fellow. I know you—you've just been moving heaven and earth for three weeks to make Lord Deresfield look at my picture. Thank you, Jack. Of course, you'll try to knock me down if I say more. What do you think of her, after all?"

"Of the Helen? Oh, glor—she'll wash, I mean. And what's to follow?"

"I must wait and hear."

So his time had come—at last! He was already rich; and with Lord Deresfield's name at his back, fame was within reach and happiness in his hands. He looked at his Helen once more, with new eyes. Could it be really the work of genius for which those who knew best already accepted it? He looked at it impartially, for indeed he could not recognise the work of his own hands. It had been breathed into him; it was as if he had been veritably and literally inspired. Could he ever repeat such a picture? Could it ever be sung into him or out of him again?

The voice had not yet begun that morning. Silence made him think; and he could not but recognise the influence under which he had produced the Helen. Its divine music had gone straight to his soul, and given its best part to the outer air. Was it possible that others heard that voice as well as he, or was it merely a fancy of his own. But no—that was impossible; even matter-of-fact Jack Andrews seemed to have been moved by it in his own fashion. How was it that he could not hear it to-day?

He could not yet begin to think over his own picture. He took out a sheet of paper to write the good news to Nelly; but he could not write a word. He had never felt in so strange a mood before. For weeks of work he had never missed the voice for an instant, even during its daily hours of silence; but here was total silence, just on the day of coming victory; and the triumph had lost its savour. He had conquered—for Nelly; and he could not even tell her the good news, because an unknown woman, whom he had never seen but as an imaginary Helen, had for once forgotten to sing.

What could it mean? Was there such a thing as witchcraft after all, and was he the victim of a voice and a charm? He could settle to nothing, and think of nothing; he could only feel that the voice of Helen was not in his ears.

"Jack," he said abruptly, when his friend returned and found him pacing the studio in the twilight, "I am a scoundrel."

"The deuce you are! What have you been doing now?"

"What have I been doing? What should you say of a man who made a good, innocent girl love him, who divided her from her home for his sake and from all who loved her, who ruined her future, who made her wait for him when he ought to have given up all for her, and who then—then when the time of waiting was over and he could take her to him, was false to her—false at the first sound of the voice of a stranger; if you don't call him a scoundrel—"

"Who said I didn't call him one? I do. Who is he?"

"I told you. I."

"You? Nonsense, you've been selling a picture. That's enough to turn any man's brain. I've had mine half turned before now, with only managing to spout one. Any more?"

"Jack, you understand me well enough. Don't joke, for Heaven's sake. I love Nelly as much as I ever loved her."

"It's all right, then? Then marry her."

"But—well, there's no better way to say it—I love another woman with all my soul."

"Marry her, then. You can't marry both in this country, that's clear. Does the other woman—"

"Did I say woman? It may be. But I only know it's a voice, Jack."

"A voice? *The* voice? By the horns of the great god Pan, Echo herself!"

It was not only for to-day that the voice was silent. The next day, and the next, and the next, it was still unheard. That voice, now inextricably blent with the Helen of his fancy, haunted him with longing, and it had passed away from his life just when he had discovered that to make poor, patient Nelly his wife now would be a worse sin than having been untrue to her. All this he now realised bitterly. He dared not regret that the disappearance of the singer had prevented his winning the

fruits of his treason; it was only right that he should do life-long penance for the wrong he had done to Nelly. He did not even try to forgive or excuse himself, when at last, out of utter, unconquerable heart-hunger, he did what most men would have done long sooner, and set to work to identify his Helen with some living woman. But nobody could tell him anything. The singer was but a veiled stranger to the people of the house, and the foreign lady in whose room she sang had gone abroad on the first day of silence. And so, with the premature, but not for that the less utter despair of a young man with an artist's temper, he felt that an unheard-of doom was upon him for the rest of his days, to remain bound in honour to a girl who loved him with all her heart, while he loved a mere vanished voice, a lost echo, with all his soul.

It was marvellously like witchcraft, indeed. But who can doubt the power of a voice to bewitch a man? It has been said that the voice is the soul; and if so, there must needs be more power in it than in all colour and form, even than in eyes, which are after all but the soul's windows. No, he could not write to Nelly with this witchcraft upon him.

But surely such a voice as that must be heard somewhere in the world. It could not have been wasted for a short season upon an attic in Bohemia. He no longer tried to work, for his inspiration was gone and had left only reaction; but he haunted every place, from the highest to the lowest, where voices are to be heard. It was all in vain. His Helen was embodied neither in opera prima donna nor in music-hall star. It was half a relief to hope and to lose again; after all, he had shuddered at times to think of who she might be to whom the voice belonged, and whom he would needs have to follow to the ends of the world.

He might not be all his conscience called him, but he had assuredly become false to a real woman for the sake of a dream. He never thought of Helen, but he recalled his own parting words a year ago: "If I don't live for you, and work for you, and win for you, I'm the greatest scoundrel ever born." He had always half wondered at his love for poor Nelly Vincent, and if he could only make her unlove him—but he knew that could never be. She would never believe him, he knew, if he called himself scoundrel to her face a thousand times over. He must give her up, ruin

her life and break her heart, or marry her without love and break her heart no less: which was the most merciful way of breaking a heart, the swift or the slow?

"I see there's a new woman going to set the Thames on fire," said Jack Andrews. "I suppose that'll interest you," emphasising "that" with a vicious splash of colour on his canvas, as if to say that his friend was lost to art, and could now be only interested in barrel-organ tunes, concert songs, and such like things. "There generally is," said Mark, carelessly. "But the Thames seems fireproof, so far."

"What, you don't care even for that now? I don't know what's come to you. Well, I suppose it is hard to work or care much for anything, when one's got one five hundred pounds and can get another when it's gone."

"No, I hate it all. I've heard enough music to last me my time."

"I should think so. That woman, who would sing 'Che farò' right under my very toes, while I was working, was enough for me. Thank the gods, she's gone. However, I'm glad the voice-fever's gone out of you. That was an uncommonly bad time for me."

"Well, consider me clothed and in my right mind."

"Pan in boots, in fact. However, we're but inconsistent creatures, we mortals, saving your ex-godship. I hate and abhor music; but I want you to hear this young woman, to oblige a friend of mine. You've been seen about the singing places, and talking to old Deresfield, and that's enough to dub a man critic. It's all right, I suppose. Most things are. I daresay it's all right that I should go on painting pictures, and sell them to nobody."

"Anything but that, Jack. Ask me anything but that, I mean."

"You've made up your mind to drop the shadow for the substance, then?"

"You mean, to marry Nelly Vincent? No. I've made up my mind to that, any way. Poor girl."

"Why? For loving you? Now I really should like, for once, to feel the sensation of thinking I could break a girl's heart by not marrying her. No, you needn't put on airs. I broke a girl's heart once, and another fellow mended it; in fact, made it better than new. I never called her poor, though; I was too poor myself to throw stones. However, as you're not

going to marry her, she can't be jealous of one voice more. This is a girl that deserves a good turn, I'm told, and you might mention her to Deresfield."

"Can't I mention her without hearing her?"

"Of course you can do that, just as I've mentioned her to you. Of course that's easy. Only I haven't said she's good or bad, without hearing. She may be as bad as the rest of them, for aught I know. When I said she deserves a good turn, I only say what I'm told."

"What makes you so interested, Jack?"

"Why shouldn't I be interested in a woman I've never seen, as well as any other man?"

"But you haven't even heard her."

"Better reason why I should be interested. Hearing spoils our illusions—if I kept such things—which I don't, unless it's thinking you're a painter spoiled. No; I don't mean that 'spoiled' is the illusion. I mean 'painter.' I've promised to let you hear her, you see; and I don't want to be forsworn. To-morrow, in revenge, you shall take me even to—the opera."

It was true, without a shadow of affectation, that Mark could hardly bear to let himself be prevailed upon to hear a voice in song again. The fit of inspiration over, he forced himself to remember that, after all, he was a man, and as such was bound to face the worst unflinchingly, and to decide, once for all, whether he was the victim of a passing fever of fancy, such as the white heat of an artist's work may well bring with it, or of a settled monomania. He examined himself, and found the question immaterial to his life's true issue. Whichever way he might decide it, he was Nelly's lover no more. The voice had taught him that it was not his true whole self he had given or could give to Nelly; and he could only think now of his duty to her. He would seek for the owner of the voice no more; that would be like taking advantage of his wrong, and thus make him guilty of double treason. But that alone would not save Nelly from a heart-break; for his faith in her love and faith was only made more intense, by his bitter knowledge of the vanity of her faith in his own. And thus, even while talking coldly and carelessly to his friend, the only end was before his face all the while.

Death does not break hearts; and better death than dishonour.

I hardly care to speak more plainly. But when a man, otherwise sane, is haunted all day long by such a madman's vision as an incarnate voice, when he feels it making him every moment false to his own manhood, and to the womanhood of her for whom he has sworn to live; when his life means, in his sight, an endless desert of wasted love for hers, and his death nothing more than a regret and a sorrow to be cured by time—how is it possible for one who carries in him a fuller share than common of the painter's paganism, the worship of ideal beauty, to think otherwise than longingly upon escape and rest under earth or water? He did not put the desire even into mental words; but more than the mere desire was there. What mattered it what became of his own despicable soul? He could imagine no more terrible eternity than being voice-haunted for ever; he knew the worst, and could not bring himself to imagine more. And Nelly would know him to be dead, and never know him to be false; and death does not break hearts, he thought over again.

To play with such thoughts is not perilous—it is fatal. He knew, without telling himself so, that this was to be his last day alive in the world. "If I am mad," he thought, "there is no sin; if I am not mad, I must think of Nelly." Desire will always lead an army of reasons. And there are many ways of slipping out of life decently, as all but the extremest madmen know, so that design may be made to look like accident, and art like nature.

Such moods are invariably passive. It becomes immaterial, in what one feels to be one's last hours, whether one does this or that, goes here or there. What would it matter, after all, if he heard one song less or more? It would not prevent his sending Helen's voice out of the world in company with his soul. So he let his friend lead him that evening where he pleased, protesting no more.

He was even deliberately passive. He asked no questions, and well-nigh made a point of not observing the street or the house whither he was being led—a morally blind man. Presently he found himself just within the door of an ordinary drawing-room, unlighted except by summer twilight, and with the windows open. About half-a-dozen people were in the room. Jack Andrews and he did not enter farther at first, because a young lady was standing

at the piano to sing, and the prelude had already begun.

"Che farò senza Euridice!"

Her back was towards the door—but what need was there to see a face he had never seen?

The divine voice had come back to him; with his living ears he was listening to that, and no other; he was looking on the Helen of his dreams with his living eyes. What could it mean—disillusion, or ten-fold despair? He was half driven to escape; but the music held him there. Perhaps the voice was sent back to him in mercy, that he might not die sane.

The last note died away, and the singer turned slowly round.

She was, and she was not, Helen. There was the queenly look; but it came from conscious triumph, and not from statuesque stature or repose. There was the beauty, too; but it was of light and life, colour and breath—the voice indeed was Helen, but the lips and the eyes—

Had he gone mad, indeed? Nelly was not beautiful, Nelly could not sing, Nelly was at Gressford—and this was she!

A madman's frenzy—he was right; he was not to die sane. And yet, how could he doubt when he caught her old shy blush at the sight of him, and saw the look of triumph turn to the old sweet look in her eyes, and felt her hand in his with the gentle touch he had not felt for a year? What could it mean?

"Don't forgive me, Mark," said Nelly's, not Helen's, voice as they stood together in the deeper twilight on the balcony of that drawing-room in Dreamland.

His whole self, and not his voice, questioned her.

"How could I think," she answered him, "how could I bear it, of your killing yourself, and for me? Oh, Mark, you cannot tell what you bade me do when you told me to wait—to sit with my hands idle and watch you break your strength and your heart before my eyes! Could I not read your letters—could I not read between the lines? Could I live and be a curse to you? And could I really do nothing, and yet be a fit wife for you? I could not stay at home, Mark. I might find something I could help you by, and bring you nearer to—to having to work and fight less hard. My uncle let me go. He wanted to keep me, but I disobeyed him, and—and—well, I got my

way. Perhaps he thought I might forget you if I found something else to put into my head; as if putting into one's head is putting out of one's heart, Mark!"

"But you did not leave home? No; it is impossible."

"You mean about my letters?"

"Nelly—if you are Nelly—tell me at once—is it you I have heard sing?"

"No, Mark. It is not I. It was Mademoiselle Saffi. Oh, can you ever forgive me? I meant it all so for the best, and I have become a living fraud. I began by disobeying you, by not waiting—that obliged me to get cousin Kate to forward your letters to me from Gressford, and to send her mine to post to you; and then I had to take a false name—they turned me into an Italian. It was Mademoiselle Saffi that sang, and I am Mademoiselle Saffi. Oh, you don't know how I have been hating myself for deceiving you, though——"

"But the voice? No; it is not yours."

"Do you—do you dislike it so much? They say it is a good one. Madame Casca, whom I used to go and practise with till she went abroad again, found it out and made me sing. Don't dislike my voice too much, Mark! I am afraid it is me."

"But the voice must have been there. And if that is you—then——"

He could not end the speech. "Then I never knew you," was in his mind; "I never loved you; I never met you till I heard you sing."

Had he indeed ever met her till now? She was, and she was not, the same girl that he had left at Gressford a year ago. And she was, and she was not, the Helen of whom he had dreamed. She was both at once; he seemed to see in her at once the soul of Helen and the heart of Nelly. Even while he loved her, he thought her plain; now he found her beautiful beyond all women—beyond even the ideal of his dreams, even as the true human must always surpass the imagined divine. Was the change in her or in him? Had Pan found eyes, or Echo taken a form?

She answered his thoughts rather than his words. "Could I sing to you at Gressford," she said meekly, "when you were teaching me? I had heard no singing but the birds'; I learned when you came."

And this was the girl to whom he had been false—for false to her he had been, in heart and soul, though it was, by a

marvel of Destiny, her own very self for whose sake he had been false to her. She was indeed transformed. All this while his love, false and imperfect as it was, had been giving her a soul that could speak as well as hide; and she, unseen, had been sending him her soul, and inspiring him, and making him love her invisible best more clearly, truly, and fully than with the best love he could ever have felt for her had he been simply true. Moment by moment, more and more like his ideal Helen she grew, till he could well-nigh fancy the growth of this little mortal into Olympian Juno herself, and see the light deepen and darken in her eyes.

But her coming glory still meant shame for him. It was she who had been working and living for him—not he for her. The little girl whom he had wondered at himself for loving had become literally the voice of his soul.

"Nelly," he said at last, "you said just now, 'Don't forgive me' . . . You meant, I suppose, for being truer and wiser than I. That is hard for a man to forgive in a woman, I know. What shall you say when you hear I have not been true to you?"

"Who will say that? And as if you didn't know what I should say!"

"But if I say it, Nelly?"

"If you do——" He felt her voice tremble a little.

"Can you begin to love me—all over again—when I tell you that I have been false; that I ceased to love you because I began to love you, and that if I could have found you I would have left you and followed you all over the world—whoever you were? And that I had thought—Heaven forgive me!—of dying rather than you should break your heart by knowing I loved you?"

"That is all beyond me, Mark. I don't understand."

"I heard you sing every day when you went to Madame Casca. Nelly, your own voice made me forget you. And if it had not been yours!?"

"But you see it was mine," she said, with illogical simplicity. Perish "ifs" even, if those are the only roughnesses in the road. "Perhaps you would not have liked it so much, if—if it had not been mine."

"Ah, if I could only think that I somehow felt it to be your own voice, all the while!"

"And I am so glad you cared for my voice, without knowing it was me! Now I shan't be so much afraid of boring you; for I shall sing a great deal, now that I know how."

"Is there no end to your forgiveness, Nelly?"

"Forgiveness—forgiveness for loving me less for a little because you found you loved me more?"

Mark answered not a word. Why should he indeed, without being more of a madman than he had once thought himself, and more obstinate in his shame than this most obstinate of girls had been in her self-will? They were still alone upon the balcony, and he drew her closer to him than he had ever done in his life before, for he drew her soul to his own.

"There," said Jack Andrews. "There is the picture, Miss Vincent. It still wants the companion, though."

They were standing in the gallery of Lord Deresfield's town-house; and the sun was shining.

Nelly looked at her lover's first victory long and earnestly; and, she could not herself tell why, tears came into her eyes.

"Who is it?" she asked. "That is a real woman, I am sure."

"Helen," answered Mark, with a touch of solemnity. "She was a real woman once—before Homer."

"Helen?" she asked again, doubtfully.

"She's right, Mark," said Jack Andrews. "I always told you that's no more like Helen than I am." And certainly, if he were critically right, no fault could be found with his comparison. He was not like Helen.

"Why do you call her Helen?" she asked a third time.

"She was the woman I saw when you sang."

"And yet you did not know it was I?"

"Have I not told you so?"

"Nobody was ever so beautiful as that.

But it came by my singing, and you gave it my name!"

"Your name, Nelly?"

"Did I never tell you what Nelly is short for? My name is Helen, Mark; didn't you know?"

"You never used to tell me anything then, Helen! And know? Shall I ever know? Shall I ever know you? But, like you or not, that is your picture—the very picture of your voice, your soul. That is as I always see you now—Helen! My dream of beauty and my real wife, both in one."

"I'm thinking about that companion picture," said Jack Andrews, who had lately developed a most tragical scowl, whenever he did not forget to put it on. "Look here, Mark; take my notion of Pan and Echo—the only good notion I ever got—and make it sell. Take it and welcome—I don't care about the confounded thing. You've only got to put in a Pan and an Echo, if you must have details, and there you are."

"Yes; but how is one to paint Echo? Lord Deresfield didn't order a *duplicate*," said Mark, looking at Helen.

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CHAPTER XI. ANDREW GORDON.

IF Andrew Gordon had called himself Mephistopheles, Noëmi Baruc would have followed him. They walked in silence along the now moonlit but still deserted streets, avoiding, either by intention or instinct on his part, all chance of meeting any part of the crowd from the theatre. It is easy enough to follow her, by throwing away all the rules and likelihoods of common waking life, and remembering how we all act and feel when we dream, and become the citizens of another country in another world. We often enter strange cities when we dream, and act strangely; and Noëmi had never been in Rome, although she lived there.

The scene became more dream-like every moment. The Ghetto, with its daily traffic and chatter, fell farther and farther away. The streets began to break up into indistinct masses of black shadow and silver-gray light; the houses to decay into broken walls and crumbling masses of stone, with dim vistas of darkness between them. Not a footfall was any longer to be heard but their own. Whither he was guiding her she neither questioned, nor thought, nor wondered. Was she not in a dream? At last they came into an open space; and she saw rising before her a colossal mass of gray, made whiter here and there by deeper shadows, and looking like the very inmost citadel of dreamland. As they approached it, she could distinguish lines of arches piled

above one another, tier upon tier. It must be a palace or a temple; but of what—gods or men? She could not help shuddering with a new awe, as her guide led her out from the open moonlight into the shadow, which this ghostly pile threw upon the confused ground. It might be neither palace nor temple; it might be a tomb.

Suddenly he stopped, turned towards her, and said:

"Sing."

After all, there is no reason why the most unmusical of throats should not sing in a dream. Indeed, there is every reason why they should, according to dream-law. If he had told her to fly, she would not have been surprised. It did not seem to her like madness that a man, if he had a fancy to hear a girl sing in the moonlight, among ruins instead of a theatre, should choose for his purpose one who had just declared that she had never tried to sing.

"Sing," he said again. "I must hear you."

"I cannot——"

"You can; and if you cannot, you must, all the same."

"What will happen if I sing?"

"That must be seen. But sing—and think of whatever you most wish for, and it shall be yours."

We have all heard of such offers. Sometimes they are made by creatures, mostly evil, who mean what they say and can do it; sometimes by mere mortals with a turn for exaggeration, who only fancy they mean what they say, and do not include a few million exceptions or so, like the inns where the guest can have anything he likes to name so long as he names eggs and bacon. But Noëmi was

not in that respect like all of us, and had never heard such an offer in her life before. She had dreamed of it, of course, being human. And now that it had come, in a new and magical world, the offer seemed neither too large nor too wild. Perhaps, in that magic atmosphere, she really could sing if she tried—really, and not only as people sing in dreams—and for the sake of whatever her soul, still overflowing with its Carnival longings, most desired. And what did her soul most desire? Most certainly no longer such a simple thing as that the hands of all the clocks in Rome should work backwards, so that she might, after all, reach the Ghetto before the gate closed. Not even that she might find herself in the crowded Corso once more, with all the hours of the day still before her—no mere natural instinct ever wishes that the past may be recalled. Her heart leaped high; and, with the wildest impulse of faith in unlimited possibilities, she answered:

“Then—a pair of gold ear-rings, signor, if you please!—real gold!”

The name of Andrew Gordon will have struck familiarly upon many ears. Those who have taken the trouble to guess, are not wrong in their surmise that the very eccentric Englishman who offered Noëmi Barne anything she pleased for a song that she could not sing, and because she could not sing, was *the* Andrew Gordon. And they need not be reminded of more than the name of the composer of *Comus*—that strange opera which, when it appeared like a musical meteor in the now extinct Phoenix Theatre in Great Queen-street, created a rage which belongs to history. *Comus* is not often heard now—English operas more than a generation old seldom are. But those who are old enough to remember it and its first night, as many still are, will feel youth come back into their hearts as they think over what might have been, and say, “Ah, we have no Andrew Gordons nowadays. If he had lived, Europe would have heard of an Englishman.”

That Europe has heard of a few Englishmen who were not musicians is nothing to musical people, as everybody knows.

The strangest thing about the triumph of *Comus* was that its composer was a rich man; rich not only in genius but in coin of the realm. More strangely still, he was the eldest son of old Gordon, of Gordon's Mill—a great man in the

kingdom of Cotton. *Genius* does take queer freaks into its head about selecting its lodgings sometimes. Old Gordon himself, of Gordon's Mill, was just musician enough to distinguish the first bar of God save the King from that of Rule Britannia. His wife, till she was past learning, had heard no music but that of machinery in full play. She had been a factory hand when old Gordon, then young Gordon, married her, neither for a pretty face nor for accomplishments, but for the mere excellent qualities, that eminently fitted her for the wife of a man who had risen in life, to fifteen shillings a week, from nothing a day. But a man must have some ancestors, though he may never have heard of them; and among the grandchildren of Adam some, at least, must be the sons of Jubal. Old Gordon came from the North, when he one day crossed from Yorkshire into Lancashire with three sixpences—not, indeed, in his pockets, for he had but one, and that was rendered unsuitable for a purse by a hole in the bottom—but safely stowed in one of his boots under his toes. His talent for climbing to the top of the ladder spoke of his undoubtedly Northern origin; but his very un-Northern silence on the score of ancestry and the faint tinge of orange in the whites of his eyes were eloquent, to the learned in such things, of other than Scots blood in his veins. Very noble names are to be found in Yetholm, for instance, where the gipsies are; and that one drop of tawny blood would account for any caprice on the part of his children, even to the third and fourth generation, though it had filtered through the veins of the best man of business that ever was born. Andrew Gordon himself did not in the least resemble the great nation of wandering fiddlers, and certainly would not have felt complimented by the suggestion that he had the slightest connection with a tribe of beggars and thieves, as people roughly and scornfully set down the great Romani nation in his younger days. But, none the less, he is a wise man who knows his own father; and, therefore, he who knows his own grandfather must be at least doubly wise.

But, whatever he was or was not, Andrew Gordon was a born musician. He also, like his father and mother, heard music in the clatter of spinning-machines. But it was not, like them, because he heard it nowhere else. It was because he heard it everywhere. Music with many, perhaps

most, people is like the sentimental part of love; it would be an unknown thing to them if they had never read or heard of it at second-hand. Andrew Gordon had been brought up from his cradle among those who never spoke of it; and he must, nevertheless, have heard it at absolutely first-hand, even in his cradle. Of course it cannot be really so, but music, in some mysterious manner, does appear to be a gift that some few mortals are allowed to carry with them from their former lives, and to keep with them, as a memory, when they come down to this world. Such are not dependent upon pianofortes and fiddles; they can hear music at their own fancy, as Ferdinand heard Ariel's upon the enchanted island, in the air.

Where there is a will, there is one way; where there is a passion, there are ten thousand—especially when a man has no lack of money wherewith to pay for the journey. Of course, Andrew, being so utterly unlike his practical father, and his homely mother, and his steady-going brothers, was petted and indulged to spoiling point; and when, at one-and-twenty, he rejected an active partnership in the mill, and resolved to live the life of a musician, the old man was proud rather than otherwise. After all, there was that orange tint in his eyes as a token of Bohemian sympathies, however deep and dormant they might lie. So he gave the young man a sleeping partnership, gave his next brother his birthright of activity, and let him go his own way freely.

"He must sow his wild oats, I suppose," old Gordon excused himself to himself. "He'll be sick of fiddling in six months, and be glad to come back to the mill again. You must put your back into it, James," he said to his second and steadiest son. "The lad must find it easy for him when he comes home."

James promised that he would put his back into it. But he did not express his very natural feeling that a man's back ought to work mainly for its owner, and not to make harness easier for those, who like to spend the morning hours of life in play. Nor was he cruel enough to hint that, after all, perhaps the truant might not get tired of play, and might not come home. In a word, he acted like the sensible young fellow that everybody called him—he did put his back into the mill with a will, and held his tongue.

In James's case, the fancy that his brother Andrew might not come back to

the mill had no better support than a wish; the father's belief, that a young man soon gets tired of any sort of life that he is freely allowed to lead, was built upon knowledge of the world. He would have been perfectly right in more than nineteen cases out of twenty. But knowledge of the world, though acquired in Lancashire, was not knowledge of Andrew.

The difference between father and son was merely verbal, but therefore all the more insuperable. It lay in the different meaning each attached to the word "playing."

No misgiving or regrets touched the young man, when he left the home of his boyhood; for he had never been a boy, and had never felt himself at home. The scenes and domesticities, among which he had grown up to his exceedingly moderate stature, had never become part of him; he had always in spirit been a stranger among them all, and had felt like a stranger. The name of London, which in those untravelling days he had never seen, sounded to his ears like the name of home to an exile, and his permission to seek his soul's fortune there like a recall from banishment. London is the modern Proteus; it is all things to all men. To one, London means pleasure; to another, fame; to another, the streets are still paved with gold. To the imagination of Andrew Gordon, London was music and nothing else, and he longed to throw himself into its sea. He had no ambition for himself; he went to London that he might be a minnow among the Tritons, and lead a life of worship in the temple.

He carried with him the golden key to all circles; he heard music, and mixed with those who made it, as fully as his heart could desire. He set to work and cultivated himself diligently, that he might be the more fit for the society of musicians. But very soon he was surprised, and by no means pleased, to find that, ignorant apprentice as he was, the very greatest fiddlers in all London showed no objection to treat him as if he were already their equal—nay, as their superior and master. Every scrap of music that he wrote as an exercise, and showed timidly in order to have its faults exposed and explained, was invariably called a masterpiece of perfection, especially by those who had daughters to marry, or concerts to be patronised, or a taste for dining well without expense to themselves. Such an art-patron was not

to be found every day, as this rich young man from Lancashire. He had come to walk up the hill with brother artists, with no reward but the honour of their company; and they had one and all agreed to make him drive up luxuriously in a chariot, with themselves for horses.

He had no knowledge of the world; but he was absolutely flattery-proof, and that compelled him to see a little, though for a long time he resolutely shut his eyes. The musical life was to his mind so divine, that to suspect the possibility of a meanness in anybody who lived it savoured of blasphemy. It could not surely be envy that made one musician lose no chance of sneering at another, when the believer in both was by, or jealousy that made his friendship a bone of contention between friends, or self-interest that degraded his masters into his followers. Of only one thing he was sure—all these flatteries and eager friendships were due to no merits of his own. To what then could they be due?

One day Mr. Hart, the then manager of the Phoenix, with whom he had a speaking acquaintance, called at his lodgings. He had for some time taken all possible care that his acquaintance with Mr. Hart should not pass the bounds of speaking; for the manager of the Phoenix was in harmony with none of his illusions. But then Mr. Hart was no musician; to him there was no occasion to shut his eyes.

"Mr. Gordon," said his visitor—a jovial, offhand, straightforward-mannered man of about fifty, who prided himself on never beating about the bush—"I'm come to ask you to save the Phoenix. There's nobody else that can."

Mr. Hart was famous in the profession as a splendid man of business, without an equal—a reputation proof against, if not actually founded upon, the fact that he had taken eight theatres in eight years, and had seven times during the same period run away from his creditors. Or perhaps it was based upon the certainly remarkable fact that he, under the circumstances, had found credit not only seven but eight times. There was a theory about, apparently immortal, that people expressed by saying, "Oh, Hart will be sure to do the trick this time—he's a wonderful man of business."

Gordon did not instinctively glance at his pockets. But it is likely enough that Mr. Hart thought he did, for he continued as if answering an objection:

"No, Mr. Gordon. I'm not come to suggest your putting in money. It wouldn't come into my hands—not a penny; and I'm not going to throw good money after bad, even if it isn't my own. The Phoenix must go. I don't mind that so much, for I don't care who knows it that I've got another house in my eye. But there's no good keeping the house in one's eye if one can't keep one's eye on the house; and I can't do that at Boulogne. You see I'm open—that's my way, and you're a gentleman. And the Phoenix is dead, sir."

"Dead? Why the theatre is full every night——"

"With paper, sir; waste paper. I've almost got to pay people to take it. And meanwhile I've quite got to pay my company, I can't put them off another week——"

"I'm very sorry for your company. But what can I do?"

"Write me something, Mr. Gordon—write me anything—and save the Phoenix for six nights more."

"Certainly not. Why do you come to me?"

"Because I want to pay off my back salaries. And reason number two, because you're a gentleman, and won't want cash down. Number three, because anything you write is a safe card. And it's a safe card because, reason number one again, you're not in the profession, and it's my experience that when a man works for his bread he finds it hard to get, but when he's got the bread and works for butter he gets other people's bread into the bargain. That's my experience, sir. And, not being in the profession, you've got no enemies; and human nature's changed since yesterday if there aren't enough gentlemen—and ladies—in town to fill the Phoenix six nights with money; with sprats, Mr. Gordon, if I may liken you to a mackerel. Write me something, Mr. Gordon—write me any trifle you like, in three days, that I can just manage to run for a week——"

"In three days!"

"And you shall have every penny of profit after I've paid my back salaries."

"And you really think that a good work can be written in three days—and by me, of all people in the world?"

"I didn't say a good work, sir. Of course I don't mean anything you'd do wouldn't be good, and all that, but it's the week's run I want, not the quality. And even if what you did wasn't first-rate, nobody would say so, I'm sure."

"You dare to come and ask me to write rubbish on purpose?"

"My dear sir! you object to write rubbish, and you call yourself a musician? Ah, you've never been put to it to make the pot boil. You've never had to raise the passage-money to Boulogne. But I don't want rubbish exactly either—something light and airy, with a tune to whistle in it, that'll do you and me good and nobody any harm. You know what I mean. And you needn't do it on purpose—by accident will do. Think, sir! There are honest, hard-working-families, carpenters, and fiddlers, and scene-shifters that'll be ruined more than me, if the Phoenix doesn't get one decent week before it dies. I can't carry them all off with me to Boulogne. There'll be debt, misery, starvation, and worse than that for the girls, and all because you won't take three days' trouble over a thing that another man would knock off in two."

"Then why don't you go to another man?"

"Because another man would want the cash down—that's why. You see I'm frank and open, sir—that's my way. And it pays—at least, it hasn't yet, but it will some day. This is not music, Mr. Gordon, it is charity."

Gordon never knew why he hesitated, for the very thought of trading in the name of art, and passing off bad work for good, was abominable to him, even for the sake of charity. Perhaps those who know what the sudden flight of an unexpectedly bankrupt manager means to a hundred men, women, and children will more easily guess why. At any rate he said:

"If I do write rubbish for your scene-shifters, you must not blame me when it is hissed off the stage."

Nor could the enterprising and business-like Mr. Hart have fairly expected from the young and untried composer anything more than the week's run, that was to save him his unwilling run to Boulogne. He must have been of an unusually sanguine temper to hope for that even. He had not even funds enough to do his novelty justice in the way of preparation, not to speak of sufficient time. It was putting a high stake on a single chance in a hopeless game. Gordon himself, while the hateful work was in progress, kept sullenly out of the way; and, when the first night arrived, it was only the fascination that drags men, against their own wills, to be the witnesses

of their own failures that dragged him to the theatre. For him, the whole atmosphere was charged with shame; to all others concerned, with dulness and bankruptcy.

And that was the beginning of the first night of *Comus*—the grandest musical triumph in England within the memory of man.

The last chord was drowned in a whirlwind of applause. Mr. Hart, in a frenzy of excitement, rushed frantically for the composer, to bring him before the foot-lights. The Phoenix was saved—not by the skin of its teeth, and for a paltry week, but bodily, and for a whole season. There was no doubt about it—like him who went out to look for an ass and found a kingdom, he had asked humbly for a tune and had received a work of genius, from the man with whose name the whole house was ringing before it went out over the whole world.

And where was Andrew Gordon all this time, while the whole house was calling for him, and the frantic manager was hunting for his saviour in vain?

He was striding off indignantly down the street, saying to himself:

"Hang the composer for a humbug, and the people for a pack of fools!"

GARDEN-PARTIES.

FROM the time of our first parents gardens have been important theatres of human events. What a history might not be told by the ancient cedars, standing in the centre of emerald lawns, which are girdled by gray ivy-grown walls—gardens such as are those of the Borghese Palace, of New College, or St. John's, at Oxford, and such as are to be seen attached to many an English country house, and not a few London suburban residences? What a history might not the trees, that are the patriarchs of these enclosures, tell of the generations of men and women who have walked, and of the children who have played on them; of the vows of love sworn and forsworn; of the troths plighted and broken; of the gay laughter that has rung out, and of the bitter cries that have been wailed forth, where the variegated flower-bed flanks the sombre shrubbery; of the conversations which have been held under the shade of the huge branches—now almost severed from the parent trunk—conversations relative to

affairs of the heart, politics, study, war, conspiracy—what you please? In a garden like this, was there not assuredly a time when scarlet-clothed cardinals picked their way along, threading the while in their minds, or their words, the mazy paths of ecclesiastical statesmanship; when Cavalier gallants swaggered by the side of dames and demoiselles; when Puritans discoursed severely of politics and impending campaigns; or, it may be, before the time of Puritans and Cavaliers, when the adherents of what it was then the fashion to call "the ancient faith," plotted hard by the stately oaks against the life and crown of our good Queen Elizabeth?

An old-fashioned garden, or the garden which surrounds an ancient house, is a picturesquely suggestive place; and such an enclosure as has been just glanced at in imagination becomes peopled, on a moment's reflection, with troops of historical or fantastic forms, and stands forth as the stage of a thousand phases of human activity. Statesmen in retirement, budding their roses; philosophers in meditation or talk; lovers in mutual rapture—these are the figures proper to a garden. It was in a garden somewhere in Armenia that the cradle of the human race was laid; it was in a garden hard by the Acropolis of Athens that the foundation of philosophy was established; it was in the garden of Gray's-inn that Bacon first conceived the idea of the *Novum Organum*; it was in a garden, at Rydal Mount, that Wordsworth composed a considerable portion of his poems. Gardens, it will thus be seen, have a kind of traditional eventfulness to maintain; and the mode in which, at the present day, this is done is the garden-party. Year after year garden-parties fill a more prominent place in our social and fashionable life; year after year does the effort increase to give the charm of variety to the entertainment; year after year, very likely, if the truth were known, is the garden-party the parent of more and more important incidents in the lives of individuals. It may, therefore, be as well to glance at one or two types of the institution, with a view to acquainting ourselves with the salient features of its functions.

The idea of the garden-party may be traced in such miscellaneous entertainments as the bean-feast, the Sunday-school tea, the *al fresco* fêtes, which take place not a hundred miles from Chelsea, as well as, of course, in all sorts of flower-shows and charity bazaars, held in the open-air.

The "day in the country," for which so many town clergymen just now entreat the charity of the public, is perhaps the best sort of garden-party, though the "garden" be Ham-common, the Thames-banks at Isleworth, Epping-forest, Hampstead-heath, or any other of these delightful isles of novel greenery and freshness which stud the ocean of metropolitan life. The bean-feast—wayze-geese, it is called, when the celebrants of the festival belong to the Caxtonian guild—is a garden-party, plus a substantial dinner. Lawn-tennis, croquet, and flirtation are replaced by more strenuous pastimes in the ground of some convenient hostelry at Broxbourne or Kingston-on-Thames, and instead of ices, champagne-oup, tea, and fruit, there is such a game of knife-and-fork played as only honest workers can essay. As for the Sunday-school tea, it is only to be noticed here because a fashion appears to have lately sprung up in some parts of the country of making it the occasion of a garden-party, in the conventional sense of the term, as well. Having received an invitation in which something is said of lawn-tennis, but nothing at all of Sunday-schools, one finds on one's arrival that the small boys and girls are seated in a circle on the lawn, and that before one can indulge in the promised recreation one is expected to make oneself useful in the pouring out of leviathan tins of tea, or the handing round of mountainous slabs of colossal cakes.

On a narrow sloping sward in a Kensington pleasaunce of historic name and fame, a quadrangular enclosure with dense hedges of myrtle, cut here and there into semicircular arches, a lady, the wearer of a title, an honoured and a familiar one, both in our national annals and in those of the Whig party, receives her guests and masses her company. The garden-parties of Holland-house are as famous as any in the world. Of course their opportunities, the conditions under which they are held, are unique. A mansion, which is a part of English history, stands in the middle of a park which is as profound a sylvan solitude as if Charing-cross were not four, but four hundred miles distant. There is scarcely a room in that mansion that is not identified with some name, some incident which is immortal. The park itself is a collection of hay-fields and gardens, deer-grounds, shrubberies, and flower-beds. There, is Addison's walk; and there, the favourite rose-plot of Charles

James Fox. There are grounds for lawn-tennis and croquet, or if you will step once more into the quadrangular enclosure already alluded to, you may find sitting or standing room, and you may feast your ears on the notes, vocal or instrumental, of a company of Swedish musicians. In the gardens of Holland-house there must be upwards of a thousand guests. Yet the presence of the hostess, who somehow or other has personally welcomed each one of the arrivals, makes itself felt throughout, and diffuses around a sort of harmony of ease and order. A historical genius of the place there is, no doubt, but the genius which to-day is chiefly felt is that of a grace and manner full of dignity and sweetness.

The Holland-house Garden-parties are noticeable, if for no other reason than that they may be said to have set the fashion of garden-parties. These entertainments were in fact held in the classic Kensington enclosure long before they were held elsewhere; and the garden-party of to-day, as it is known universally, is only a copy of the original, as it was invented by her who was for the time the reigning monarch of the Fox family and Whig society generally. As the circles of society have enlarged, as it has been necessary to increase the opportunities of social meeting, so have garden-parties become popular. The immediate neighbourhood of London is singularly rich in opportunities for them. The suburbs of London are the most beautiful in the world, and they are the most accessible. Not only on the lawns of Chiswick, surrounded by walls of venerable age, but in the prim parterres of houses which are the growth of yesterday, are garden-parties held. That these vary in attractiveness as they vary also in social pretension, goes without saying. Gardens can be overcrowded as well as rooms; and garden-parties are frequently given in narrow slips of ground which it is a satire to speak of as gardens. The entertainment is one, for the purpose of which it is essential that the enclosure in which it takes place should not be of too formal a character. The ideal garden is one with winding walks, umbrageous trees, with a river frontage lined by a gravel walk. It is also very desirable that the French windows of the house shall open level with the turf, so that there may be free passage in and out. Givers of garden-parties, actual or potential, may be reminded that there can be no greater mistake than to suppose that a garden-party does not involve more or less of a com-

plete bouleversement of the domestic arrangement indoors. Guests may come at four and go at seven, but while they are there, it is desirable to permit them free access of the house as well as of the grounds, or else it were better not to go to the trouble of entertaining them at all.

The ordinary garden-party is gradually becoming an *ad fresco* crush, where the crowd is as great, and standing room as difficult to find, as at a reception in a May-fair drawing-room in the height of the season. There is a pretence of lawn-tennis going on in one corner, and of croquet in another; but the guests gasp and pant for air, and the first thought on having got into the thick of the gaiety, is how one is to get out again. A small garden in the neighbourhood of a great town may be a source of satisfaction and pride to its owners, but is a very doubtful blessing to some of its owner's friends. To be compelled to have one's afternoon tea or after-dinner coffee in what is called an arbour at the end of a small grass plot; to be expected to recline at full length on the grass; to experience in the open air the bitter balminess of spring, or the extreme heat of July; to be tormented by insects; to have to bear and to do all this, when a comfortable room is close at hand, merely because the establishment boasts a garden, is to make one sigh for the urban dwelling in the closely-packed street, where the only outlets were the area in front and the little court behind, dedicated to pails, brooms, and cats.

There is a decided tendency at present, specially to utilise garden-parties for the parade of children and of lions. It probably seems more decorous to allow an eminent stranger to be mobbed on a grass-plot than in a drawing-room, while as for the small girls and boys of the period, they have a more extended space for their gambols, and they seem more in their proper element. It is doubtful whether the large part which children have come to play in these entertainments is altogether a good thing for themselves, or for the peace and enjoyment of those who are responsible for their good conduct. Children are precociously wise and discreet in these times; yet they are children still, with the old childish love of mischief and frolic as yet inherent in them. It is somewhat awkward for parent or elder sister to be interrupted by the intelligence that one urchin charge has had a disagreeable fall while scaling a tree, or

by the apparition of another which has stained its white dress with strawberries, or deluged its petticoats with champagne-cup. Further, it may be questioned whether garden-parties would not often be more enjoyable than they are, if there were fewer amusements provided for the company. There must be games of course—lawn-tennis, croquet, Badminton, and what not. But though men and women are only children of a larger growth, even they must surely be beginning to weary of the performing-dogs, the musical-glasses—disguised though these are in various shapes and under a host of fine names, but still the musical-glasses for all that—and even of Punch and Judy shows. After all, garden-parties—except where there is some special and peculiar attraction in the gardens themselves, some unique features in the landscape, some romantic corners in the grounds, grottoes and caverns, a river or a lake—are an entertainment midway between a morning call and an evening party. They do not involve the effort of the latter, while the fact that they are celebrated in the open air, relieves them from the stiffness and ceremony of the former. The casual chat, the pleasant stroll, the glimpses of many faces, old and new, familiar and strange, are quite enough to cause the time to pass away lightly. A little music is a permissible, welcome, and natural accompaniment. But that is enough, and whatever is more than this partakes of the nature of boredom.

There are improvements that might be suggested in the conduct of garden-parties, as in every other variety of social institution. Probably they are most purely enjoyable in the country, where there is the least of effort in their organisation, and where the guests are all of them conveyed in their carriages from their own houses to their host's. In the neighbourhood of London, and other great towns, there is usually some inconveniences in the railway arrangements, which mar the pleasure of those of the guests who are not carriage people. It may be suggested, too, that as long as young men and young ladies play, and are expected to play, games involving such severe exercise as lawn-tennis, it is positively inhuman, as well as absurd, to expect them to appear in their go-to-meeting costume. There is something which would be ludicrous, if it were not painful, in the spectacle of a gentleman of mature years, when playing the game of lawn-tennis, endeavouring to keep himself "in,"

or his adversary "out," clad in the frock-coat and tall hat of urban existence. In the country this barbarous anomaly is not witnessed. When will the givers of garden-parties in the capital learn, in this respect, from the entertainers of the provinces? Yet when every deduction is made, on whatever score, the garden-party is rational in idea and enjoyable in practice. As little of unaccustomed pomp as possible, and as much of everyday nature: that should be the motto of the garden-party hosts. Where it is the motto—and happily it is so in many instances—the garden-party is the most pleasurable and most entirely sensible way of receiving or visiting one's friends during the summer months—a happy compromise between the simplicity of Arcadia and the noise and heat of the drawing-room.

A CHEAP HOLIDAY.

WE had proposed to go to Switzerland, Brown, Robinson, and I. We had talked of Vienna and Pesh; even of Constantinople, with a run over to Cairo and the Pyramids. Sometimes Norway had seemed to us easy; and there were moments when America had not appeared impossible. Many a pleasant pipe we smoked over the discussion of these plans, and our map and Bradshaw gave them such an appearance of reality, that we generally separated with a feeling that we were really going to start for Egypt the next morning. Brown declared that he was acquiring quite a Parisian accent. Sometimes we tired of the Continent, and agreed instead to go for a cruise with De Marlinspike in his yacht, or to go to Blazer's moor in Scotland for the grouse. I am sure we got as much pleasure on those occasions as De Marlinspike ever got out of his yacht, or Blazer from his moor. There was a boundless freedom about it all. We joined the yacht whenever we liked, had always splendid weather, or if we ever indulged in a gale it was only for the sake of variety; and then we had never used up our last dry jacket; we never had to beat up for port late in the evening against a head wind and a cross sea, with our provisions running short; we never had any difficulty about landing, and never wearied of our sport. Oh, those were merry cruises we made in the Vixen over our evening pipes in Robinson's chambers!

At last the period of emancipation drew

close; London was deserted, drawing-rooms were empty, and the only reason for staying in town was that it was the last place where you were likely to meet your tailor. About this time an impartial listener would have noticed that we became less ambitious; our trips decreased in extent and duration, and we calculated expenses in a manner quite at variance with our former magnificence. We had, all three, arranged the time of our departure, but were still undecided where we should go, when we met for the final discussion in Robinson's rooms. I, for my part, after a private committee of ways and means, had come to the conclusion that the state of my finances made it impossible for me to go abroad at all, and was wondering how I should announce my secession to the others, when to my great relief Robinson broke the ice. After filling and lighting his pipe, he stretched his long body out in his arm-chair, and blew away our pleasant airy castles.

"I say, you fellows, I'm afraid I shan't be able to go with you after all."

Brown looked blank; he was the moneyed man of the party, and had reckoned on his summer trip.

"Can't go!" said he, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "what do you mean?"

"Why, I'm so hard up," said Robinson, "I find I really can't afford it; but you and Smith can go together, two are quite enough, a third man would be one too many after all."

"Nonsense, man," said Brown, "why it won't cost you more than living in town; you must have a holiday; don't break up the party. Smith and I shall quarrel before we have been away a week, if we go together."

"I'm very sorry, old fellow," said Robinson, in the quiet tone he always used when he had made up his mind, which indeed he always did before he spoke. "I'm very sorry, but I really can't afford it."

"Well, I must say, I think you might have found that out before," answered Brown, giving an angry puff at his pipe.

Robinson pretended to busy himself about hospitable cares in the way of grog. He knew that Brown would necessarily have some more steam to blow off, before he could listen to reason, and so gave him time before he answered.

When the grog was satisfactorily mixed, he turned with deliberation to Brown's last remark.

"I really am very sorry, old fellow;

there is nothing I hate more than being thrown over myself, and you know I wouldn't do it if I could possibly help it?"

"Surely you can't have found out in the last two days that you can't afford it?" said Brown, breaking in with considerable warmth—Brown is rather a hot-tempered fellow.

"Well, the truth is," continued Robinson, with admirable sangfroid, "I was able to afford it till within two days ago, but I have had a sudden call upon me for money, which has run me rather dry. If I were to go abroad with you it would put me to a good deal of inconvenience, and I should be trying to save pennies all the way."

Although Brown's temper is a little hasty, he is one of the best fellows alive; he knew something of Robinson's circumstances; knew about that younger brother, to provide for whom the dear old fellow stinted himself in more things than Continental trips; and to save Robinson from having to make any further explanation he acquiesced at once, and recovered his ordinary good temper.

"Well, old boy, I'm very sorry you can't come; but if you can't, you can't, and there's an end of it. Smith and I will have to fight as little as possible. Where shall we go, my ancient?"

This made my confession rather difficult. I had been rather pleased to hear Robinson say he couldn't go, because I thought I should be able to follow suit easily, but now I found my position worse than ever. I hadn't Robinson's excuse, or indeed, any excuse at all, and my apology was lame. However, it was accomplished somehow, and Brown being in a manner pacified, it became a question how we were all to spend our holiday. Concluding that Brown would still go abroad, we busied ourselves with suggestions as to how he could best go. So we proceeded with our discussions in our ordinary way, suggesting all sorts of impossible plans, till at last Robinson said:

"Well, I've no money to go anywhere, so I shall go down to Sandedge and potter about in my old boat, and when you fellows are tired of every other place you had better come down there. I can't offer to take you in, for the cottage isn't big enough, and my mother hates smoke; but there is the most primitive little inn you ever saw, and Mrs. Wilkins is a model landlady."

To go to a watering-place would have

been just as expensive as going abroad; I hate walking with a knapsack, and there was nothing else to do; so I hailed this as a most happy solution of my difficulty. Brown soon cast in his lot with us, and so it comes about that we are dropping down Sandedge harbour in old Bob's boat, with an ebb tide and a nice little sailing breeze.

Very pleasant this breezy morning is! I am too poor to have many amusements, so I am obliged to take my pleasure minutely, in minor tones of sight, and sound, and colour, extracting from a passing gleam of sunlight the thrill of pleasure that it might otherwise have taken a view of Alpine heights to produce. I feel myself, therefore, in paradise now, lying in the bottom of the boat, watching the sunlight and cloud shadows chasing each other over the dancing water. I am an Englishman, and so of course love the water; but I know also enough about the management of a boat to admire the way in which Bob handles his, keeping her as close to the wind as ever she will go, but with every thread drawing; taking advantage of every puff a bit stronger than usual to shove her up right into the wind's eye, and as the squall abates, off again before the lessening wind, sets the sails aflap. There is no sport in the world like boat-sailing for one who, like myself, delights in minute pleasures. Your sails must be trimmed to a hair's-breadth, your ballast to half an inch, to make your boat do her best. You must know her temper and her mouth, as you would those of a high-mettled horse, and humour her as carefully. Your boat is a long one, perhaps, and consequently apt to miss stays. A stranger coming into her would not get her about once in a dozen times, and would lay the blame on her, instead of his own want of skill; but the slightest thing will do it. Lean your body forward, so as to bring her the least bit more down by the head, put your helm down gently but firmly, so as not to check her way more than is absolutely necessary; keep as still as death in the boat, just feel the head-sheets delicately as she comes up to the wind—there she goes; just check your foresail over to windward for a moment; now her head pays off; let draw, sheet your foresail home, and away the little beauty darts off on the other tack like a fish, giving you the pleasant satisfaction of feeling that you haven't lost an inch of ground that could be saved. We want all we can get too, for there is plenty of wind outside, the white horses

are leaping high over the bar, and there is a nasty nest of sandbanks ahead that we must weather. Now then, stand by to go about again, and do it smartly, for we must shave this fellow as close as possible, and sail the other side of the wind almost, to weather that cruel, angry-looking line of foam ahead. Whew! that is cutting it fine, indeed; she touched the sand then. By Jove, she'll miss stays, and, if she does, it is a case of swamp. Just cant her the least bit over to leeward; hurrah! she'll do it, her head pays off, now her sails draw, and not a bit too soon, for we were just in the suck of the breakers. Well done, old Bob! Keep her at it, and we shall weather yonder fellow nicely; that's it, if the wind will only hold just so for another minute, we shall be all right. Now we are all clear, our enemy is curling and hissing well under our lee; you could tell it by the movement of the boat, even if you couldn't see, for she seems to know that the danger is past as well as we do, and with a joyous bound she dashes out into the open water, that comes rolling to us from many a long mile of breezy ocean.

If you want to see a pleasant sight, just look at old Bob's face now; he has turned the tiller over to Brown, lit his pipe, and with a ballast-bag for a seat, and his back against the boat's side, he has coiled himself down for a placid half-hour's enjoyment.

"I say, Smith," says Bob at last, "what a thundering old hypocrite this fellow is;" pointing to the sea as he knocks the ashes out of his pipe, and speaking of it as if it were a human being. "Just look at this old impostor coming tambling towards us now; look at the way he comes jumping and curvetting along, enticing little innocent gleams of sunlight to play with him as if he were the most harmless fellow in existence. Why, that old fellow has committed murder and highway robbery, for all he looks so playful now; he smashed up a fine ship and murdered all hands on the French coast over there; and he made another pay toll of half her cargo in the Bay of Biscay to satisfy his ravenous maw; and now he's off to that other old pirate, the horse-shoe shoal, trying to look as if he were only on a day's pleasure."

"A sort of cross between a woman and a tiger—beautiful but dangerous," Brown observes sententially from the stern-sheets.

"Both of them are out of place in a boat, so mind your helm, old Maladroit,"

says Bob, shaking from his jacket the remains of a sea that our careless coxswain has taken in over the bow of the boat.

Brown grins, and promises to be more careful in future, and under better guidance we go bounding along. Big waves, that look as if they were going to curl right over our masthead, give a hiss and a snarl, and melt away harmlessly under us as the Foam rises to them with a lordly sweep. Oh, it is a glorious motion; not the heavy, ponderous roll of a big ship; not the helpless, sickening wriggle that those remember so well who have ever crossed the Channel; but the bounding, springing motion of a horse, when he feels the touch of elastic turf, and smells the moorland air; a motion that tells of joyful energetic life—the old boat seems to enjoy it just as much as we do. Then watch the colour of that wave as it advances, a heavy, sweeping mass of dark green, grooved and dented. Suddenly he thrusts out a great white tongue and hisses at us. The Foam turns her head a little to meet him, and the sullen monster parts and lets us pass, pretending he was only in a hurry, and didn't really want to swamp us. Smiling and laughing in many-toned emerald tints, he flecks himself with two creamy lines of foam that join behind us, and mark, in softest white, the road by which we have come. What perfect luxury it is! All one's senses are gratified; the crisp, cracking sound of the boat, the rush of the waves, the hum of the wind through the rigging, and the fresh salt smell of the sea that pervades one like an essence. The lotus-eaters must have been nerveless creatures when they could cry,

Wearry the barren fields of wandering foam.

Suddenly Brown rouses us from our reverie by an exclamation, and looking where he points to windward we see a sight that would stir the languid pulses of a Turk. Coming right down upon us, before the wind, is a pyramid of canvas, and behind that a long line of smaller clouds. The first is a fine frigate bearing down for the anchorage, clothed in canvas from truck to deck, studding-sails out on both sides, right full before the wind. Her officers and crew are worthy of her too. See the way that canvas is taken in; her studding-sails melt away, her courses and topsails are clewed up, she swings slowly round, and drops her anchor. Men crowd into her rigging like a swarm of bees, her sails are stowed, and, before we

have done wondering, a boat is dropped astern, her yards are squared, and she lies motionless.

We had been so engrossed by the sight that we had forgotten the smaller vessels astern.

The big ship had finished her part of the performance, and we turned to the newcomers with the languid sort of interest one would feel when, after a feast of peaches someone were to offer you a dish of plums; but suddenly, as if the plums had turned out to be greengages, our appetites were excited by an exclamation from Bob of "By Jove! I forgot all about it. Why, it's the ocean race!"

The ocean race! Why, all the cracks are to sail in it! Those white spots have something like an interest for us now.

"Hold on as you are going now, Brown," says Bob, "and we shall have a lovely sight of them; they'll round the light-ship and beat home again."

By the time the racers have neared the light, we have got close enough to their course to have a good view of them, and a more exquisite sight it would be difficult to see. There are seven vessels in the race, but the last two are hull down, hopelessly out of it. The other five, however, are doing all they know, and there is scarcely more than a mile, as far as I can judge, between the first and last of them. Straight before the wind they come. Main-booms out to starboard, spinnaker-booms out to port, and gigantic balloon-topsails bellying out, tearing and pulling in a way that must try the quality of their topmasts and stays. Coming down nearly end on to us, their hulls look so ridiculously out of proportion to the mountain of canvas they carry, that one almost expects to see them flap their snowy wings and fly away to sea. We are about a mile past the light-ship, and as the big schooner that is leading nears us, her enormous topsails disappear, to be speedily replaced by jib-headers for working back to windward. There goes her spinnaker, splendidly got in almost in the act of rounding the light-ship. Round she spins like a top, and as she comes up to the wind, careens to the breeze till her lee rail is almost under water, the seas breaking on her shapely bow, covering her forward, every now and then, with a deluge of spray, and glancing along her beautiful black bends till they glisten like polished marble. Oh, it is a noble sport! No poor wretched animal bleeds for our amusement there; but man contends

against man in a gallant rivalry of skill, pluck, and judgment. No man could look at that almost animate machine in front of us, without breaking the tenth commandment—it isn't in human nature to do it; but when I come to consider the matter more dispassionately afterwards, I am not sure that we don't get quite as much amusement out of our little boat as that lucky fellow, whoever he may be, who owns that schooner ahead, does out of his beautiful craft. It is all very well when you are sailing such a race as this, with just such a wind as your vessel loves; but how many days out of the twenty or thirty that he has been to sea this year, has he whistled for wind till his throat was dry, doddering about a mile or two from shore, unable to make half a mile an hour, and devoured by ennui; whereas I have always found enough to move the Foam along somehow, and generally enough to give us a little excitement in the course of the day.

Hullo! what's happened now? Bob looks as if he expected quite as much excitement as is good for us. He is about right too, for a nasty-looking squall has been coming down upon us, while we were looking at the race, and is hissing round us now.

"Keep her away a bit, Brown; let her take it as easily as she can."

"Now then, we had better get a reef in the mainsail as soon as possible," says Bob, as the heaviest part of the squall passed over, after nearly burying the poor Foam, as she rose on a sea and got the full force of it.

"Get the sprit out of the stop, Smith; take care, man, you'll have it through the bottom of the boat if you don't look out," he shouts, a moment after, as I fumbled about with it, staggering in the unwonted motion.

"Here, you had better let me come there, I am more accustomed to it than you are; come and sit down here, and lay hold of the sheet."

It isn't an easy thing to move about in a boat when she is dancing in this energetic way, much less to stand up to get the sprit out of the stop; but Bob glides along somehow, raises his long sinewy back, lowers the sprit over the side, for it won't raise and lower as it ought to do; we get a reef down in our mainsail, and then hold a council as to our movements. Bob's opinion is that the wind will either increase considerably in strength, or else

die away almost entirely by the evening. In the former case, if we hold on our original course, there will be more than we care about; and in the latter we shan't have enough to take us home, and the grub is all finished. So we agree to make tracks for home, and head for Sandedge harbour.

What a glorious change in the motion! That continuous thrash, thrash, thrash of the boat when she is beating to windward is rather wearisome after some time, and it is a welcome change to feel her gliding along with a soft hissing noise, throwing herself half-way out of the water with a mad rush as she gets to the top of a sea, and then gently subsiding down into the trough, as if she were quietly going to bed.

The last of the yachts has rounded the light-ship by the time we have made our arrangements, and all are thrashing away to windward. That big cutter has come to grief though, apparently. I suppose she wasn't smart enough with her topsail when the squall struck her, and her topmast has gone over the side. Never mind, she won't want it as long as this wind holds; let us hope she has a spare one on board, and will be able to send it aloft before it falls calm.

And now, as we near the shore towards evening, the latter part of Bob's prophecy comes true. The squall has long since blown itself out; a mist spreads itself over the waters; a great red ball of sun appears on the horizon, and throws a rosy glory over the heaving swell. No longer broken, the seas sweep on in long, glassy, undulating lines, curling into wreaths of seething foam over the sandbank, gathering round them a wealth of colour, and fading away into quiescence beyond.

We have passed the frigate on our way back. Still, black, and stately appears the gallant craft, sitting as quietly on the water as if she had never known the fierce joy of battling with a gale. She has come home from a foreign station. We can just see, in the uncertain light, stalwart figures, with faces tanned by a warmer sun than shines upon these shores; and here and there an emaciated form, whose feeble movements tell of a sickly climate. Crowds of shore boats hover round her, looming in the mist like ghosts of departed fleets. Trunks and boxes are being hoisted out to the shrill shriek of the boatswain's pipe; and out beyond, the town of Sandport, dimly seen, looks like an enchanted city.

Here we are at the harbour mouth again. The sun is just setting. Its warm, mellow light throws a glory over the water, that warms one's soul like a feast of wine; flecks and streaks of soft red float in the sky, and above, crossing and recrossing each other in subtlest tracery, are autumn gossamers—a very lacework of cloud threads. We have rounded the point. Land-locked on both sides, protected by the sandbank in front, the water is as smooth as glass, the tiny ripples that wash upon the sands creep gently, unwilling to break the hush by their soft breathing. Over the low point the last full song of the setting sun comes streaming; every stone and pebble, every hollow in the sand, catches the melody, and repeats it in a minor key. A gentle puff of wind comes now and then, and wakes a rippling, gurgling sound from the bow of the boat as she glides smoothly along, awed by the universal stillness. Long-legged sandpipers run along the sand complaining; a belated rook sails over to the trees beyond; a curlew calls with harsh metallic note to its mate on the mud bank; a heron with ponderous flight, and legs trailing out behind him, clangs overhead, and we sail on to an enchanted land.

The red light fades away to amber, the clumps of trees stand out heavy and solid. A soft, mellow hum comes floating to us from the little port, disintegrating itself by degrees into sounds of oars, and splashing water, and childish laughter, and voices. Lights appear in the cottage windows: are they real, or creations of our fancy? Real, Bob thinks, for he startles us with, "Better brail up the mainsail, Smith; we can run in under foresail and mizen."

Our dream is broken, the keel grates softly on the shingle, and with gentle movements we step ashore, feeling that we have just come from fairyland.

We supped with Bob at his mother's cottage, and pretty Mary Robinson sang us ballads afterwards. Very pretty was her voice, and very prettily she sang. I seemed to hear the gentle murmur of the waters as I listened, and surely the softness of that glowing sunset was lingering in her eyes, as Brown leant over her to turn the music.

"I'm very glad we didn't go to Switzerland," said Brown, after a long silence, as we strolled back to our inn.

"You might have been there a long

time without seeing such a feast of colour as that sandbank," I assented.

"Yes," said Brown, abstractedly. But I don't think he was thinking of sandbanks.

PIGS AND THEIR TRIALS.

Is a pig a responsible being? Has he a moral sense? If he commit a crime, does he know it to be a crime? If he be tried as a criminal, found guilty, and sentenced, would he know what it is all about, and form an opinion on the justice or injustice of the proceedings? And whatever be the answers to these questions, do they equally apply to other four-footed creatures, and to the lower animals generally? We leave this as a "widdle" to be solved by Dundreary and other moral philosophers. It is, meanwhile, a fact that animals have really passed through some such ordeal in bygone ages; and the reader may not be unwilling to know a little of the evidence in support of this statement. But, first, it may be well to notice a curious narrative relating to a judicial combat between a man and a dog, and a controversy to which it has led touching the possibility of such a thing taking place, without an undue degradation of man as a responsible being, or an equally undue elevation of a dog as presumably irresponsible.

Many of us remember the time when a sensational melodrama was performed at some of the London theatres, under the title of *The Forest of Bondy*; or, *The Dog of Montargis*. It has been revived occasionally, when a particular exhibitor or performer had a dog which he had trained to fill a part or routine of action. The story runs thus: Anbry de Montdidier, a gentleman of the royal court, had, in Chevalier Macaire, an archer of the guard, a deadly enemy, who envied him the favour of the king. One day Montdidier was walking in the forest of Bondy, attended only by a favourite hunting-dog. Macaire came upon him stealthily and suddenly, stabbed him to the heart, dug a hole in the ground, and buried the body. The poor dog, bewildered and distressed, remained at the spot all day and all night, and so long afterwards that he became nearly famished. Hurrying home, he whined for food, devoured it ravenously, and returned to the spot where his murdered master lay. This he did again and again, quitting the fatal

heap of earth only when hunger compelled him to seek for food. The singularity could not fail to attract notice. The mysterious absence of Aubry de Montdidier had become a source of anxiety to his friends; the visits of the dog, his whines and howls, and the gestures denoting a wish that someone would accompany and aid him, led to a determination to ferret out the truth. Messengers were sent, who were led by the dog to the spot, where the lately-disturbed earth was dug up, and the murdered body found. It was properly interred with Christian rites; and the dog, quiet but saddened, became attached to the friends of his poor master. One day, in a public place, he suddenly espied Chevalier Macaire, rushed upon him, seized him by the throat, and was with difficulty dragged away. This occurred more than once, and suggested to some of the courtiers the recollection that Macaire was known to have been on ill terms with Montdidier. The king, hearing of these things, ordered Macaire to attend with the other archers of the guard, and caused the dog to be brought to him. No sooner did the dog see Macaire, than he sprang on him just as before. The king thereupon questioned the suspected man closely, but could not obtain from him any confession that he was privy to the murder of Montdidier. Upon this—and herein lies the pith of the story—the king resolved upon a trial by battle. It was one of the usages of that age to cause two men to fight, when doubt existed concerning the truth of an accusation brought by one of them against the other, in reliance on the belief that God would defend the right. An arena was prepared, seats were arranged for the king and his courtiers, Macaire was provided with a heavy bludgeon, and the dog with an empty cask into which he might retire to breathe awhile. The combat began; the dog rushed round and round Macaire, avoiding the blows as well as he could, watched his opportunity, and at last, with a spring and a gripe, brought him to the ground. The king accepted this as conclusive proof, and condemned Macaire to the death of a murderer.

Some French writers believe the story; others regard it as a legend resting on no trustworthy foundation. The story appeared in La Colombière's *Théâtre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie*, from whence it was copied by Bernard de Montfauçon. The event is said to have occurred in the year

1371; the king was Charles Quint, or Charles le Sage. The place of combat was the Ile St. Louis, or Ile Notre Dame, a small island in the Seine, the real nucleus of the city of Paris. Over the mantelpiece of a saloon at the château of Montargis, a favourite country residence of the king, is, or was, an old picture representing the combat. The king, the princes and princesses, and the courtiers, are seated around the arena, in the middle of which the dog is represented as seizing Macaire by the throat, despite the formidable bludgeon. The dog is called the Dog of Montargis, so far as is known, only because of this picture in the château of that name. Research has, however, brought to light a Latin poem, older than the time of Charles le Sage, in which such a trial by combat is described as having taken place in the days of Charlemagne, more than a thousand years ago. Hence, in the opinion of many critics, the story was probably an invention of some troubadour in the eleventh or twelfth century.

Besides this, the story has been gravely attacked because it compromises the dignity of man, ignores the relative importance of reasoning and unreasoning beings, confounds those who are responsible for their actions with lower animals, unconscious of responsibility in a moral point of view. It is right, say these censors, to respect animals as works of the Creator, but wrong to exaggerate the sentiment. If we raise beasts in estimation we must raise human beings also; if we cannot do this latter, then we must allow every beast to retain his inferior position, to keep his distance, as it were, from that superior being man. (Query: A man sometimes beats his wife, does Mr. Hog ever beat or bite Mrs. Sow?) Unreasoning and irresponsible animals fill all grades down to the very lowest forms of organisation, little better than plants or minerals; while man is capable of rising from his present level almost up (we are fain to hope) to equality with the angels. It is not compatible with Christian doctrine for a man to fight with a dog; not consistent with moral responsibility to test a question of guilt or innocence by such an ordeal. If (they are Frenchmen who discourse thus) King Charles le Sage had ordered one of his attendants—whether the Chevalier Macaire or any other—to submit to such a degradation, would his honour as a Frenchman have permitted him to do so?

A murderer he may have been, but could he consent to make himself a beast, or the equal of a beast? No; he would have preferred death, with or without a trial. No man in his own rank of life would have associated with him after he had fought a combat with a dog, whether he had been victorious or not; the dog-fight would damn him. When a lady, in the days of chivalry, selected a champion to fight for her, she chose a man of knightly honour, or at any rate one equal in rank to his antagonist, in order that it might be no degradation to either to combat with the other. It is also urged, in refutation of the Bondy narrative, that no animals below the rank of man have any clear idea of death; they do not discriminate between it and a prolonged sleep; the passing away of a spirit from the silent body would be beyond their powers of conception. Even children can with difficulty bring themselves to understand what death means. The dog of Montargis did not know that his master was dead, whatever else he may have known; and he could not deem it a moral retribution to spring upon the throat of Macaire. Thus argue the critics who dispute the story on moral grounds.

And now we come to our pigs. The story or legend just treated of depends, if true at all, on a belief in something—be it what it may—above mere brute nature in brutes, above mere bestiality in beasts. And it will be interesting to show, by evidence of quite a different kind, that the French did at one time really adopt a course towards the lower animals, which we in the present day should consider absurdly beneath the dignity of man, absurdly above the comprehension or responsibility of the brute creation.

A learned juriconsult, M. Berriat St. Prix, examining the archives of the old French criminal courts, found more than sixty accounts of trials in which swine or other animals were placed at the bar—as we should call it—as criminals, or offenders accused of crime. These occurred at various dates, from the twelfth century down far into the seventeenth—the later centuries of the Middle Ages and the earlier of the modern. The Church had been accustomed to pronounce anathemas, on some occasions, against certain noxious vermin, such as field-mice, May bugs, caterpillars, snails, and others hurtful to the farms and gardens. But the criminal trial of animals was a different

thing altogether. The instances ferreted out by M. Berriat St. Prix related mostly to offenders of the porcine genus, but some applied to bulls or cows and other animals.

One of the trials took place in the year 1266. The officer of justice of the Monastery of Sainte G n evieve brought to trial a hog that had killed and partly devoured a poor little infant, at Fontenay aux Roses, near Paris. The culprit, found guilty, was sentenced to the punishment of being roasted to death—an example of roast pork which will probably be rather new to most English readers.

Again, in the year 1386, a magistrate of Falaise, in Normandy, after a formal examination into the facts, condemned a sow to be mutilated in the leg and the head, and then to be hanged, for having killed and partly devoured an infant. Of course the prisoner at the bar was neither asked nor expected to give evidence in her own defence. The executioner was furnished with new gloves on the occasion.

Again, the judicial officer of the Abbey of Beaupr , near Beauvais, instituted a formal enquiry into a charge brought against a bull, of having viciously killed a maiden thirteen years of age, in the Seigneurie of Cantry, a dependency of the Abbey. The facts were investigated, the animal found guilty, sentence passed, and the bull put to death by hanging. So far as appears, the four-footed beasts condemned after these curious trials were not put out of the world in the usual way; they suffered the more ignominious death of felons.

Just before the close of the fifteenth century, in the time of our Henry the Seventh, a zoological trial—if the term may be used—was held, concerning which M. Berriat St. Prix gives us some of the technical records of procedure. It was held before the bailli or judicial officer of the Abbey of Josaphat, near Chartres: "Monday, April 18, 1499, an enquiry was held before us, at the request of the procureur of Messieurs the Monks of the Abbey of Josaphat, against Jehan Delalande and his wife, prisoners in the jail of this abbey, by reason of the untimely death of a child named Gilon, about a year-and-a-half old, which child had been duly nursed and nourished by its mother. The child was murdered by a pig, about the age of three months, belonging to the said Delalande and his wife. Considering the charge brought, and the evidence

taken, we have condemned and do hereby condemn the said pig, for the reason and facts established, to be hanged and executed by our executioner, in the jurisdiction of Messieurs our Superiors, and by virtue of our definitive and lawful power. Given under the countersign of the said bailliage, the year and day above named. Signed, O. Briseg." There is no statement that Delalande and his wife bore any part of the punishment inflicted on their porcine property.

One instance, noted by the authority above named, is additionally curious, in so far as it lets us into the knowledge of a few facts, connected with the technical details of bringing the four-footed culprit to justice. It is an attestation made by the bailli of Mantes, dated March 14th, 1413, concerning the execution of a sow for having killed and partly devoured a little child. The approximate English of the old French forms of expression may be presented thus: "To all whom it may concern: Simon de Baudemont, lieutenant at Meullent of the noble Sieur John, Seigneur de Maintenon, Chevalier-chamberlain of the King our Sire, and his bailli at Mantes and the said Meullent, greeting. We hereby make known that in bringing to justice a sow that had killed and partly devoured a little child, we have become chargeable for the following expenditure, namely: Expenses incurred for the said sow in jail, six Paris sols. To the maître des hautes-œuvres, who came from Paris to Meullent to perform the said execution, by command and ordonnance of our said master the bailli and procureur of the king, fifty-four Paris sols. For the cart which brought the said sow to justice, six Paris sols. For cords to tie and secure her, two sols eight deniers. For gloves, two deniers. The which items make, a sum total of sixty-nine sols eight deniers Parisian. All the which we hereby certify to be true by these presents. Sealed with our seal. Signed, De Baudemont."

There seems some reason to believe that the executioner wore gloves on the occasion, as if to save his hands from the contamination of touching the condemned brute. If so, they were perhaps hired for each occasion; they could not, even making allowance for the great difference in the value of money in those days and the present, have been purchased for so trifling a sum as two deniers.

Does it follow that the Middle Ages, as typified by these strange judicial pro-

ceedings, lowered human nature to the level of brute nature, by subjecting both alike to the same ordeal and punishments? Not necessarily. It was only when human life was sacrificed by animals that they were thus tried, sentenced, and punished. The principle of legislation which seems to have been accepted and adopted was that all violence to human life and human nature are punishable, by whomsoever and whatsoever committed. A state of society which sanctioned this maxim is not unlikely to have sanctioned also the style of judicial combat indicated by the story of the Dog of Montargis, whether that particular story is true or legendary—provided there was strong presumptive evidence that the accused person had really committed murder.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.
CHAPTER X. ADIEU!

I WAS thankful to find myself on my way home again. Basil was with me in the cab, which bore upon its roof my precious box of stage finery. Arrived at the door of our lodgings, I learnt that my husband was upstairs. Was anything the matter, I enquired? I had become anxious on Paul's account; it was so strange that he had not appeared at the theatre. No, nothing was the matter, the servant answered with an air of surprise at my question. All was well, then.

Basil said good-bye at the door. He would not come upstairs. I had need of rest, he said. I was not to exhaust myself further by talking, or sitting up late. He would call to see me on the morrow, if he possibly could.

A light was burning in our sitting-room; the table was littered with papers. Paul reclined upon the sofa; he was fast asleep, his face white as marble. Was he ill? He stirred; something troubled him; he frowned, the muscles about his mouth twitched convulsively. And now he moaned and muttered unintelligibly. It was plain that he suffered, that he was oppressed by some painful dream.

"Paul," I said softly, as I kissed him on the forehead. I pressed his hands tenderly; they were burning hot. He awoke with a sudden start, and with a strange

cry upon his lips; a look of panic crossed his face.

"Who calls? Who wants me? I am here. I am at my post."

He glanced rather wildly round the room. He was confused, amazed. Presently, his eyes lighted upon me.

"Where am I? Who is this? Are you Doris?"

"Yes, Paul, dear; I am Doris, your wife."

"Ah, true, yes; Doris, my wife."

He recovered himself gradually. He asked, presently, with a smile: "Well, little one, and how did you fare? You were terribly frightened, of course; yet you succeeded at last. Is that not so? There was great clapping of hands; there was applause from all parts of the house; and flowers were thrown to my Doris."

"You were there, Paul?"

"No, I was not there. But I know the programme of these occasions. Well, and you are satisfied, Doris?"

"Yes," I said. I could not tell him then of my real sentiments upon the subject.

"And my Doris is to be a great actress in the future?"

"I do not say that. I must not expect too much. And, after all, there are few great actresses."

"But you will be one of the few."

He laughed as he said this; but it seemed to me that his light-hearted air was artificial, and assumed to conceal real uneasiness. His manner was fevered and restless. As he rolled up and lighted a cigarette, I noted that his hands trembled very much.

"Something has happened, Paul," I said to him abruptly.

"Yes, something has happened. Doris has made her *début*. Ah, she should have been more warmly, more gracefully welcomed home—with fruit and flowers, with wines and caresses, with song and dance. Ah, this is but a poor banquet to spread before you, my poor child! A salad—well, that is something. Some bread, a fragment of cream cheese, some beer in a jug from the public-house at the corner. Is that all? No—here is some *café au lait* on the hob, a little *cognac* in this flask. I can offer you no more than these, my little one—only these, and my love, and my congratulations. Poor Doris!"

"Paul, this is not what I mean. Let us be serious for a moment."

"Let us be serious, certainly."

"You could not come to the theatre. What prevented you?"

He looked embarrassed, he hesitated.

"As we agreed just now, Doris," he said in a low voice, "something has happened."

"I knew it. I was sure of it. And something grave. Please tell me, Paul. Do not keep me in suspense."

"One moment. You will not be frightened. You must not be frightened. Nay, you will be brave; promise me that you will be brave, Doris."

"I promise. I will be brave."

He drew me towards him and pressed me to his heart.

"Dear one, what I have feared for some time has come to pass at last," he said softly and calmly. "I have been sent for. I must go."

"You will leave me, Paul?"

"It must be so; for a time only. Nay, you promised to be brave."

"I am brave, as brave as I can be."

But I was sick with terror, tears blinded my eyes.

"But when will you return?" I asked after a pause.

"That is more than I can say."

"You will come back soon—very soon?"

"I hope that it may be soon—very soon," he answered mechanically. Alas! there was no hope in his voice.

"But, Paul, I cannot bear it!"

"It is hard to bear. God knows I find it so. But it must be borne, Doris."

I longed to ply him with questions, yet I held back from doing so, dreading what his answers might be, knowing what his answers must be.

"Paul, tell me one thing," I gasped out presently. "There is danger?"

"There may not be," he said evasively; "I hope there will not be."

"You are going to Paris? There is a new plot against the life of the French king?"

"Hush! Do not speak so loud. There is no new plot. There is but one plot. It does not date from to-day, nor from yesterday."

"When must you go?"

"In a few hours' time. There is an early steamboat leaving London-bridge for Boulogne. It is the cheapest route. I have to study economy," he added with a strange, sad smile, "even in such a matter as this. I want to leave my Doris as much money as I can."

I could not speak. My tears were fall-

ing fast; a nervous trembling had seized me; I was hiding my face in his breast.

"My child, you must be brave," he said again, softly and caressingly. "If you knew how your tears wound me! Your every sigh is as a stab to my heart. Courage, my Doris."

"It is more than I can bear."

"Do you think I do not feel it also?"

"Sometimes I think that men do not feel as women do. They so train themselves to endure, that pain ceases to affect them. Paul, you are sure that it grieves you to part from me?"

"Very sure, dearest; you cannot doubt it."

"I am half crazy, to-night. But—you love me better than the cause that takes you from me?"

"Indeed I do, Doris."

"Then, do not go. Abandon this mad, perilous enterprise. Stay with me, Paul. This plot for which you would desert me, it is not so dear to you as once it was."

"That is true," he said musingly. "Yet is there accusation in the fact. I am less devoted to the right than once I was. The cause remains the same, it is I that am changed. The people are still wronged and down-trodden; tyranny still holds its head aloft, is still active in malefaction. And yet my pulse does not beat as once it did, when I think of outraged France. My patriotism cools and turns to apathy; I have sacrificed duty to love. What will my friends think of me? What will they say? That I am as Rinaldo in the bower of Armida"—he smiled rather cynically as he said this—"Armida being an English-woman and my wife! I shall be despised, laughed at—and deservedly."

"You lay so much stress upon the opinion of these others. They do not love you as I do, Paul."

"They are my friends, my comrades, my fellow-conspirators. Should I not be true to them? Would you have them regard me as perjured and a traitor? I cannot desert them."

"It is so much easier to desert me."

"You are bitter, Doris," he said with a sigh. "But I cannot hope—I have never hoped—that you would look on these things as I do. A woman cannot perhaps understand wholly a man's sense of duty, the feeling of honour that is at all sacrifices paramount with him."

"Ah, Paul, but if this feeling of honour is false, mistaken! If this duty of which you speak is but so much wrong-doing!"

"It is too late to discover that now, Doris. A soldier may not, when the world is given for battle, suddenly turn humanitarian and decline to shed blood. There are times when we must throw to the winds, not merely our scruples, our convictions, but our love, our hopes—in truth, all we hold precious in life. My darling, do not make our parting harder to bear than it needs must be; do not let our farewell words be tinged with conflict and discussion. This thing must be. Let us so think of it, and so strengthen each other to endure it. A great trouble has come upon us; but there is no escape. What does it serve to beat ourselves against the bars? there is no way out. Let us be patient, and suffer silently with compressed lips. We shall gain courage by not giving way to fear. And after all, this our distress may last but for a little while only; we may soon be reunited."

"It is so easy to say that. If I could only think it true! But you tell it me to quiet me, as you would promise a crying child the moon. I can't be stilled in that way."

"My Doris, what can I say, what can I do to comfort you? Does it ease your pain to make me suffer? You reproach me, but I reproach myself still more. I should not have married you, with this obligation binding me hand and foot. But that I should be summoned from your side seemed then but a possibility—a far-off thing—that need scarcely be taken account of. And I loved you so much! I was wrong. I was mad. For now see what has happened! I must quit you, and you distrust me. You think that it is for my own pleasure I go, and not that I am forced from you by my sense of duty. Ah, I should have told you that you were marrying a slave, that a chain held my ankle; that I was as a bird tied by a string; that I had freedom but for a little while and within a small range; that if, for a moment, I ventured beyond most narrow limits, then surely I felt a tug at my fetters. I was reminded of my bondage."

"A slave to the cause of liberty!" I said with some bitterness. Then I added: "But do not reproach yourself, Paul. I knew this, or half knew it. I felt the danger of this thing of which you speak; this plot, coming between us and drawing you from me."

"Ah, Doris, do you wish that we had never met?"

"No, Paul, I do not wish that. But I so

hoped that we might never part; that you would be always mine as I should be yours always!"

"My child, I might have spared you this misery if I had but held my peace. I was not free to speak to you of my love. It was cruelty to ask you to be mine. I should have been content with loving you from afar off. I should have locked the secret of my love in my heart, have covered it up, hidden it, and pressed it down with both my hands as though it were a fire I was stifling. You would never have known. You would have gone on your way contentedly enough. You might even have been happy in the love of another."

"Paul, do not say these things to me; please do not. If it were all to do again I would do it. I loved you. I love you; and shall always love you. And we have been truly happy, my husband, although this hour of sorrow has now come upon us. Have we not been happy, Paul? Indeed it is something to have been so happy."

"Yes, it is something," he said abstractedly. Then his wan face turned towards the clock on the mantelpiece.

"How the time flies! I must pack up a few things in this leather bag. I shall not want many. Let me see that I have my passport. Yes, that is correct. The conspirator's passport is always en règle," he observed, with a light laugh.

The cold gray light of early morning was stealing into the room. I shivered with cold, with exhaustion, and nervousness.

"My poor darling, your hands are like ice. Let me press them against my burning forehead. My child, do not cry so; you will break my heart."

"Let me help you, Paul; let me do something for you. Are these things to go in the bag?" How my hands shook. "Cannot I be of any use?" I cried piteously. "Please let me help you."

"Yes, dear. Light a match; help me burn these papers, all of them, to the last scrap. They shall find no trace of me."

I hardly knew what he meant at the time. But I helped to collect the papers scattered about the room, to heap them on the fireplace. In a few minutes they were reduced to tinder.

"You will write, Paul?"

"Yes, dearest, I will write; at least, I will try to write; I may be prevented. But should there be delay, you will not repine; you will not be frightened; you will be patient and brave?"

"Paul, dear, I will do all that you would have me do. Only, if I don't hear from you, I shall go mad, I think; or I shall start in quest of you, to rejoin you."

"That must not be, Doris," he said gravely.

"A wife's place is by her husband's side."

"We will not discuss that now, Doris."

"Am I not your wife?"

"Here, in England, yes. But there are certain conditions to be complied with before the French law recognises marriages such as ours."

"You mean——"

"I mean that to constitute marriage in France it is necessary to observe the law, and to go through a series of sommnations and proclamations at certain intervals at the Mairie or the Prefecture, with consequent registration. Do not look so scared, Doris. These are the idlest forms. I lay no stress upon them; I care, indeed, nothing about them, and they can be observed at any future time. They cannot hinder you from being in my eyes my own lawful, wedded wife. I did wrong perhaps to speak of them at all. I only referred to them to show you that for the present there existed reason why you should not think of following me to France to rejoin me there."

"Enough, Paul. I will not think of following you."

"I have distressed you. I should not have told you this."

"No, Paul; it was right I should know. But I am your wife by English law, and in the sight of Heaven, and in my own eyes and yours. I am your wife—let me cling to that; all else seems slipping from me. I need to cling to something."

A dreamy, dreary feeling was stealing over me. I was faint and sick with fatigue, distress, and despair. I scarcely knew what I said or did.

"I will wait patiently, Paul, and pray for you. I will wait until you come back. I will not follow you or seek to know where you are or what you are doing. You will write if you can or may, but if no tidings come still I will not complain. Only think of me, Paul; think of my loneliness, my wretchedness, and deal kindly with me and gently, and come back to me—come back to me, oh my husband, or my heart will break, or my brain will give way! Promise me you will come back!"

"It must be as God wills, Doris," he said in a whisper. "But don't lose faith

in me. Do not withhold your love from me, whatever may happen."

"I could not if I would."

"God bless you, Doris."

He left me to look from a window from which the street could be seen. I followed him.

"The time has come," he said; "I am waited for."

I saw that beside a street-lamp, the flame of which was nearly quenched by the growing light of day, there stood the motionless figure of a man wrapped in a long and heavy cloak, and wearing a slouched hat that half hid his face.

"Alas! I have but little money to leave you, Doris. I will only take enough to cover the expenses of my journey."

"No, no, take it all, Paul. You will need it all, and more. Do not think of me. I can manage very well. And take food with you, Paul, and this flask of brandy, and some bread. You will need food, Paul. You have eaten nothing for many hours. And these cigarettes, I made them for you myself. They will not be the last I shall make for you? You don't think that, Paul?"

"No, my child, we won't think that."

"What else can I do?" I glanced round the room. Was there nothing else I could press upon him that might be of use to him on his journey? "The fool I have been to part with my jewels!" I said again. And then my eyes rested upon Mr. Leveridge's ring. I tore it from my finger, and thrust it upon Paul. "You will take this also, Paul. It is really of value; and you can sell it if you have need of money."

"A pretty bauble," Paul said, studying it for a moment.

The man in the street gave a prolonged, piercing whistle.

"It is indeed time. Once more good-bye, Doris, my wife, my own love, my darling!" I could not speak, I could only cling to him.

He gently disengaged himself from my grasp. He kissed me fondly, he rained kisses upon me. Then came the sound of his departing step upon the stairs. I was too weak, too faint, to follow him. A scream came to my lips, but seemed to die into a feeble, toneless gasp.

I tottered to the window. I was in time to see Paul passing down the street, with the man who had been waiting for him under the lamp-post. He looked up, and waved his hand. How white his face looked in the morning light! I kept him in sight as long as I could. A policeman, I noted, turned to gaze after the two men as they passed him on his beat; but he did not speak to them.

I threw myself upon my bed and lost consciousness.

Presently it was broad daylight. The sun was shining brightly, the rays falling and glittering upon some small object left upon the table. What was it?

Paul had forgotten or neglected to take with him Mr. Leveridge's ring.

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