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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.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1878.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXII. THE MARQUIS AMONG HIS FRIENDS.

THERE was, of course, much perturbation of mind at Brotherton as to what should be done on this occasion of the marquis's return. Mr. Knox had been consulted by persons in the town, and had given it as his opinion that nothing should be done. Some of the tradesmen, and a few of the tenants living nearest to the town, had suggested a triumphal entry—green boughs, a bonfire, and fireworks. This idea, however, did not prevail long. The Marquis of Brotherton was clearly not a man to be received with green boughs and bonfires. All that soon died away. But there remained what may be called the private difficulty. Many in Brotherton and around Brotherton had of course known the man when he was young, and could hardly bring themselves to take no notice of his return. One or two drove over, and simply left their cards. The bishop asked to see him, and was told that he was out. Dr. Pountner did see him, catching him at his own hall-door, but the interview was very short, and not particularly pleasant. "Dr. Pountner? Well; I do remember you, certainly. But we have all grown older, you know."

"I came," said the doctor, with a face redder than ever, "to pay my respects to your lordship, and to leave my card on your wife."

"We are much obliged to you—very much obliged. Unfortunately we are

both invalids." Then the doctor, who had not got out of his carriage, was driven home again. The doctor had been a great many years at Brotherton, and had known the old marquis well. "I don't know what you and Holdenough will make of him," the doctor said to the dean. "I suppose you will both be driven into some communion with him. I shan't try it again."

The dean and Canon Holdenough had been in consultation on the subject, and had agreed that they would each of them act as though the marquis had been like any other gentleman, and his wife like any other newly-married lady. They were both now connected with the family, and even bound to act on the presumption that there would be family friendship. The dean went on his errand first, and the dean was admitted into the marquis's sitting-room. This happened a day or two after the scene at Cross Hall. "I don't know that I should have troubled you so soon," said the dean, "had not your brother married my daughter." The dean had thought over the matter carefully, making up his mind how far he would be courteous to the man, and where he would make a stand, if it were necessary that he should make a stand at all. And he had determined that he would ask after the new Lady Brotherton, and speak of the child as Lord Popenjoy, the presumption being that a man is married when he says so himself, and that his child is legitimate when declared to be so. His present acknowledgment would not bar any future proceedings.

"There has been a good deal of marrying and giving in marriage, since I have been away," replied the marquis.

"Yes, indeed. There has been your brother, your sister, and last, not least, yourself."

"I was not thinking of myself. I meant among you here. The church seems to carry everything before it."

It seemed to the dean, who was sufficiently mindful of his daughter's fortune, and who knew to a penny what was the very liberal income of Canon Holdenough, that in these marriages the church had at least given as much as it had got. "The church holds its own," said the dean, "and I hope that it always will. May I venture to express a hope that the marchioness is well."

"Not very well?"

"I am sorry for that. Shall I not have the pleasure of seeing her to-day?"

The marquis looked as though he were almost astounded at the impudence of the proposition; but he replied to it by the excuse that he had made before. "Unless you speak Italian, I'm afraid you would not get on very well with her."

"She will not find that I have the Tuscan tongue or the Roman mouth, but I have enough of the language to make myself perhaps intelligible to her ladyship."

"We will postpone it for the present, if you please, Mr. Dean."

There was an insolence declared in the man's manner, and almost declared in his words, which made the dean at once determine that he would never again ask after the new marchioness, and that he would make no allusion whatever to the son. A man may say that his wife is too unwell to receive strangers, without implying that the wish to see her should not have been expressed. The visitor bowed, and then the two men both sat silent for some moments. "You have not seen your brother since you have been back?" the dean said at last.

"I have not seen him. I don't know where he is, or anything about him."

"They live in London—in Munster Court."

"Very likely. He didn't consult me about his marriage, and I don't know anything about his concerns."

"He told you of it—before it took place."

"Very likely—though I do not exactly see how that concerns you and me."

"You must be aware that he is married to—my daughter."

"Quite so."

"That would, generally, be supposed to give a common interest."

"Ah! I daresay. You feel it so, no doubt. I am glad that you are satisfied by an alliance with my family. You are anxious for me to profess that it is reciprocal."

"I am anxious for nothing of the kind," said the dean, jumping up from his chair. "I have nothing to get and nothing to lose by the alliance. The usual courtesies of life are pleasant to me."

"I wish that you would use them then on the present occasion by being a little quieter."

"Your brother has married a lady, and my daughter has married a gentleman."

"Yes; George is a great ass; in some respects the greatest ass I know; but he is a gentleman. Perhaps, if you have anything else that you wish to say, you will do me the honour of sitting down."

The dean was so angry that he did not know how to contain himself. The marquis had snubbed him for coming. He had then justified his visit by an allusion to the connection between them, and the marquis had replied to this by hinting that though a dean might think it a very fine thing to have his daughter married into the family of a marquis, the marquis probably would not look at it in the same light. And yet what was the truth? Whence had come the money which had made the marriage possible? In the bargain between them which party had had the best of it? He was conscious that it would not become him to allude to the money, but his feeling on the subject was very strong. "My lord," he said, "I do not know that there is anything to be gained by my sitting down again."

"Perhaps not. I daresay you know best."

"I came here intent on what I considered to be a courtesy due to your lordship. I am sorry that my visit has been mistaken."

"I don't see that there is anything to make a fuss about."

"It shall not be repeated, my lord." And so he left the room.

Why on earth had the man come back to England, bringing a foreign woman and an Italian brat home with him, if he intended to make the place too hot to hold him by insulting everybody around him? This was the first question the dean asked himself, when he found himself outside the house. And what could the man hope to gain by such insolence?

Instead of taking the road through the park back to Brotherton, he went on to Cross Hall. He was desirous of learning what were the impressions, and what the intentions of the ladies, there. Did this madman mean to quarrel with his mother and sisters, as well as with his other neighbours? He did not as yet know what intercourse there had been between the two houses, since the marquis had been at Manor Cross. And in going to Cross Hall in the midst of all these troubles, he was no doubt actuated in part by a determination to show himself to be one of the family. If they would accept his aid, no one would be more loyal than he to these ladies. But he would not be laid aside. If anything unjust were intended, if any fraud were to be executed, the person most to be injured would be that hitherto unborn grandson of his for whose advent he was so anxious. He had been very free with his money, but he meant to have his money's worth.

At Cross Hall he found Canon Hold-enough's wife and the canon. At the moment of his entrance old Lady Brotherton was talking to the clergyman, and Lady Alice was closeted in a corner with her sister Sarah. "I would advise you to go just as though you had heard nothing from us," Lady Sarah had said. "Of course he would be readier to quarrel with me than with anyone. For mamma's sake I would go away for a time, if I had anywhere to go to."

"Come to us," Lady Alice had said. But Lady Sarah had declared that she would be as much in the way at Brotherton as at Cross Hall, and had then gone on to explain that it was Lady Alice's duty to call on her sister-in-law, and that she must do so, facing the consequences, whatever they might be. "Of course mamma could not go till he had been here," Lady Sarah added; "and now he has told mamma not to go at all. But that is nothing to you."

"I have just come from the house," said the dean.

"Did you see him?" asked the old woman with awe.

"Yes; I saw him."

"Well!"

"I must say that he was not very civil to me, and that I suppose I have seen all of him that I shall see."

"It is only his manner," said her ladyship.

"An unfortunate manner, surely."

"Poor Brotherton!"

Then the canon said a word. "Of course no one wants to trouble him. I can speak at least for myself. I do not, certainly. I have requested her ladyship to ask him whether he would wish me to call or not. If he says that he does, I shall expect him to receive me cordially. If he does not—there's an end of it."

"I hope you won't all of you turn against him," said the marchioness.

"Turn against him!" repeated the dean. "I do not suppose that there is anyone who would not be both kind and courteous to him, if he would accept kindness and courtesy. It grieves me to make you unhappy, marchioness, but I am bound to let you know that he treated me very badly." From that moment the marchioness made up her mind that the dean was no friend of the family, and that he was, after all, vulgar and disagreeable. She undertook, however, to enquire from her son on next Sunday whether he would wish to be called upon by his brother-in-law the canon.

On the following day Lady Alice went alone to Manor Cross—being the first lady who had gone to the door since the new arrivals—and asked for Lady Brotherton. The courier came to the door and said "Not at home," in a foreign accent, just as the words might have been said to any chance caller in London. Then Lady Alice asked the man to tell her brother that she was there. "Not at home, miladi," said the man, in the same tone. At that moment Mrs. Toff came running through the long hall to the carriage-door. The house was built round a quadrangle, and all the ground-floor of the front and of one of the sides consisted of halls, passages, and a billiard-room. Mrs. Toff must have been watching very closely, or she could hardly have known that Lady Alice was there. She came out and stood beside the carriage, and leaning in, whispered her fears and unhappinesses. "Oh, my lady, I'm afraid it's very bad. I haven't set eyes on the—the—his wife, my lady, yet; nor the little boy."

"Are they in now, Mrs. Toff?"

"Of course they're in. They never go out. He goes about all the afternoon in a dressing-gown, smoking bits of paper, and she lies in bed or gets up and doesn't do nothing at all, as far as I can see, Lady Alice. But as for being in, of course they're in; they're always in." Lady

Alice, however, feeling that she had done her duty, and not wishing to take the place by storm, had herself driven back to Brotherton.

On the following Sunday afternoon the marquis came, according to his promise, and found his mother alone. "The fact is, mother," he said, "you have got a regular church set around you during the last year or two, and I will have nothing to do with them. I never cared much for Brotherton Close, and now I like it less than ever." The marchioness moaned, and looked up into his face imploringly. She was anxious to say something in defence, at any rate, of her daughter's marriage, but specially anxious to say nothing that should anger him. Of course he was unreasonable, but, according to her lights, he, being the marquis, had a right to be unreasonable. "The dean came to me the other day," continued he, "and I could see at a glance that he meant to be quite at home in the house, if I didn't put him down."

"You'll see Mr. Holdenough, won't you? Mr. Holdenough is a very gentleman-like man, and the Holdenoughs were always quite county people. You used to like Alice."

"If you ask me, I think she has been a fool at her age to go and marry an old parson. As for receiving him, I shan't receive anybody, in the way of entertaining them. I haven't come home for that purpose. My child will have to live here when he is a man."

"God bless him!" said the marchioness.

"Or at any rate his property will be here. They tell me that it will be well that he should be used to this infernal climate early in life. He will have to go to school here, and all that. So I have brought him, though I hate the place."

"It is so nice to have you back, Brotherton."

"I don't know about it being nice. I don't find much niceness in it. Had I not got myself married I should never have come back. But it's as well that you all should know that there is an heir."

"God bless him!" said the marchioness, again. "But don't you think that we ought to see him?"

"See him! Why?" He asked the question sharply, and looked at her with that savageness in his eyes which all the family remembered so well, and which she specially feared.

That question of the legitimacy of the boy had never been distinctly discussed at Cross Hall, and the suspicious hints on the subject which had passed between the sisters, the allusions to this and the other possibility which had escaped them, had been kept as far as possible from their mother. They had remarked among themselves that it was very odd that the marriage should have been concealed, and almost more than odd that an heir to the title should have been born without any announcement of such a birth. A dread of some evil mystery had filled their thoughts, and shown itself in their words and looks to each other. And, though they had been very anxious to keep this from their mother, something had crept through which had revealed a suspicion of the suspicion even to her. She, dear old lady, had resolved upon no line of conduct in the matter. She had conceived no project of rebelling against her eldest daughter, or of being untrue to her youngest son. But now that she was alone with her eldest son, with the real undoubted marquis, with him who would certainly be to her more than all the world beside if he would only allow it, there did come into her head an idea that she would put him on his guard.

"Because—because—"

"Because what? Speak out, mother."

"Because, perhaps they'll say that—that—"

"What will they say?"

"If they don't see him, they may think he isn't Popenjoy at all."

"Oh, they'll think that, will they? How will seeing help them?"

"It would be so nice to have him here, if it's only for a little," said the marchioness.

"So that's it," he said, after a long pause. "That's George's game, and the dean's; I can understand."

"No, no, no; not George," said the unhappy mother.

"And Sarah, I daresay, is in a boat with them. I don't wonder that they should choose to remain here and watch me."

"I am sure George has never thought of such a thing."

"George will think as his father-in-law bids him. George was never very good at thinking for himself. So you fancy they'll be more likely to accept the boy if they see him?"

"Seeing is believing, Brotherton."

"There's something in that, to be sure."

Perhaps they don't think I've got a wife at all, because they haven't seen her."

"Oh yes; they believe that."

"How kind of them. Well, mother, you've let the cat out of the bag."

"Don't tell them that I said so."

"No; I won't tell. Nor am I very much surprised. I thought how it would be when I didn't announce it all in the old-fashioned way. It's lucky that I have the certificated proof of the date of my marriage, isn't it?"

"It's all right, of course. I never doubted it, Brotherton."

"But all the others did. I knew there was something up when George wasn't at home to meet me."

"He is coming."

"He may stay away if he likes it. I don't want him. He won't have the courage to tell me up to my face that he doesn't intend to acknowledge my boy. He's too great a coward for that."

"I'm sure it's not George, Brotherton."

"Who is it, then?"

"Perhaps it's the dean."

"D—— his impudence. How on earth among you could you let George marry the daughter of a low-bred ruffian like that—a man that never ought to have been allowed to put his foot inside the house?"

"She had such a very nice fortune! And then he wanted to marry that scheming girl, Adelaide De Baron—without a penny."

"The De Barons, at any rate, are gentlefolk. If the dean meddles with me, he shall find that he has got the wrong sow by the ear. If he puts his foot in the park again I'll have him warned off as a trespasser."

"But you'll see Mr. Holdenough?"

"I don't want to see anybody. I mean to hold my own, and do as I please with my own, and live as I like, and toady no one. What can I have in common with an old parson like that?"

"You'll let me see Popenjoy, Brotherton?"

"Yes," he said, pausing a moment before he answered her. "He shall be brought here, and you shall see him. But mind, mother, I shall expect you to tell me all that you hear."

"Indeed, I will."

"You will not rebel against me, I suppose?"

"Oh no; my son, my son!" Then she fell upon his neck, and he suffered it

for a minute, thinking it wise to make sure of one ally in that house.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE MARQUIS SEES HIS BROTHER.

WHEN Lord George was summoned down to Manor Cross—or rather to Cross Hall—he did not dare not to go. Lady Sarah had told him that it was his duty, and he could not deny the assertion. But he was very angry with his brother, and did not in the least wish to see him. Nor did he think that by seeing him he could in any degree render easier that horrible task which would, sooner or later, be imposed upon him, of testing the legitimacy of his brother's child. And there were other reasons which made him unwilling to leave London. He did not like to be away from his young wife. She was, of course, a matron now, and entitled to be left alone, according to the laws of the world; but then she was so childish, and so fond of playing bagatelle with Jack De Baron! He had never had occasion to find fault with her; not to say words to her which he himself would regard as fault-finding words, though she complained more than once of his scolding her. He would caution her, beg her to be grave, ask her to read heavy books, and try to impress her with the solemnity of married life. In this way he would quell her spirits for a few hours. Then she would burst out again, and there would be Jack De Baron and the bagatelle. In all these sorrows he solaced himself by asking advice from Mrs. Houghton. By degrees he told Mrs. Houghton almost everything. The reader may remember that there had been a moment in which he had resolved that he would not again go to Berkeley-square. But all that was very much altered now. He was there almost every day, and consulted the lady about everything. She had induced him even to talk quite openly about this Italian boy, to express his suspicions, and to allude to most distressing duties which might be incumbent on him. She strenuously advised him to take nothing for granted. If the marquisate was to be had by careful scrutiny, she was quite of opinion that it should not be lost by careless confidence. This sort of friendship was very pleasant to him, and especially so, because he could tell himself that there was nothing wicked in it. No doubt her hand would be in his sometimes for a moment, and once or twice his arm had almost found its way

round her waist. But these had been small deviations, which he had taken care to check. No doubt it had occurred to him, once or twice, that she had not been careful to check them. But this, when he thought of it maturely, he attributed to innocence.

It was at last, by her advice, that he begged that one of his sisters might come up to town, as a companion to Mary during his absence at Cross Hall. This counsel she had given to him after assuring him half-a-dozen times that there was nothing to fear. He had named Amelia, Mary having at once agreed to the arrangement, on condition that the younger of the three sisters should be invited. The letter was of course written to Lady Sarah. All such letters always were written to Lady Sarah. Lady Sarah had answered, saying, that Susanna would take the place destined for Amelia. Now Susanna, of all the Germain family, was the one whom Mary disliked the most. But there was no help for it. She thought it hard, but she was not strong enough in her own position to say that she would not have Susanna, because Susanna had not been asked. "I think Lady Susanna will be the best," said Lord George, "because she has so much strength of character."

"Strength of character! You speak as if you were going away for three years, and were leaving me in the midst of danger. You'll be back in five days, I suppose. I really think I could have got on without Susanna's—strength of character!" This was her revenge; but, all the same, Lady/Susanna came.

"She is as good as gold," said Lord George, who was himself as weak as water. "She is as good as gold; but there is a young man comes here whom I don't care for her to see too often." This was what he said to Lady Susanna.

"Oh indeed! Who is he?"

"Captain De Baron. You are not to suppose that she cares a straw about him."

"Oh no; I am sure there can be nothing of that," said Lady Susanna, feeling herself to be as energetic as Cerberus, and as many-eyed as Argus.

"You must take care of yourself now, Master Jack," Mrs. Houghton said to her cousin. "A duenna has been sent for."

"Duennas always go to sleep, don't they; and take tips; and are generally open to reason?"

"Oh heavens! Fancy tipping Lady Susanna! I should think that she never slept in her life with both eyes at the same time, and that she thinks in her heart that every man who says a civil word ought to have his tongue cut out."

"I wonder how she'd take it if I were to say a civil word to herself?"

"You can try; but as far as Madame is concerned, you had better wait till Monsieur is back again."

Lord George, having left his wife in the hands of Lady Susanna, went down to Brotherton and on to Cross Hall. He arrived on the Saturday after that first Sunday visit paid by the marquis to his mother. The early part of the past week had been very blank down in those parts. No farther personal attempts had been made to intrude upon the Manor Cross mysteries. The dean had not been seen again, even at Cross Hall. Mr. Holdenough had made no attempt after the reception—or rather non-reception—awarded to his wife. Old Mr. De Baron had driven over, and had seen the marquis; but nothing more than that fact was known at Cross Hall. He had been there for about an hour, and as far as Mrs. Toff knew, the marquis had been very civil to him. But Mr. De Baron, though a cousin, was not by any means one of the Germain party. Then, on Saturday there had been an affair. Mrs. Toff had come to the Hall, boiling over with the importance of her communication, and stating that she had been—turned out of the house. She, who had presided over everything material at Manor Cross for more than thirty years, from the family pictures down to the kitchen utensils, had been absolutely desired to walk herself off. The message had been given to her by that accursed courier, and she had then insisted on seeing the marquis. "My lord," she said, only laughed at her. "'Mrs. Toff,' he had said, 'you are my mother's servant and my sisters'. You had better go and live with them.'" She had then hinted at the shortness of the notice given her, upon which he had offered her anything she chose to ask in the way of wages and board-wages. "But I wouldn't take a penny, my lady; only just what was due up to the very day." As Mrs. Toff was a great deal too old a servant to be really turned away, and as she merely migrated from Manor Cross to Cross Hall, she did not injure herself much by refusing the offers made to her.

It must be held that the marquis was justified in getting rid of Mrs. Toff. Mrs. Toff was, in truth, a spy in his camp, and, of course, his own people were soon aware of that fact. Her almost daily journeys to Cross Hall were known, and it was remembered, both by the marquis and his wife, that this old woman, who had never been allowed to see the child, but who had known all the preceding generation as children, could not but be an enemy. Of course, it was patent to all the servants, and to everyone connected with the two houses, that there was war. Of course, the marquis, having an old woman acting spy in his stronghold, got rid of her. But justice would shortly have required that the other old woman, who was acting spy in the other stronghold, should be turned out also. But the marchioness, who had promised to tell everything to her son, could not very well be offered wages and be made to go.

In the midst of the ferment occasioned by this last piece of work, Lord George reached Cross Hall. He had driven through the park, that way being nearly as short as the high road, and had left word at the house that he would call on the following morning, immediately after morning church. This he did, in consequence of a resolution which he had made, to act on his own judgment. A terrible crisis was coming, in which it would not be becoming that he should submit himself either to his eldest sister or to the dean. He had talked the matter over fully with Mrs. Houghton, and Mrs. Houghton had suggested that he should call on his way out to the Hall.

The ladies had at first to justify their request that he should come to them, and there was a difficulty in doing this, as he was received in presence of their mother. Lady Sarah had not probably told herself that the marchioness was a spy, but she had perceived that it would not be wise to discuss everything openly in her mother's presence. "It is quite right that you should see him," said Lady Sarah.

"Quite right," said the old lady.

"Had he sent me even a message I should have been here, of course," said the brother. "He passed through London, and I would have met him there had he not kept everything concealed."

"He isn't like anybody else, you know. You mustn't quarrel with him. He is the head of the family. If we quarrel with him, what will become of us?"

"What will become of him if everybody falls off from him? That's what I am thinking of," said Lady Sarah.

Soon after this all the horrors that had taken place—horrors which could not be entrusted to a letter—were narrated him. The marquis had insulted Dr. Pountner, he had not returned the bishop's visit, he had treated the dean with violent insolence, and he had refused to receive his brother-in-law, Mr. Holdenough, though the Holdenoughs had always moved in county society! He had declared that none of his relatives were to be introduced to his wife. He had not as yet allowed the so-called Popenjoy to be seen. He had said none of them were to trouble him at Manor Cross, and had explained his purpose of only coming to the Hall when he knew that his sister Sarah was away. "I think he must be mad," said the younger brother.

"It is what comes of living in a godless country like Italy," said Lady Amelia.

"It is what comes of utterly disregarding duty," said Lady Sarah.

But what was to be done? The marquis had declared his purpose of doing what he liked with his own, and certainly none of them could hinder him. If he chose to shut himself and his wife up at the big house, he must do so. It was very bad, but it was clear that they could not interfere with his eccentricities. How was anybody to interfere? Of course, there was present in the mind of each of them a feeling that this woman might not be his wife, or that the child might not be legitimate. But they did not like with open words among themselves to accuse their brother of so great a crime. "I don't see what there is to be done," said Lord George.

The church was in the park, not very far from the house, but nearer to the gate leading to Brotherton. On that Sunday morning the marchioness and her youngest daughter went there in the carriage, and in doing so had to pass the front doors. The previous Sunday had been cold, and this was the first time that the marchioness had seen Manor Cross since her son had been there. "Oh dear! if I could only go in and see the dear child," she said.

"You know you can't, mamma," said Amelia.

"It is all Sarah's fault, because she would quarrel with him."

After church the ladies returned in the

carriage, and Lord George went to the house according to his appointment. He was shown into a small parlour, and in about half-an-hour's time luncheon was brought to him. He then asked whether his brother was coming. The servant went away, promising to enquire, but did not return. He was cross and would eat no lunch, but after awhile rang the bell loudly, and again asked the same question. The servant again went away and did not return. He had just made up his mind to leave the house and never to return to it, when the courier, of whom he had heard, came to usher him into his brother's room. "You seem to be in a dence of a hurry, George," said the marquis, without getting out of his chair. "You forget that people don't get up at the same hour all the world over."

"It's half-past two now."

"Very likely; but I don't know that there is any law to make a man dress himself before that hour."

"The servant might have given me a message."

"Don't make a row now you are here, old fellow. When I found you were in the house I got down as fast as I could. I suppose your time isn't so very precious."

Lord George had come there determined not to quarrel if he could help it. He had very nearly quarrelled already. Every word that his brother said was in truth an insult, being, as they were, the first words spoken after so long an interval. They were intended to be insolent, probably intended to drive him away. But if anything was to be gained by the interview, he must not allow himself to be driven away. He had a duty to perform, a great duty. He was the last man in England to suspect a fictitious heir, would at any rate be the last to hint at such an iniquity without the strongest ground. Who is to be true to a brother if not a brother? Who is to support the honour of a great family if not its own scions? Who is to abstain from wasting the wealth and honour of another, if not he who has the nearest chance of possessing them? And yet who could be so manifestly bound as he, to take care that no surreptitious head was imposed upon the family? This little child was either the real Popenjoy, a boy to be held by him as of all boys the most sacred, to the promotion of whose welfare all his own energies would be due; or else a brat so abnormally distasteful and abominable

as to demand from him an undying enmity, till the child's wicked pretensions should be laid at rest. There was something very serious in it, very tragic; something which demanded that he should lay aside all common anger, and put up with many insults on behalf of the cause which he had in hand. "Of course I could wait," said he; "only I thought that perhaps the man would have told me."

"The fact is, George, we are rather a divided house here. Some of us talk Italian and some English. I am the only common interpreter in the house, and I find it a bore."

"I daresay it is troublesome."

"And what can I do for you now you are here?"

Do for him! Lord George didn't want his brother to do anything for him. "Live decently, like an English nobleman, and do not outrage your family." That would have been the only true answer he could have made to such a question. "I thought you would wish to see me after your return," he said.

"It's rather lately thought of; but, however, let that pass. So you've got a wife for yourself."

"As you have done also."

"Just so. I have got a wife too. Mine has come from one of the oldest and noblest families in Christendom."

"Mine is the granddaughter of a livery-stable keeper," said Lord George, with a touch of real grandeur; "and, thank God, I can be proud of her in any society in England."

"I daresay; particularly as she had some money."

"Yes; she had money. I could hardly have married without. But when you see her I think you will not be ashamed of her as your sister-in-law."

"Ah! She lives in London, and I am just at present down here."

"She is the daughter of the Dean of Brotherton."

"So I have heard. They used to make gentlemen deans." After this there was a pause, Lord George finding it difficult to go on with the conversation without a quarrel. "To tell you the truth, George, I will not willingly see anything more of your dean. He came here and insulted me. He got up and blustered about the room, because I wouldn't thank him for the honour he had done our family by his alliance. If you please, George, we'll understand that the less said about the

dean the better. You see I haven't any of the money out of the stable-yard."

"My wife's money didn't come out of a stable-yard. It came from a wax-chandler's shop," said Lord George, jumping up, just as the dean had done. There was something in the man's manner worse even than his words, which he found it almost impossible to bear. But he seated himself again, as his brother sat looking at him with a bitter smile upon his face. "I don't suppose," he said, "you can wish to annoy me."

"Certainly not. But I wish that the truth should be understood between us."

"Am I to be allowed to pay my respects to your wife?" said Lord George, boldly.

"I think, you know, that we have gone so far apart in our marriages that there is nothing to be gained by it. Besides, you couldn't speak to her, nor she to you."

"May I be permitted to see—Popenjoy?"

The marquis paused a moment, and then rang the bell. "I don't know what good it will do you, but, if he can be made fit, he shall be brought down." The courier entered the room and received certain orders in Italian. After that there was considerable delay, during which an Italian servant brought the marquis a cup of chocolate and a cake. He pushed a newspaper over to his brother, and as he was drinking his chocolate, lighted a cigarette. In this way there was a delay of over an hour, and then there entered the room an Italian nurse with a little boy who seemed to Lord George to be nearly two years old. The child was carried in by the woman, but Lord George thought that he was big enough to have walked. He was dressed up with many ribbons, and was altogether as gay as apparel could make him. But he was an ugly, swarthy little boy, with great black eyes, small cheeks, and a high forehead, very unlike such a Popenjoy as Lord George would have liked to have seen. Lord George got up and stood over him, and, leaning down, kissed the high forehead. "My poor little darling," he said.

"As for being poor," said the marquis, "I hope not. As to being a darling, I should think it doubtful. If you've done with him, she can take him away, you know." Lord George had done with him, and so he was taken away. "Seeing is believing, you know," said the marquis; "that's the only good of it." Lord George

said to himself that in this case seeing was not believing.

At this moment the open carriage came round to the door. "If you like to get up behind," said the marquis, "I can take you back to Cross Hall, as I am going to see my mother. Perhaps you'll remember that I wish to be alone with her." Lord George then expressed his preference for walking. "Just as you please. I want to say a word. Of course I took it very ill of you all when you insisted on keeping Cross Hall in opposition to my wishes. No doubt they acted on your advice."

"Partly so."

"Exactly; yours and Sarah's. You can't expect me to forget it, George; that's all." Then he walked out of the room among the servants, giving his brother no opportunity for further reply.

THE EASTERN QUESTION AS IT WAS.

THE dismemberment of Turkey is no merely Russian idea, it was for centuries after the crusades the dream of French statesmen. Sully, in his *Economies Royales*, tells us that the overthrow and subdivision of the Ottoman empire were seriously intended by his thoroughly practical master. But long before Henry the Fourth's time the French had entertained similar designs.

This was natural on their part, for they had always been foremost in the crusades. The last and bloodiest of them all they undertook wholly unaided, and at a time when, we should imagine, they could hardly have recovered from the disaster of Poitiers. In 1396, John the Fearless led the chivalry of France, Flanders, and Burgundy to perish on the field of Nicopolis. Froissart gives a lively picture of this terrible defeat. Bajazet had all his prisoners slaughtered, save the few from whom he expected a heavy ransom. And his words to John, when he sent him back after two years' captivity at Brusa, were: "I will bet my horse eats his oats off the high altar of St. Peter's." The taking of Constantinople—which Marshal Boucicault, sent over by Charles the Sixth, had saved from Bajazet—roused a great deal of feeling in France. The son of John the Fearless held a solemn feast, and vowed with all his guests on a pheasant, which the king-at-arms of the order of the Golden Fleece had given him, "first to God, then to the right glorious Virgin Mary, to the ladies, and to the pheasant," to make war on the

infidels. Nothing came of it. Philip the Good waited for the king, and the king was busy with home affairs, and turned a deaf ear to the entreaties of a lady dressed up as "Mother Church," who was a chief personage in the pageant which welcomed his entry into Lille.

By-and-by, Francis the First, after his captivity in Spain and the humiliations which Charles the Fifth had made him suffer, actually entered into a secret treaty with the Turks, and allowed Suleiman the Magnificent to seize Rhodes and Belgrade. It was a secret treaty, for at the same time Barthélemy de Salignac, prothonotary of the Holy See, urged Francis to wipe out the disgrace of Pavia by wresting the Holy Land from the hands of the Moslem; but many Frenchmen thought Francis quite right. "Contre son ennemy on peut de tout bois faire flesches," says the Sieur of Monluc; "as for my part, if I could call the devil to break the head of the enemy who wants to break mine, I'd do it with all my heart. Dieu me le pardoint." It was the same in Charles the Ninth's time. Postel, the orientalist, might prove in his *République des Turcs* that it was necessary, and quite possible, de chasser "cette race ismaélique;" but Charles's statesmen were more jealous even than Francis was of the House of Austria, and, moreover, they were anxious above all things to put the Duke of Anjou on the throne of Poland.

However, the plan of partition was sketched out. René of Lusinge, a Savoyard—who, with three hundred noblemen, had fought the Turks under Charles of Lorraine, Duke of Mayenne, and had then made ten campaigns under the Emperors Maximilian and Rudolph—published at Paris, in 1588, his history of the growth and decline of the Turkish empire. He points out the inner weakness of the Turkish state, and says that nothing is needed for its overthrow but a mutual understanding among Christian princes. They must attack, all at once, each that part of Turkey which lies nearest to them.

La None, nicknamed Bras de Fer, comrade and friend of Henry the Fourth, is more explicit. "The thing must be done," he says; "for where should we be now but for the victory of Lepanto and the diversion made by Persia?" The Pope must take the lead, and must, sinking his own interests, stop all quarrels between the Latin and the Greek Churches. Spain and the empire—France, of course—and

Poland, her ally, may be reckoned on; and they are enough. But they must not, like the old crusaders, be careless of ways and means. "No embarking without biscuit and without plenty of money. The crusade will last four years at least; and a poll-tax, like the Spanish *crusada*, will be the best way of raising funds." His plan—something like that of Leo the Tenth—was to have two great armaments, one by land, headed by Henry the Fourth or by the Duke of Lorraine, the other by sea, commanded either by the Duke of Savoy or by Alexander Farnese. The first year is to suffice for conquering Hungary and part of Greece; next year the land force is to push on as far as Belgrade, while the Anglo-Spanish fleet is to seize the strong places in the Archipelago. The third campaign will make the allies masters of Belgrade and Servia and of the whole seaboard of Thrace; while in the last year, eighty thousand Christians will defeat, under the walls of Philippopolis, two hundred and twenty thousand Mussulmans. Then the Dardanelles will be forced, the grand seigneur will flee over to Asia, and the siege of Constantinople will not be a lengthy affair. "The division of the spoil," adds La None, feeling as Mrs. Glass did about the hare, "had better be left till the work is done—*vaut mieux attendre à départir le gasteau quand nous l'aurons entre mains.*"

Henry the Fourth's grand scheme, based on La None's idea, led to the sending of De Brèves, who had been twenty years ambassador at Constantinople, as special envoy to Rome. "Shall I strive to weaken the House of Austria, or shall I rouse Europe to join in a crusade?" These were Henry's two courses; feeling prompted him to the latter. He did neither, for Ravillac's dagger put a speedy end to his projects. Mary of Medicis was a violent Turcophobist. Du Pellier, an adventurer, who called himself a Breton noble, republished Lusinge's book, with a few alterations and a fresh title-page, in which he represented himself as its author. It shows how little intercourse there was in those days between the different provinces, for Du Pellier not to have known that Lusinge was still alive and in France. Next De Brèves, who, as we have said, had been Henry's ambassador at Constantinople and envoy to Rome, wrote urging the holy work on Louis the Thirteenth. Since his mission to Rome he had held all sorts of offices, and

had been tutor to Gaston, Louis's brother, squire to Mary of Medicis, knight of the order of the Holy Spirit; but, amid all his work, the dream of his life was to prepare "les assurez moyens de ruiner la monarchie des princes ottomans." He, too, points out the causes which were undermining the Turkish power. He insists strongly on the venality and corruption of the pashas—removable by the least intrigue at head-quarters, and therefore eager to make the largest gains during their term of office. The timars or fiefs, held on condition of bringing a troop of horse into the field, are given by court favour, and are withdrawn at will. Hence the cavalry is losing its old excellence. The janissaries, too, were invincible so long as they were recruited from Christian-children, wholly cut off from Turkish surroundings; but now, attracted by the pay and position, Turks have nearly filled up their ranks; and these Turks are always scheming for the advantage of their friends and stirring up disaffection in the provinces. "All these signs of weakness," says De Brèves, "I noticed during the two-and-twenty years that I spent at Constantinople, in the service of the king your father." He advises an expedition by sea, for if Constantinople is taken the thing is done; and he would have the partition of the sick man's goods arranged beforehand, that there may be no quarrelling when the war is over. But his most remarkable suggestion is about the treatment of the Eastern Christians. "We must put no difference," he says, "between the Greek faith and ours; must hear their masses, honour their clergy, make the sign of the cross after their fashion, keep their fasts"—terribly long ones, we may observe—"in fact, do as they do, and, above all, let their clergy march at the head of our armies." He winds up with a prayer, that "the Eastern Question may be settled "avant que Dieu disposât de lui." But the Thirty Years' War came on. Instead of Greek and Latin Christians marching side by side against the infidel, Latin and Protestant were flying at each other's throats, and religion was made the pretext for the break-up of the German empire.

Louis the Fourteenth, in his anxiety to weaken the House of Austria, had taken up with the policy of Francis the First. Turkey was, he conveniently remembered, the "old ally" of the Most Christian King. Still, Frenchmen fought in large numbers in the armies which beat back the aggressive

Kiuprili. A great-grandson of Henry the Fourth fell at the siege of Candia, and the grand vizier kept saying to the French ambassador: "We are your old allies; yet, somehow, there are always plenty of your countrymen in the ranks of our enemies." It was on questions of etiquette, however, always all-important at the court of the Grand Monarque, that Louis quarrelled with the Turks. Louvois was anxious that his master should head a crusade, whether Austria would join or not—Louvois was obliged to content himself with a very inferior kind of crusade against the poor Huguenots and Camisards. Bossuet taught his royal pupil, the Duke of Burgundy, that war to the knife was a Christian prince's duty towards Turks, infidels, and heretics, but above all, towards Turks. Boileau, in a poem in praise of some victory in Holland, said: "Leave these lesser triumphs, and go eastward,"

Je t'attends dans deux ans aux bords de l'Hellespont.

Everybody, in fact, except Colbert, was wild for a crusade, and Colbert had the greatest difficulty in holding the nation in. On the whole, it is perhaps a pity that he succeeded. You cannot forcibly change the genius of a people, without doing it serious harm. "Making war for an idea" had always been the boast of France; and no wonder the French chafed and struggled like a dog in a leash, while the Turks were sweeping over Hungary, and Vienna was looking for deliverance, not to the Most Christian King and the descendants of the crusaders, but to Sobieski and his brave Poles. The policy of Richelieu and his successors had done its work; the noblesse was degraded into a court party, and Louis found aggression in Holland, and the ravaging of the Palatinate, more congenial work than crusading. Had he then put himself at the head of Christendom, and, flinging aside his selfish policy, marched to relieve Vienna, there is no saying what might have happened. The great Revolution might have come peaceably, as it came to us, instead of with a reign of terror; for the old nobles were very different men from their degenerate great-grandsons. The long wars of the eighteenth century might never have been—wars which, while they gave England a factitious greatness, threw the world back some hundred years. But Colbert prevailed; and the French, revenging themselves as usual "by an epigram," published a "Dialogue in the kingdom of darkness

between Mahomet and M. Colbert, late minister of France." Mahomet thanks the clothier's son of Dijon for the help he has constantly given to Turkey; and Colbert assures him he acted out of pure admiration for the Turkish government, to which he had tried, by bringing all down to the same dead level, to assimilate that of France.

What the ideas of the time were, may be judged from the book of Michel Febvre, called "in religion" Father Justinian, a Capuchin, who had lived eighteen years at the Aleppo Mission. He kept his eyes open; and travelling much, even going with the caravans across the Syrian desert, he saw a great deal. His visit to Constantinople was under exceptionally favourable circumstances; he had converted to the Latin Church no less a person than the Patriarch of Antioch, who sent him to inform the Sultan of the fact, and he describes, in his *Théâtre de la Turquie*, the magnificent sights which he witnessed. Returning to Europe, he was patronised by Popes Clement the Tenth and Innocent the Eleventh, and published his book in French, Italian, Spanish, and German. He describes "the fourteen nations who dwell in the Turkish empire, and the seven sects of infidels, and seven of Christians, into which they are divided." He knows all about "ce grand casuiste," the Sheik-ul-Islam. He lays his finger on the great blot in Turkish institutions, the venality of the judges; and he urges on all Christian princes, specially on Louis the Fourteenth, "the by no means difficult enterprise of pulling down the Turkish power, and giving back to Christendom those lands which were the cradle of our faith." Difficulties he readily explains away, after the fashion of enthusiasts. The old crusades failed, because they were led by hermits who knew nothing of public affairs; besides, they by no means wholly failed, for the Christians conquered Syria, Cyprus, Jerusalem, the Greek empire, and part of Egypt. "But Turkey is difficult to invade—full of rugged mountain ranges; isn't it wiser for our king to keep to the low countries?" "May be," replies the Capuchin; "but the people in those more rugged countries are far easier to beat." The one thing needful is to persuade all Christian princes to make, if not an alliance, at least a truce for three or four years. Then France can go to work alone; of course, the Pope will help her, and Poland, and perhaps Persia;

and if Spain, or the emperor, is so ill-advised as to break the truce, while her armies are fighting the battle of the Cross, all Europe will cry "Shame!" "But," said Colbert, "what will become of all our consuls and merchants in Ottoman towns, if we declare war?" "Why, all the king has to do, is to demand a lowering of the customs. The Grand Turk is sure to refuse; whereupon his majesty will at once withdraw all his subjects. If the Sultan hinders their going, he will threaten to lay all the ports of Turkey in ashes." As for the jealousies of other powers, let the Pope partition the spoil beforehand, and assign to each state its share in the attack; and let the standard be not the French flag, but that of Holy Church. "But what good will all this be to France?" "What good, indeed?" replies the patriotic friar; "why shouldn't France be like Spain, with her Naples, and Sicily, and Mexico, and the West Indies? Even if she can't hold Turkey for herself, there can be no political reason why she should not set up there a prince of the blood-royal." Febvre even dreamed of two empires, one in Europe, the other in Asia, each under a Bourbon. This is his favourite idea: "Let France be magnanimously content with setting up Christianity (under Bourbon rulers) on the ruins of Mahometanism, and with a few islands in the Archipelago as stations for her fleet and centres of trade." We, who hold Malta, and Gibraltar, and Heligoland, and have only just given up the Ionian Islands, cannot think he asked too much; nor can Germany find fault with him with a Hohenzollern on the throne of Roumania.

Very politic is his plan of getting rid, first of Islamism and then of "the Greek schism." As soon as the country is conquered, no one is to be allowed to carry arms; a French judge is to sit in every town side by side with the *cadi*; the garrisons are to be half French, half Eastern Christians; and the tables are to be turned on the Mahometans, by making them pay the tax which they now exact from the Christians. "That's the way to make converts!" Febvre triumphantly exclaims. "These Bosnians and Croats and Servians, and such like, were not originally Mussulmans"—he is quite right there. "They conformed, to save their lands and to gain power and place; and they'll conform the other way, when it is advantageous to do so." So confident is he, that he thinks a year almost enough to

bring them all round. "Of course," he adds, "we must take care to make Roman Catholics, and not Greek or Armenian Christians, of them." Then follows the greater difficulty of getting rid of the Eastern schisms. "First, abolish all distinctive costumes. Next, throw all churches open to all alike; don't let one be called the Frank church, another the Greek, and so on. Urge all patriarchs, bishops, &c., to preach obedience to the Pope, and make it worth their while to do so by giving them pensions out of the endowments of the mosques, on condition of doing what they are told. Don't meddle with the present race of Greek priests; but ordain no others, save on condition of celibacy. Forbid all schoolmasters to teach Armenian or Syriac, or anything but Arabic, Turkish, and Lingua Franca." Those are Father Justinian's plans for bringing in the heterodox.

Febvre was followed by Coppin, who had been a cavalry captain, and afterwards French consul at Damietta, and had then "felt a call" and "gone into retreat" in the diocese of Puy, where he took orders. At the age of seventy-two this enthusiast published his Holy War, or the Buckler of Europe, in which he describes minutely the plan of operations and the mode of dividing the spoil. Messina in Sicily is to be the rendezvous—Coppin is not daunted by the recollection of Philip and Richard Cœur de Lion and their quarrels—in Malta are to be collected the conquered cannon ready for division amongst the allies. The Persians and Tartars are to be gained over, and the Arabs to be tempted by the offer of the timars or fiefs held for military service. Then, as to the "sick man's goods," Africa, that nest of pirates, must be subdivided as well as the rest. England is to have Tangier; Spain, Oran and Algiers; France, Bona and Tunis; Portugal, Tripoli; Holland, Barca. The Morea he considers so valuable that he gives every power a bit of it. France is to have Corinth; Spain, Argos; England, Lacedæmon—the richest bite of all; Portugal, Sicyon; Venice, Messene; Holland, Pisa; Savoy, Florence. Genoa and Lucca are to divide between them the plain of Elis, famous for the Olympic games; the Pope is to have half Arcadia, the other half is to go to the grand dukes of Parma and Modena. Such a reproduction of the separate city-states of old Greece prepares us for what follows. Venice is to be once more mistress of the Adriatic, with Solavonia, Bosnia, Albania,

and Epirus to her share. The emperor is to have Hungary, with Servia, Macedonia, and part of Bulgaria. Poland gets Wallachia and Moldavia, with Podolia and the rest of Bulgaria. Spain is to have Achaia and Northern Greece as far as Thermopylæ. Thessaly falls to England; the rest of the seaboard as far as the Dardanelles to Portugal. To France are assigned the Straits and Constantinople, Adrianople, and Brusa; nay, she is to stretch across the highlands of Lesser Asia as far as Trebizonde. Lower Egypt ought also to be hers by right of St. Louis's crusade, but she will allow the present rulers, "who are not bad fellows for infidels," to govern it under her protection. England, Holland, and the other maritime powers will divide the seaboard of the Levant, on the same plan as that on which has been divided European Turkey. The Portuguese shall have Aleppo, the key to the East Indies, where they are all-powerful. The Knights of St. John are to get back Rhodes; the other islands of the Archipelago are to be parcelled out among the smaller states. "And," sapiently adds our schemer, "since some of them have no navy, they may be allowed to sell their portions, if they are so minded."

There is not a word in all this about the Grand Duke of Muscovy, who, however, had been for some time a power in Europe. The strange ignoring of Russia, and the fact that Portugal is looked on as the chief power in the East, show the marvellous change which less than two centuries has wrought in the world. Coppin, unlike De Brèves, would by no means begin by attacking Constantinople; but his whole work was shown to be an anachronism, when, in the very year of its publication, the court of Vienna refused the aid of Louis the Fourteenth against the invasion of Kara Mustapha. This curt refusal made Louis veer back to the Turkish side. He punished a bishop for saying in his charge: "What! the church is perishing; the enemies of Christ are gaining whole provinces; and we rejoice as at a political victory."

Henceforth, France gave up all schemes of crusading; and Europe began to settle down into the state which lasted till the Revolution. Prince Eugene and Charles of Lorraine, both Frenchmen by blood, won victory after victory over the Ottomans—a sore trial for Louis; for both of these great captains had suffered from his spoiling and annexing. Austria, his great enemy, had shown herself able, without his help, to

reconquer Hungary. France, therefore, went in for the policy in which England, till this last war, has imitated her—the preservation of the Turkish power, or, rather, the staving off as long as possible its inevitable doom. It is strange that the last echo of Turcophobia is found in Voltaire. He, tolerant in most things, hated the Moslem. Read his *Tocsin of the Kings*, and you'll fancy an old crusading hermit is writing. He even begs Frederick the Second "to drive out those ruffianly Turks"—therein showing himself less of an ethnologist than Febvre, who, knowing the Turks had just the same title to be in Europe as the Bulgarians and the Magyars, talks not of driving out the Turks, but of converting them.

It is a forgotten page of history, this, which records the fixed idea of so many French statesmen, that France should reassert her position as the head of Christendom, by taking the lead in one grand final crusade; but it is interesting, if only to remind us how the world has got altered. One strange thing is, that those who entertained the idea most seriously—Henry the Fourth and Sully—were Protestants. They had no intention of "bringing in" the Greek church; they would have been content for Greek and Lutheran and Calvinist and Romanist to live peacefully side by side. Their only wish was to get rid of Islam; and when we see what a terrible amount of bloodshed and misery this getting rid of Islam is now causing, we may well wish that the work had been done three centuries ago.

"FEY."

I'm no way "superstitious," as the parson called our Mat,
 When he'd none sail with the herring fleet, 'cause he met old Susie's cat.
 There's none can say I heeded, though a hare has crossed my road,
 Nor burnt my nets as venomed, where a woman's foot had trod.
 And though it's mobby wisest to hearken when they tell,
 The sea-maids shriek their warning, from the reef beside the bell;
 Seeing I reckon one hears them, when the wind has a northerly set,
 And at the lip of the Nab out there, the breakers rouse and fret;
 Still, I'm no way superstitious, but this I allis say,
 You may get the coffin ready, when a doomed man is fey.
 Aye laugh, and call it folly, I see you glance aside,
 Wait a bit until I tell you how poor Jem Dobson died.
 We were mates, but he was master, and a cautious man was he,
 For ever studying at the glass, and watching sky and sea,

I'm sure it ofens put me about, when the fish were as rank as ought,
 And he'd none sail, for "the wind was shy," or "the clouds were ruffled," he thought.

One day, an April morning, it was blowing east-nor-east,

The call of the surf was on the Scar, the billows frothed like yeast;

Great foam-flakes rested on the sand, and the hollow, sullen roar,

Rose in the offing loud enow to bid us keep ashore.

Guess how the boldest among us stared, when Jem came swinging down,

And bade me help to launch the Rose, with an oath, and with a frown.

I was loath, but young and foolish, and ahrank like from a sneer:

There's naught a frightened lad won't do, to prove he has no fear.

There were plenty spoke to stop him, but he'd ner hear nor heed,

But sorted gear, and hauled up sail, all in a strange, dumb speed;

I tell you my heart leapt fit to burst, as we shot out in the bay,

For I met poor Jem's wild, wandering eyes, and I knew the man was fey.

I said when I durst, "There's mischief there," and I nodded where, right ahead,

The black squall lay on the water, the foe we mariners shied;

But he scarcely drifted the helm a point, as his eye o'er the distance ran,

But laughed and said, "The breeze is like to wait for a sure-doomed man."

Doomed, aye, for the squall burst on us, and he turned her broadside-to,

I sprang to the helm, but over late, the stout sheet strained and flew;

And as the Rose heeled over, and the seas broke fierce and grim,

I heard Jem saying quietly, "Poor lad, it's hard on him."

Sam Lacy told me afterwards—he steered the life-boat then—

And their work was set to save me, those strong seafaring men,

Jem just threw up his hands to heaven, and with never a cry or call,

Went down to the death he was bound to die, in the very face of them all.

So, though no way superstitious, I neither jest nor sneer,

When old wives talk of omens and signs, they reckon should guide us here;

For it's little we know of the world beyond, and I cannot forget the day,

When I so nigh touched hands with Death, and poor old Jem was fey.

ON A ROPE-WALK.

MÆRGOLD-COUEE brings a pretty thought with the sound of it, so does Grange-walk, so does Long-walk, so does Willow-walk, and so does Cherry-garden. Casting shadows on the rope-walk of this sketch, as it lies in a district thick with such rural christianings, there are real willow-trees, of absolute life and growth, planted here and there in the hard-trod ground. Hlemming it in, on both of its long sides and at

its narrow ends, there are the tarred boardings, or hoardings, that are the walls of genuine cottage garden-pieces; whilst, to complete the picture, the whole is trimmed up with tangles and twists of the rapid scarlet-runner, and set off with gleams of marigolds, sweet-peas, and other cottage-flowers, full of strength and colour, and of the sort usual amidst such simple and old-world surroundings. Take a second glance, for further detail. Hard against the rope-walk there are close back-ways leading to the cottage-gardens that hedge it in; there are latched gates for ready entrance; there are peeps of lop-sided lean-tos, of buckled-up water-butts, of trelised arbours—not in good repair—there are edgings of grass, dandelions, and other dusty and common weeds. The master of the rope-walk, too, could stand at the fore-end, as the technical phrase is, of his slip of land, under the shadow of his wheel-shed, or at the back-end, its opposite, or could stand beside his genuine old wall, from which he draws up water, by the letting down of a bucket, in the genuine old way; and he could pitch one of his own neat-wound balls of twine right into spots known by such titles as Gun-alley, Tyler's-gateway, Active-place, Hen and Chicken-lane, all of them groups of little residences as picturesque and antiquated as his own. Yet, this rope-walk is in London, for all that; it is close by London's chief bridge, it is alongside of London's chief river, it is overhung by one of London's chief railroads. It is in Bermondsey, in short. There—though rope-making, under some firms, has grown to be steam-driven, factory-like, gigantic—rope-making is preserved, in other spots, in all the simplicity and peacefulness of its early establishment, is clothed with all the original characteristics of moderate undertaking and easy-going size. Carried on thus, in, and amidst nooks and nests and quaint abiding-places thoroughly of the old life, remaining, as in amber, just as Londoners of two and three centuries ago saw them and knew them and used them, living out in them their sedate and steady lives, rope-business affords the same refreshment as if it existed in some country back-lane, fifty or a hundred miles away; and, lighted up with such pleasant surroundings, all of rope-interest shall get the necessary noting.

A needful preliminary to it lies in a short command from the master-roper.

"Phil," this is, "stop work there. Come here, and answer questions."

Phil's name—albeit, it was accidentally—fitted him like Thimble fits the tailor, like Grabbit fits the lawyer, out of direct intent, in the old comedies. A particular rope, or twine, in use, and often under Phil's deft hand, is known as fillis; flum, there shall come the reminder, is the Latin for a thread, a string, yarn; filix, if further confirmation be required, is a small fibre from a root; fil is French for thread, wherein lies Phil's genealogy, without a flaw.

As for Phil's calling, he was that prominent personage seen upon every rope-walk, invariably associated with the business of it, and attracting the eye at once; known, if he be spoken of correctly, as the spinner. His aspect and attitude require little or no delineation. He binds himself about the waist with a spinning apron; he has the long bind, or hank, of hemp he is to spin, coiled up in it; he is for ever fumbling, as it seems, at this apron-load, paying out the fibre from it constantly and rapidly, and having leathern mittens, or similar appliances, upon his hands, that he may not pay out the flesh of those also, and be brought at last to have no paying-out power at all. During his spinning time he might be thought, if life were altogether the jest it has been gaily said to be, to be qualifying himself for the superlative performance of one of the duties of court-chamberlain, for he is for ever walking backwards, very intent and serious; holding dignity, apparently, quite as much an object with him as his occupation. And a spinner, as was seen when Phil began to add experiment to explanation, is compelled to keep to a solemn treading or a regulation pace; he is unable, consistent with conscientious manipulation and proper wheel-power, to let this pace be exceeded. It is at the rate of about two miles an hour, and it takes Phil, or any of his spinning fraternity, so many times along the rope-walk, from the whirling wheel backwards to the pulley at the back end, and so many times along the rope-walk, from the pulley at the back end backwards to the wheel under its low, unsubstantial shed again, it makes a pretty piece of walking for him—allowing deduction for necessary stoppage to adjust, to overlook, to be off with an old operation and be on with a new—that would measure at the day's end, if laid straight out, as much as eighteen miles.

It was a fact, put this way into substantial figures, that made a little wonder-

ment at the fatigue it would be likely to bring about excusable. But Phil was ready with an excellent reason why fatigue of that sort very rarely had the chance to come.

"You see," he said, "we can't work at ropes in wet weather—or in any bad weather, I'll say. We're in the open air, we are; and in the rain our stuff gets spoiled."

It was quite clear it would. It was quite clear, too, that Phil, or any other spinner under any other name, would get spoiled, worked a daily eighteen miles in wet weather—or in any bad weather—up and down, up and down, and always backwards, it must be borne in mind; Phil all the time having no other shelter over him than those "stake-heads," to tighten his strands on, that are just frail uprights, three-corner-way supported—and that might be outline gallows, set up at short intervals to scare away marauders. But any thought of damage to flesh and blood did not seem to have entered Phil's philosophy. It was easy to him, and to others, to understand how the bulky bundles of hemp, and tow, and jute entrusted to his care, and lying about the walk, and wheelshed, and rough warehouse, could so far lose their prime qualities that they should be difficult to work up—taking time for the working—and remain poor-looking when the extra labour had been spent, and the extra price charged for. Over fabrics and material it was quite possible to Phil and to others to reason, to see the needs of their nature, to do the best to let these needs be met; but as for aches of body, as for agues, as for premature decrepitude of men, and women, and children, existing under conditions that could not fail of being detrimental—those sort of things were what life meant, were what life never was without. Neither Phil nor anybody else could so arrange matters that they could be prevented.

And another truth, in which Phil and the master-roper over him might be uninstructed when put out of the form they had been accustomed to, and into the surprise of statistics, is the length of yarn obtained by the spinner's eighteen miles of productive and profitable pedestrianism. It amounts, when six threads or yarns are finished—which means, when the spinner has twisted together so much hemp-fibre he has done what he calls a quarter's work, the ordinary pay for which is seven pence—to nine hundred and sixty fathoms

of it, equalling one thousand nine hundred and twenty yards, or something over a mile. It amounts, when the spinner has spun eight times this quantity—which is a proper dry day's accomplishment—to eight times nine hundred and sixty fathoms, of course; the same coming to a long line that, stretched out, would measure eight miles and three-quarters. It is a yarn worth spinning assuredly; and it is a yarn, too, it will have been noted, that takes just twice as much walking to make it as it comes to. In other words, a spinner walks eighteen miles, and produces just half that length of material. Or, put by a different method still, to spin a reel of yarn measuring one hundred yards, somebody will have had to have walked two hundred yards; to spin a ball of string measuring one hundred yards, and composed of two yarns twisted together, or a "strand," somebody will have had to have walked four hundred yards; to spin a coil of cord measuring one hundred yards, and composed of nine strands, as all ropes called "cable-laid" are, somebody will have had to have walked three thousand six hundred yards, or two miles and something over; and so on in proportion. From the whole of which, interesting reflection may arise when lengths of twine, and string, and cord, and rope get handled, or when the eye rests upon a cable or a hawser.

"Do you see," said Phil, when he was going to show, with extra precision, what this yarn that requires this double walking really was—"do you see how I put this hemp-stuff on, at first, to begin? At this wheel-head—we call this piece of timber, sticking up behind the wheel, the wheel-head—there's this lot of whirls. Some people may call them bolts; it's the same thing; it means a little reel, for another name, with a hook in it; and the reel goes round as fast as the wheel turns it; for, you see, the wheel-band is round each whirl, and it must go, it can't help it. Then I just hook my hemp on to the wheel-hook—here, boy! turn the wheel here! quick!—and then I pay it out in two lots, look, one from each thumb and finger—double hand-spinning we call it; and the hemp must twist, you see—it's nothing to do with me, it ain't—the hemp must twist because the whirl it's fastened to is twisting, and the wheel is twisting, and every whirl fastened to the wheel twists, as many as you like; and so I go back, and back, and back."

Till Phil had spun three or four yards of his rough twine, enough for example, and the wheel-boy was told to leave off turning.

"Bring a loper here!" was Phil's cry then; "look sharp!"

But, surely, if Phil had called for a brass swivel, about two inches long, the same little implement would have been presented. A "loper" had all the appearance of being a swivel, at any rate, with some technical variation; and into it Phil hooked his twine, the boy who had brought it held it in one place tight, the other boy drove round the wheel once more; and as Phil walked backwards again, up to the whirl where he had first hooked on his fibre, a double-twisting was compulsorily effected, and a piece of loose cord was twisted rapidly up to completion.

"Now, we call that two-lea," said the master-roper, as it was handed out to be examined. "But if you go to ask me what two-lea means, there you are; you just ask me something that I can't tell you."

It may be set down, for all that, that "lea" is the old-world father of "leam" and "leash," the line to hold hounds in by; that in old-world phraseology, in Kidderminster, the grim old town where hemp and wool have had gloomy twisting round for centuries, where yarn, and reel, and warp, and woof, and bobbin, must have submitted to their first torture, the word "lea" meant as much yarn, each yarn containing two hundred threads, as would fill a reel "four yards about." We must add, too, that yarn, properly, is spun wool, not hemp; that a "yarringle," or "yarringle-blade," in which lies the inkle (tape) of Shakespeare and obsolete commerce, was the implement on which hanks of yarn were wound into balls or "clews;" that another christening for a ball or clew was a "bottom," whereby the sobriquet of Bottom for the weaver shows intention; and that a further pretty elucidation comes from the word "clew," when thoughts are carried back by it to Henry the Second, living out his love-episode at Woodstock. What was carried in the royal hand was a "clew" of silk—i.e., a ball of silk, to use the modern word; as the king walked towards his Rosamund's bower, unwinding, his clew grew less and less—to unclaw, in the old dramatists, is always to unwind.

"Now, you see," said Phil, as further

exposition, "we don't always have a boy to hold the loper. At the end of the rope-walk there, there's what we call the pulley,—well, yes; we can walk up and look at it; it's no harm. Here it is. It's just a rough old box, to keep the loper from the weather, that's all; and a pulley's a boy, or a boy's a pulley, it's all one; it's only to hook your yarn through, and to let it pull out easy, and it's only according to where you are. If you're short up against the whirls, you can have a boy; if you're far away, and you're getting long, you must have the pulley."

"And when you have just spun like this, up to your pulley and back again, is your twine done?"

Phil was exceedingly amused. So was the master-roper.

"There, now! I knew you'd miss the best!" came the latter's cry upon it, high with professional excitement. "You couldn't, you know, you couldn't take it all! Why, there's to card, for carding off the shives; there's to tackle, for tightening—some call it warping or stretching; there's the top, to rope it down; there's the size, for sizing it; there's the bass, for what we call dry-rubbing, to put the polish on; there's water for wet-rubbing—they don't all belong to one kind of rope, but there they are, for some sort or another, and they've all got to be done; there's tar for tarring such string as we call firewood-tyers, and for all ropes to be used where there's damp or wet; there's to tub, for twisting it round to form the coil in, when we put a pad to show the end for pulling up, or it would go as wrong as wrong; there's a lot of names I haven't said yet; there's to nettle, the grip, the gage, the sliding nipper—"

It was an avalanche of technicality, that we could not understand all at once, undoubtedly. It had to be taken piecemeal.

"Let us begin at the beginning, or at the end, or anywhere where it is straight and short. Let us begin at the card, for example. You spoke of a card. Have you got one?"

"Here!" Phil cried, as if in answer to a muster-roll.

It was a piece of black leather, about the thickness of a shilling and the size of an opened sheet of note-paper; it was studded thickly over on one side with bits of brass wire, half-an-inch long, that might have been pins without any heads and pins without any points; and these

were stuck in and out like bristles through a brush-back.

"And how do you use it?"

"So!" says Phil, bending his leather over with the wire-ends meeting, and rasping his leather up and down a piece of stretched rope, as if his only object were to rasp it through, and to leave it parted, for some strong vengeance.

"It's the shives, I said, you know; it's to card off the shives," repeated the master-roper, giving himself the honour of the encore. "But there you are; if you go to ask me what the shives means, you're just asking me again something that I can't tell you."

Phil's shives, that he was vigorously carding from off the rope, were there to be seen—their own explanation. They were the little odd hard ends of the hemp sticking out, untwisted, unsettled, spite of whirl and loper and the accustomed thumbing of the spinner; and as these were rasped off by the rough action of the wires, they embedded themselves, and lay amongst them in lumps of wet fluff. It was the philological position of the word, the philological fact that "shive" was formerly a chip or slice of bread for one thing, a chip, a slice, a splinter of any substance.

"It is no matter. Let us go on. You spoke afterwards of the bass. Is the bass handy?"

"Here!"

Phil, of course; picking an old tatter, or wisp, of cocoa-nut matting off the convenient roof of the wheel-shed—it was about level with his eyes—and presenting it with military aplomb and gravity.

"And this is for—?"

Phil showed upon the spot. He rubbed it along and along a rope, much as he had rubbed his card along and along a rope—another variety, by-the-way, of the card, for very strong purposes, being a sheet of interlaced rings of steel, like a slice cut out of a warrior's coat of mail; only Phil, this time, went to work coaxingly, soothingly, his object being not to wrestle with and exasperate, but dexterously to tone down, to soften, to leave behind him a mild polish.

"It's to dry-rub," came from the master-roper, during the minute of operation, in his character of chorus. "To dry-rub; that's what we call it, always."

"Then to wet-rub is—?"

"Here!"

Phil dipped a bucket into a well, and

hauling the bucket out of the well, and adroitly hoisting it on to a raised rope, gave it a little promenade there—he could not have done it better if it had been a living Blondin put on for practice—by which time the bucket proved to be not a bucket but a barrel, with the head off and the bung out; and by when the water was seen to be streaming from the bung-hole on to and over the thick rope, along and along, thickly as Phil moved it.

"You spoke, too, of a top?"

"Here!"

Phil threw the barrel upon the ground, to lie there and stream itself harmlessly empty, and snatched up a flat-size wooden whipping-top—apparently—that had deep gashes cleft in its sides, like a diminutive country-side washing-dolly, handleless, or an equally diminutive churn-stamp.

"It's to rope it down, as we say," chorused the master-roper. "Up to then it is all uneven and irregular-like; but we catch it in one of these cuts. Look at Phil; that'll show it"—Phil was brisk as ever, still, with this new appliance, rubbing along and along—"and it gets roped, as we say, into proper and fit shape."

"As to sizing? or the size?"

"Here!"

Phil was rubbing imitation size then; for he had none prepared at hand; and he was explaining how it was rubbed on, just as might be expected, on to "white" ropes in opposition to "tarred" ditto, and was only used to stiffen.

"Then the tar?"

"Here!"

But no. Phil was too quick for his own quickness, too willing for his own willingness, there. No tarring was going on, as it happened; no tar was by, to go on with, if it had been wanted; no firewood-tyers, otherwise "dark tyers," otherwise string to tie up bundles of firewood, were in course of spinning; no other tarred cordage was set, either on whirl, on stake-head, on loper, on boy, or pulley. Phil was perplexed. His master—therein lay the cause—had under-let a slice of his slice of London land to a dark-tyer spinner, dark-tyer spinning was not in demand at that moment, possibly; at any rate, the dark-tyer spinner was absent from his lesser leasehold that day, and the mass of his appliances was absent with him. There stood the guillotine-like apparatus, however, required for his speciality of manufacture; there were his ghostly stake-heads, with their five-and-twenty down-

hung hooks for warping; there was his wheel-head, with its five-and-twenty hooks to match; and Phil could explain, and did, how a length of rope to be tarred—technically called a “haul” of it—is soaked after making, in a tub, the tar in it at a certain heat, and how it is drawn out afterwards through a tight “gauge,” filled with a “sliding-nipper” and lined with oakum, so that it may be squeezed from over-quantity of tar, and hung up to dry and harden, to be fit for use. The knowledge was imparted, in addition, from one source and another, that the act of tarring ropes weakens them, in that important business of theirs of leverage and of sustaining. Since, though, tarring renders hemp, tow, jute, and so on, less liable to be injured by wet; and since the ropes into which these are spun are, at most times, simply hanging in the water, or lying about loose, or stowed away in coils, and the twine these are spun into is used only for sewing up coal-sacks, for hemming sails, for mending sails, and the like, with all strain off, for all these purposes, and damp the only enemy to be dreaded; it is best, in the end, that the tarring should be done. Tarring, moreover, stiffens; and stiffness, in the case of barge-ropes, for example, upon the towing-path, is a quality, for its own sake frequently and essentially required. To finish up all of which, there need only be added, that tarred-rope in French being *corde goudronnée*, Jack Tar, the naval king of it, is named in France, *Pape Goudron*.

Now, there is another operation, besides tarring, connected with ropes, that weakens them instead of giving them greater power to hoist and to bear. It is that very first of operations, that very essence of all operations, that makes the fibre into rope at all, that is the cause of rope-walk, roper, Phil, whirl, wheel, well, and everything; viz., twisting. Keep your hemp straight, you keep your hemp strong. Twist about your hemp—twist it, spin it—you take the strength of your hemp away. This has been demonstrated. Réaumur, as long ago as 1711, in the midst of his discoveries of mines of turquoises in his own belle France, and of how to hatch eggs, and of how to turn iron into steel, and of how to make artificial pearls, and the rest, found time, also, to make discoveries about ropes. Sir Charles Knowles followed him, confirming his facts; and the result of the investigation shows that the loss incurred by hemp in twisting is equal to about a third.

Thus: a white rope—not a tarred rope—of three inches and a half in circumference, taken in the course of Sir Charles's experiments, was composed of seventy-two yarns, each yarn of itself—before twisting—bearing a strain of ninety pounds, and being able, therefore, in the whole, to have borne six thousand four hundred and eighty. It broke at four thousand five hundred and fifty-two. Do not let hemp be twisted then. Well, that would do, certainly, in the matter of strength; but it would not do as certainly, in the matter of length, for hemp-fibre is never more than four feet long; ropes are wanted exceedingly much more than four feet long, and in order to knit hemp-fibre into hemp-fibre, and to knit more hemp-fibre into more hemp-fibre, the weakening must be put up with and allowed for, and the twisting must be done. A way to avoid it is to plait, which is done in ropes that are for clock-lines, for sash-lines, and for other purposes where as much strength as possible is required to go into as small a space as possible, in order that there may be easy passage over a small pulley; but a plait rope is a flat rope, as is self-evident with the uses to which it can be applied extremely limited. Flat ropes are available for mines, however, when, to get power and as width is no drawback, several are strongly sewn together, lying side by side. Still, these are being superseded, even for this purpose, by ropes of iron-wire, introduced first, in 1831, into the silver mines of the Hartz Mountains. Such were found at once to be as strong as hempen ropes of four times their weight; and at the end of two years they had evinced no symptoms of wear, whilst a hempen rope, and of the superior heaviness, would have been completely useless in thirteen months.

Several materials outside of hemp—including tow and jute—and outside of iron-wire, have been taken under the eye and under the hand by master-ropers, by their Phils, and others, for rope manufacture on their rope-walks, or in rope factories fitted with machines. The French have tried aloe-leaves from their Algiers, and produced cordage five times as tough as if it had been of hemp; the Peruvians have tried ox-hide, and used it for their so-called rope-bridges; the Manilla Islanders have tried the *Musa textilis*, the plaintain fibre, nicknamed *Manilla-hemp*, and find it excellent for large ship-ropes; the far-away farmers of Britain—notably of North Wales—continue to twist straw into ropes

for their rough farm-work, doing thus as ancestors of many generations did before them; coir, also, or cocoanut-fibre, has been used; and long wool—almost as had a substitute for brittleness as straw; and there has been a mixture made of hemp and threads of caoutchouc, found of excellent service for balloons, since the superior elasticity of the caoutchouc saves the riders from a great deal of shock and jerk. Then, in the case of iron-wire ropes, several substances have been tried as a means of covering or coating them, to save them from the danger of rust. They have been coated with tin; they have been coated with zinc; they have been bound round with cloth; they have been bound with hemp itself, dipped into a solution of caoutchouc, of asphaltum, of tar, linseed-oil, and tallow mixed. As for the several sorts of ropes, each sort differing, however slightly, from the other to fit it for its different use, their name is legion. They fairly puzzled the master-roper, and the master-roper's wife, and Phil, when they were asked to bring them to recollection.

"You know," said the master-roper, "there's twine, and there's line; stuff as fine as fishing-line or whip-cord, up to stuff as heavy it will lower a couple of ton. They're all of them rope, for the matter of being made on a rope-walk; and they're all, in a manner, just the same. There's one of them in between, barrow-cord we'll say. It is called by various names; for some people would ask for mat-cord, and some for tippet, and some for frame-line; but they all mean the cord for straining parchment on to frames, or for straining rugs on to frames; and it has to be tough and strong, for the skins and the rugs are all steeped in water to let them stretch, and if the cord wasn't strong, it wouldn't bear."

"And yes," put in the wife quickly, in corroboration, "and don't forget drum-line for lacing the drums; and army-cord for tying accoutrements; and twine for kite-flying; and snood-line for fishing; and laid-cord for tying parcels as heavy as half-a-hundred weight; and chalk-line for bricklayers; and pocket-cord for sewing hop-bags; and jack-line for shop-window-blinds, or any heavy frames; and box-cord."

In short, there came so wide an opening into purpose and appropriation, it made it seem the depth of ignorance to have ever entertained the supposition, that string is string, that rope is rope, that cord is cord.

Each is not, and each never can be. Just as dressings of hemp, before making into rope—have to retreat on to the general term—have their distinct and defined divisions into pound bar, and shorts, and caged hemp, and long bar, and common long, and fine five, and so forth; so has hemp when spun, so many distinct and defined divisions, each one absolute—they could not very well all have naming. One kind is for plough-reins; one kind is slings for engines, fitted with a thimble-run, or a doubling lined with iron, something of the shape of a tailor's thimble, for easy slipping; one kind is sealing-twine, fine enough for chemists to tie round their neat packages, and to fasten up with wax. And there must be a reminder, that ropes occupy an important position in manufacture, and that there is strong reason that they should do so. Life depends upon them; property depends upon them. Let rope-business be carried on faithlessly and heedlessly, let ropes snap because this is so, and a score of fortunes may be lost, a whole ship-load of people may perish. That life, also, and unhappily, is taken away at times by means of the very goodness of rope, is as true as the other. Sad that it should be so; sadder that it should continue to be so, much longer than the present year of grace. Whilst the terrible institution has its terrible existence, however, the rope for it has to be spun upon a rope-walk; the same as rope for any other purpose: it is four-stranded; it is eight or nine feet long; it is two inches and a quarter in circumference; it is made on hooks on the precise plan of horses' halters, to give strength; it has each end twined in; so that it is a finished rope from end to end. As it is being spun, every man upon the rope-walk helps in the spinning, that every man may say it has been through his hand.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IV. HUNGER AND HEREST.

WHEN Comrie went to bed, without a candle, he was much too pleased with his day's work to take much heed about the arrangement of his clothes upon their proper chair. For days and days past he had been trying to find out the means of introducing himself to his neighbours.

But it was not because he was a young man, and because a good-looking girl lodged overhead and, far too often, disturbed his studies by singing. So far as she was concerned, he cared nothing. His taste in music was confined to a sentimental enjoyment of about six Scotch tunes, and he was not rich enough yet to afford to take note of whether a girl's eyes were black, blue, or grey. On his young shoulders was set a very old head indeed; he had not been in love since he was seventeen, and since then had given himself no time or thought for follies. A girl might be interesting; but then she must have something the matter with her, and be attractive as a case, and not as a girl. Helen herself in health would have had no charms in his eyes. But he had long been hankering after the deaf musician, and at last Mrs. Snow's neglect to leave out her model lodger's candlestick had given him his opportunity.

As a pupil of Maurel of Paris, and as an enthusiastic believer in that great surgeon, he had a special taste for the morbid anatomy of the more sensitive organs, where the nerves act so subtly, so obscurely, and yet so intensely. The ear, in a state of disease, had a sort of fascination for him, just because it is so little comprehended—perhaps one may say so incomprehensible. And there was no manner of doubt but that his fellow-lodger was as deaf as a stone. Comrie dreamed all night, not of Celia's beautiful eyes, but of her father's deaf ears; an odd dream for a young man who had eyes in his own head, but of the right sort for one who had his own father's debts to pay. And usually he did not waste time even in dreaming. He used to take concentrated essence of sleep, in a dose of five hours, before beginning a working day of five-and-twenty. I say it advisedly; for one of his working hours was fully equal to two of an ordinary Southron's.

The fact is the case had fascinated him, because it had puzzled him. He was unable to get at the core of it even by imagination, which is the genius of the physician. There have been deaf musicians, though not frequently. There was Beethoven, for example—only Comrie knew no more of Beethoven than Beethoven of Comrie. But this particular musician was so especially and exceptionally deaf, and all the while, when he looked or spoke, had such a look of hearing. There is a physiognomy of

deafness; and the great Maurel had a theory that different forms of deafness may be diagnosed by their special physiognomies. The acute might be told from the chronic forms by a glance; but acute could be distinguished from acute, and chronic from chronic.

And yet, all the while, though he did not know it, it is more than doubtful whether the young man would have taken quite so intense an interest in the elderly man, had it not been for the combination of a pair of very bright eyes with a dim and dying tallow-candle. If we knew everything about ourselves, we should be marvellously wise.

They were very poor, or else they would not have been his fellow-lodgers at Mrs. Snow's in Saragossa-row. And no wonder, thought Comrie, that a musician, as deaf as a stone, should be out of an engagement, while the daughter was far too pretty to have a chance of earning her living honestly. He would make another professional call, and that shortly. Meanwhile, he breakfasted, as always, on a huge basin of porridge, went to his morning's work, and forgot everything, as a matter of course, except what he had to do.

But he put on and took off his thoughts as easily and regularly as his clothes; and, for recreation and rest, he took out John March's case from the mental pigeon-hole where it had been carefully stowed away for reference at odd minutes. When dinner-time came he first took a brisk walk to get an appetite, and then managed to find himself in the neighbourhood of Walter Gordon's studio. That was rather a habit of Walter Gordon's friends—towards dinner-time. There is no particular need to suspect Comrie of sponging. A glass of sherry, a biscuit, and a cigar are not much to sponge for; and they saved Comrie from the expense of many a fuller meal when pence were low and fasting imperative by the rule of Saint Lazarus—a stricter rule than ever Franciscans or Carmelites obey. And if Walter Gordon every now and then, guessing the state of affairs, asked him to go out and feed somewhere with him, he would have been worse than a sponge to refuse—he would have been a fool.

Walter Gordon was standing before his easel when Comrie entered. He did a great deal of work in the way of standing before his easel.

"Well, old fellow," said Walter, "what's

the news—in the medical world? I half wish I had stuck in it, sometimes," he went on, with a dissatisfied look at his canvas. "It's something real, any way—there's a great deal of reality about an amputation; and there is humbug about art, as I've heard Clari say, of all women. The fact is, Comrie, I don't know what to do, except have a weed. Will you? And there's the sherry. No; I don't know what I'm fit for. I've been lawyer, doctor, philosopher, musician, painter; and the end of it all is that Nature beats me in making such a thing as a woman's nose."

"Nature's a clever woman," said Comrie, sententiously.

"I hate clever women," said Walter.

"She's just too clever by half," said Comrie, with dogmatic decision. "I think ye'll agree with me, that if a man contracted to make good noses, and he turned them out in the shapes of nature, ye wouldn't employ him again. And I tell ye that a decent surgeon, that knows his trade, would turn ye out a better piece of humanity than Nature does, though she's been at the trade, they say, five thousand years and hasn't a rival. Think o' the way she brings us into the world, and then how she sends us out again! There's no man would be able to do it all; but no man that could do it at all but would do it just twice as weel."

"You're right," said Walter. "Nature made tobacco, but she never made a cigar."

"And think o' the human ear," said Comrie, the fulness of heart coming into his tongue. "It's the most exquisite organ; it's all beauty, from the lobe to the brain. A good clockmaker will make a chronometer that'll last a man's lifetime. But Nature just acts——"

"As if her own was of the longest?"

"Just as if she'd meant to show she's a cheat and a jade. She'll make a man a painter just for the fun of sending him blind; and a musician, just to get all the joke out of deafness she can."

"Yes; a deaf musician does seem arch-mockery," said Walter; "as bad as a horse without legs, or a swallow without wings. Like what the old German epigram says of a heart without love:

A lordless land, a sunless day,
A wineless cup, a rhymeless lay,
An eyeless face, a birdless grove—
A heart until it aches with love.

Comrie had as little sympathy with sentiment as with humour. And hitherto, indeed, any man who came to Walter

Gordon for sentiment would have gone away empty-handed.

"I've just met with a most interesting case of it," said the doctor.

"What? Your own, I suppose?"

"Mine?"

"I wasn't quite sure. Nobody ever heard of your being in love; but then you said, 'interesting,'"

"Pooh! Love and all that! What's that to do with a deaf musician?"

"I don't see why not. Musicians aren't love-proof; and love isn't bound to go in at the ears. See Ovid, see Burton, see everybody with eyes, passim. But, of course, I knew there was a 'case' in the case with you. Who is she? As the Sultan used to say."

"The girl?" asked Comrie, literally.

"Oho! There is a she, then!"

"Pooh!" exclaimed Comrie again. "The girl can hear as well as you or I; it's her father that's stone-deaf, and I'll cure him, or my name's not Comrie, or else I'll fail."

"A deaf musician with a daughter!" exclaimed Walter, turning round suddenly. "Do you mean it? Who are they? What is their name? Why—you've not been to Deepweald?"

Comrie was not as yet so far advanced in his profession as to have the habit of diagnosing expressions and tones, or he would surely have seen that there was something in the wind. Walter had too cosmopolitan a training to be the model young Englishman who can see a man who has just seen his sweetheart as calmly as if he were just told that it was a fine day, or that dinner was ready, or that he was sentenced to be hanged in half an hour.

"No," said Comrie, "I've never been in Deepweald, nor anywhere south of the Border but London—except in trains," he added for the sake of the accuracy that was part of his professional stock in hand. "The case," he said, with the faintest deepening of his complexion, "is in Saragossa-row." It was brave of him to live there; but he was not proud of it, and therefore was all the braver. The true Bohemian is never vain of Bohemia—though, when he grows old, he may affect to be, like the fox in Æsop, who lost his tail.

"In Saragossa-row?" asked Walter. "Then it's clear they're not the people that I mean. Come and feed. I've been working all day, and I'm hungry."

His work had been to Comrie's like a

sparrow's to an eagle's—in the same comparison, his hunger was a sparrow's to a raven's. The honest sponge was in luck to-day.

"I suppose it is hard work, trying to make paints look like nature," he said, without the least intention of sarcasm. "Let's see what you've been doing. It wouldn't be a bad thing if all you painters would get a surgeon to revise the anatomy, and not make your pictures so that a medical man feels like to faint when he goes to the exhibition. Now there—that neck is— Why, it's the girl!"

"What girl?"

Comrie looked doubly grave. "The girl in Saragossa-row. I didn't know she was an artist's model. So that's how they live then. Ah well. We must e'en all of us live just somehow, till there gets to be more gold in the rain."

"That girl is no model," said Walter.

It was true that what he called work was trying to paint a portrait of Celia from memory, with just a little more success than his now historic failure to put Clari on canvas; and he knew well enough that it must be Celia herself, and no other deaf musician's daughter, who lived, or starved, in Saragossa-row. For though he had never been in the place, Comrie not being hospitable, he knew very well what living there must mean. John March had been dismissed then? They had no means? What were they doing here, and what would become of Celia with none to help or counsel her, and all alone in the world of London—a far more perilous one than Lindenheim?

His first impulse was to forget that he had asked Comrie to feed with him, to take a cab, and drive straight to Saragossa-row. But he paused. He did forget his invitation to Comrie, and even that Comrie was in the room; but he could not forget his reception in Deepweald by John March, and there is such a thing as intrusion upon poverty, which presents a peculiar difficulty to quick imaginations. Comrie would have taken a visit from anyone of his friends as an insult, against which his whole thistle world would have erected all its prickles; and, excepting a motiveless call upon Comrie, he was without the smallest plausible excuse for going to see Celia. A prince may afford to pardon a trespass upon his palace, or a beggar upon his hut; but Saragossa-row was just the sort of place where uninvited intrusion is beyond the pale of pardon. Of course he would

be able to get at her some-when; but this sudden discovery of her, and another discovery that he had made some weeks ago, made the some-when look like an age.

Suddenly he thought. He dived into his dressing-room, leaving Comrie, who had given appetite leave to indulge itself before a fair prospect of dinner, smoking hungrily. He knew Walter to be of the high caste of Bohemian Brahmins, but nevertheless thought he took an unconscionably long time to wash his hands. However, there was no help for it; hunger, when it sees its own end, is by no means an unpleasant sensation. But at last, when the minutes had grown to some five-and-forty, his host reappeared—in full evening costume.

"Are ye going to the opera again?" asked Comrie.

"No, I don't think I am obliged to hear Comus more than twice a week, as my poor dead uncle's deputy. No; I'd forgotten; I'm going to Lady Quorne's. She has evenings, you know—but I want to see her before the people come. I'm off at once, but you can stay here and smoke as long as you like; I shouldn't wonder if Green looks in, or somebody. They generally do."

"Are ye going to dine there?"

"No. Good-bye, old fellow. I want to hear about that case of yours. Let me see; I never can remember numbers. What's yours? In the Row, I mean." It was etiquette among Comrie's friends to drop "Saragossa," leaving strangers to supply, in their imagination, "Bolton," or "Savile," or some equally orthodox name.

Comrie's heart—yes, his heart—sank within him. It was not that he saw the prospect of dinner floating away on the stream that might have been, but neither he, nor anyone else, had ever known Walter Gordon to be guilty of such a sort of forgetfulness. He did not even seem to remember that he also had called himself hungry. It was certainly hard.

There is no doubt about it—Love and Selfishness are but two words for the same thing.

But it is not I who am answerable for such pestilent heresy. It is only Comrie, who was not in love, but merely hungry, and who yet felt that nothing but love could be the spoiling of a good fellow, and make him forget dinner-time. But there was no help for it—Walter and his dress clothes were off and away. So, like a Scotsman and a philosopher the hungry

man, with one angry sigh towards the unfinished picture of Celia, poured out more sherry, discovered the biscuit-tin, munched serenely, and meditated on all the ills that ears are heir to.

"So the lass is a model," was his only interruption. "And the lad's so gone on her that he forgets his dinner. I don't see much guid in being born with a silver spoon in one's mouth if one doesn't use it to sup brose with. I'd sooner have the brose without the spoon.

Nothing of all this accounted for the mystery of the mantilla. But it accounted easily enough for the arrival of an envelope with a coronet upon it in the very unaristocratic neighbourhood of the Row. Comrie's compatriot, who speculated on the consequences of our being endowed with the power to see ourselves as others see us, only took a half view of the needs of knowledge. Could some other power give us the gift to see others as we see ourselves, Celia would not have become set down as an artists' model, nor her father as a receiver of goods that were not the lawful property of the depositor.

It had not occurred to Walter Gordon that to accept an invitation to Park-lane implied means of making an appearance there such as were not to be looked for in the Row, or even in all the old-clothes' shops in the vicinity. Like most men of his age who do not chance to be married, he had an idea that young women are like the lilies of the field, and, without having to toil or spin, put forth silks and laces as naturally as the flowers put forth leaves and petals. Dimly and theoretically he knew that such things have to be bought with money; but he realised it as much as the need of a butterfly to buy its many-coloured wings at Titania's court-milliners. So nothing interfered with his belief in his own cleverness in having brought himself en rapport with Celia without the more than doubtful proceeding of a call in the Row. Nothing was more natural than that Lady Quorne should patronise the local talent of Deepweald and a protégée of her kinsfolk, the Gavestons; and, indeed, Lady Quorne was quite ready to take a satisfactory view of her duties in that behalf.

Walter Gordon did not work much for the next few days, but went about as young men do who are in the first stage of love for the first time in their lives, when nothing definite has happened to tighten the cords of the elastic golden film which afterwards is apt to become so thick and cloudy. That state of the heart, when love is more than liking and less than passion, and yet is sweeter than mere friendship, is the golden age; and men would strive to lengthen it rather than to shorten it if they were wise. Walter had no chance of hurrying emotion; so he spent the next few days in a pleasant lounge through a dream, idealising the Cinderella of Saragoessa-row into an enchanted princess, and never thinking for a moment that her dreams were of candles that would burn without growing shorter. One is tempted sometimes to take the burden of heresy from Comrie's shoulders, and to transfer it to one's own.

At last the evening arrived for him to keep his one-sided rendezvous in Park-lane; and he was ready for it as early as Bessie Gaveston had been for her first ball. Somehow the hands of his watch obstinately refused to move—the second-hand seemed to mark minutes, and the minute-hand hours. One is not always unhappy when time creeps and cab-horses crawl.

But at last he was fairly in the great drawing-room of Quorne House, where a few guests were already assembled. The first person whom he recognised was one whom he had seen under very different circumstances indeed—by the dim, tobacco-clouded light of an alehouse parlour, shivering and wet with wind and rain. Now he was comfortable, portly, and sleek, with hands well ringed and gloved, and a bald head that shone. In a word, Prosper.

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PRICE TWOPEN

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIV. THE MARQUIS GOES INTO BROTHERTON.

THE poor dear old marchioness must have had some feeling that she was regarded as a spy. She had promised to tell everything to her eldest son, and though she had really nothing to tell, though the marquis did in truth know all that there was as yet to know, still there grew up at Cross Hall a sort of severance between the unhappy old lady and her children. This showed itself in no diminution of affectionate attention; in no intentional change of manner; but there was a reticence about the marquis and Popenjoy which even she perceived, and there crept into her mind a feeling that Mrs. Toff was on her guard against her—so that on two occasions she almost snubbed Mrs. Toff. "I never see'd him, my lady; what more can I say?" said Mrs. Toff. "Toff, I don't believe you wanted to see your master's son and heir!" said the marchioness. Then Mrs. Toff pursed up her lips, and compressed her nose, and half-closed her eyes; and the marchioness was sure that Mrs. Toff did not believe in Popenjoy.

No one but Lord George had seen Popenjoy. To no eyes but his had the august baby been displayed. Of course many questions had been asked, especially by the old lady, but the answers to them had not been satisfactory. "Dark, is he?" asked the marchioness. Lord George replied that the child was very swarthy. "Dear me! That isn't like the Germaines. The Germaines were never light, but they're

not swarthy. Did he talk at all?" "A word." "Did he play about?" "No, was out of the nurse's arms." "Dear Was he like Brotherton?" "I don't t. I am a judge of likenesses." "He healthy child?" "I can't say. seemed to be a good deal done up finery." Then the marchioness decl that her younger son showed an unnat indifference to the heir of the family. was manifest that she intended to ac the new Popenjoy, and to ally herself no party base enough to entertain suspicion.

These examinations respecting the l went on for the first three days of week. It was Lord George's intentio return to town on the Saturday, an seemed to them all to be necessary something should be arranged before t Lady Sarah thought that direct applic should be made to her brother for p of his marriage, and for a copy of register of the birth of his child. quite admitted that he would resent application with the bitterest enr But that, she thought, must be end She argued that nothing could be more friendly to the child than this. all were right, the enquiry which circ stances certainly demanded would be r while he could not feel it. If no proof were adduced now, there w certainly be trouble, misery, and per ruin, in coming years. If the neces evidence were forthcoming, then no would wish to interfere further. T might be ill blood on their brother's but there would be none on th Neither Lord George nor their you sister gainsaid this altogether. Ne of them denied the necessity of enq

But they desired to temporise; and then, how was the enquiry to be made? Who was to bell the cat? And how should they go on when the marquis refused to take any heed of them—as, of course, he would do? Lady Sarah saw at once that they must employ a lawyer; but what lawyer? Old Mr. Stokes, the family attorney, was the only lawyer they knew. But Mr. Stokes was Lord Brotherton's lawyer, and would hardly consent to be employed against his own client. Lady Sarah suggested that Mr. Stokes might be induced to explain to the marquis that these enquiries should be made for his, the marquis's, own benefit. But Lord George felt that this was impossible. It was evident that Lord George would be afraid to ask Mr. Stokes to undertake the work.

At last it came to be understood among them, that they must have some friend to act with them. There could be no doubt who that friend should be. "As to interfering," said Lady Sarah, speaking of the dean, "he will interfere, whether we ask him to or not. His daughter is as much affected as anybody; and if I understand him, he is not the man to see any interest of his own injured by want of care." Lord George shook his head, but yielded. He greatly disliked the idea of putting himself into the dean's hands; of becoming a creature of the dean's. He felt the dean to be stronger than himself, endowed with higher spirit and more confident hopes. But he also felt that the dean was—the son of a stable-keeper. Though he had professed to his brother that he could own the fact without shame, still he was ashamed. It was not the dean's parentage that troubled him so much as a consciousness of some defect, perhaps only of the absence of some quality, which had been caused by that parentage. The man looked like a gentleman, but still there was a smell of the stable. Feeling this rather than knowing it, Lord George resisted for a while the idea of joining forces with the dean; but when it was suggested to him, as an alternative, that he himself must go to Mr. Stokes and explain his suspicions in the lawyer's room, then he agreed that, as a first step, he would consult the dean. The dean, no doubt, would have his own lawyer, who would not care a fig for the marquis.

It was thought by them at Cross Hall that the dean would come over to them, knowing that his son-in-law was in the country; but the dean did not come,

probably waiting for the same compliment from Lord George. On the Friday Lord George rode into Brotherton early, and was at the deanery by eleven o'clock. "I thought I should see you," said the dean, in his pleasantest manner. "Of course, I heard from Mary that you were down here. Well; what do you think of it all?"

"It is not pleasant."

"If you mean your brother, I am bound to say, that he is very unpleasant. Of course you have seen him?"

"Yes, I have seen him."

"And her ladyship?"

"No. He said that as I do not speak Italian it would be no good."

"And he seemed to think," said the dean, "that as I do speak Italian it would be dangerous. Nobody has seen her then?"

"Nobody."

"That promises well! And the little lord?"

"He was brought down to me."

"That was gracious! Well; what of him. Did he look like a Popenjoy?"

"He is a nasty little black thing."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"And looks——. Well, I don't want to abuse the poor child, and God knows, if he is what he pretends to be, I would do anything to serve him."

"That's just it, George," said the dean, seriously—very seriously, and with his kindest manner, being quite disposed to make himself agreeable to Lord George, if Lord George would be agreeable to him. "That's just it. If we were certified as to that, what would we not do for the child in spite of the father's brutality? There is no dishonesty on our side, George. You know of me, and I know of you, that if every tittle of the evidence of that child's birth were in the keeping of either of us, so that it could be destroyed on the moment, it should be made as public as the winds of heaven to-morrow, so that it was true evidence. If he be what he pretends to be, who would interfere with him? But if he be not?"

"Any suspicion of that kind is unworthy of us; except on very strong ground."

"True. But if there be very strong ground, it is equally true that such suspicion is our duty. Look at the case. When was it that he told you that he was going to be married? About six months since, as far as my memory goes."

"He said, 'I am to be married.'"

"That is speaking in the future tense; and now he claims to have been married

two or three years ago. Has he ever attempted to explain this?"

"He has not said a word about it. He is quite unwilling to talk about himself."

"I daresay. But a man in such circumstances must be made to talk about himself. You and I are so placed that, if we did not make him talk about himself, we ought to be made to make him do so. He may be deceitful if he pleases. He may tell you and me fibs without end. And he may give us much trouble by doing so. Such trouble is the evil consequence of having liars in the world." Lord George winced at the rough word as applied by inference to his own brother. "But liars themselves are always troubled by their own lies. If he chooses to tell you that on a certain day he is about to be married, and afterwards springs a two-year-old child upon you as legitimate, you are bound to think that there is some deceit. You cannot keep yourself from knowing that there is falsehood; and if falsehood, then probably fraud. Is it likely that a man with such privileges, and such property insured to a legitimate son, would allow the birth of such a child to be slurred over without due notice of it? You say that suspicion on our part without strong ground would be unworthy of us. I agree with you. But I ask you whether the grounds are not so strong as to force us to suspect. Come," he continued, as Lord George did not answer at once; "let us be open to each other, knowing as each does that the other means to do what is right. Do not you suspect?"

"I do," said Lord George.

"And so do I. And I mean to learn the truth."

"But how?"

"That is for us to consider; but of one thing I am quite sure. I am quite certain that we must not allow ourselves to be afraid of your brother. To speak the truth, as it must be spoken, he is a bully, George."

"I would rather you would not abuse him, sir."

"Speak ill of him I must. His character is bad, and I have to speak of it. He is a bully. He set himself to work to put me down when I did myself the honour to call on him, because he felt that my connexion with you would probably make me an enemy to him. I intend that he cannot put me down. He is undoubtedly Lord Brotherton. He is the owner of a wide property. He has many privileges

and much power, with which I cannot interfere. But there is a limit to them. If he have a legitimate son, those privileges will be that son's property, but he has to show to the world that that son is legitimate. When a man marries before all the world, in his own house, and a child is born to him as I may say openly, the proofs are there of themselves. No bringing up of evidence is necessary. The thing is simple, and there is no suspicion and no enquiry. But he has done the reverse of this, and now flatters himself that he can cow those who are concerned by a domineering manner. He must be made to feel that this will not prevail."

"Sarah thinks that he should be invited to produce the necessary certificates." Lord George, when he dropped his sister's title in speaking of her to the dean, must have determined that very familiar intercourse with the dean was a necessity.

"Lady Sarah is always right. That should be the first step. But will you invite him to do so? How shall the matter be broken to him?"

"She thinks a lawyer should do it."

"It must be done either by you or by a lawyer." Lord George looked very blank. "Of course, if the matter were left in my hands—if I had to do it—I should not do it personally. The question is, whether you might not in the first instance write to him?"

"He would not notice it."

"Very likely not. Then we must employ a lawyer."

The matter was altogether so distasteful to Lord George, that more than once during the interview he almost made up his mind that he would withdraw altogether from the work, and at any rate appear to take it for granted that the child was a real heir, an undoubted Popenjoy. But then, as often, the dean showed him that he could not so withdraw himself. "You will be driven," said the dean, "to express your belief, whatever it may be; and if you think that there has been foul play, you cannot deny that you think so." It was at last decided that Lord George should write a letter to his brother, giving all the grounds, not of his own suspicion, but which the world at large would have for suspecting; and earnestly imploring that proper evidence as to his brother's marriage and as to the child's birth, might be produced. Then, if this letter should not be attended to, a lawyer should be employed. The dean

named his own lawyer, Mr. Battle, of Lincoln's-inn-fields. Lord George having once yielded, found it convenient to yield throughout. Towards the end of the interview the dean suggested that he would "throw a few words together," or, in other language, write the letter which his son-in-law would have to sign. This suggestion was also accepted by Lord George.

The two men were together for a couple of hours, and then, after lunch, went out together into the town. Each felt that he was now more closely bound to the other than ever. The dean was thoroughly pleased that it should be so. He intended his son-in-law to be the marquis, and being sanguine as well as pugnacious, looked forward to seeing that time himself. Such a man as the marquis would probably die early, whereas he himself was full of health. There was nothing he would not do to make Lord George's life pleasant, if only Lord George would be pleasant to him, and submissive. But Lord George himself was laden with many regrets. He had formed a conspiracy against the head of his own family, and his brother conspirator was the son of a stable-keeper. It might be also that he was conspiring against his own legitimate nephew; and if so, the conspiracy would of course fail, and he would be stigmatised for ever among the Germaines as the most sordid and vile of the name.

The dean's house was in the Close, joined on to the cathedral, a covered stone pathway running between the two. The nearest way from the deanery to the High-street was through the cathedral, the transept of which could be entered by crossing the passage. The dean and his son-in-law on this occasion went through the building to the west entrance, and there stood for a few minutes in the street, while the dean spoke to men who were engaged on certain repairs of the fabric. In doing this they all went out into the middle of the wide street in order that they might look up at the work which was being done. While they were there, suddenly an open carriage, with a postillion, came upon them unawares, and they had to retreat out of the way. As they did so they perceived that Lord Brotherton was in the carriage, enveloped in furs, and that a lady, more closely enveloped even than himself, was by his side. It was evident to them that he had recognised them. Indeed he had been in the act of raising his hand to greet his

brother when he saw the dean. They had both bowed to him, while the dean, who had the readier mind, raised his hat to the lady. But the marquis steadily ignored them. "That's your sister-in-law," said the dean. "Perhaps so."

"There is no other lady here with whom he could be driving. I am pretty sure that it is the first time that either of them has been in Brotherton."

"I wonder whether he saw us."

"Of course he saw us. He cut me from fixed purpose, and you because I was with you. I shall not disturb him by any further recognition." Then they went on about their business, and in the afternoon, when the dean had thrown his few words together, Lord George rode back to Cross Hall. "Let the letter be sent at once, but date it from London." These were the last words the dean said to him.

It was the marquis and his wife. All Brotherton heard the news. She had absolutely called at a certain shop, and the marquis had condescended to be her interpreter. All Brotherton was now sure that there was a new marchioness, a fact as to which a great part of Brotherton had hitherto entertained doubts. And it seemed that this act of condescension in stopping at a Brotherton shop was so much appreciated, that all the former faults of the marquis were to be condoned on that account. If only Popenjoy could be taken to a Brotherton pastrycook, and be got to eat a Brotherton bun, the marquis would become the most popular man in the neighbourhood, and the undoubted progenitor of a long line of marquises to come. A little kindness after continued cruelty will always win a dog's heart; some say, also a woman's. It certainly seemed to be the way to win Brotherton.

CHAPTER XXV. LADY SUSANNA IN LONDON.

IN spite of the caution which he had received from his friend and cousin Mrs. Houghton, Jack De Baron did go to Munster Court during the absence of Lord George, and there did encounter Lady Susanna. And Mrs. Houghton herself, though she had given such excellent advice, accompanied him. She was of course anxious to see Lady Susanna, who had always especially disliked her; and Jack himself was desirous of making the acquaintance of a lady who had been, he was assured, sent up to town on purpose to protect the young wife from his wiles. Both Mrs. Houghton and Jack had become

very intimate in Munster Court, and there was nothing strange in their dropping in together even before lunch. Jack was of course introduced to Lady Susanna. The two ladies grimaced at each other, each knowing the other's feeling towards herself. Mary having suspected that Lady Susanna had been sent for in reference to this special friend, determined on being specially gracious to Jack. She had already, since Lady Susanna's arrival, told that lady that she was able to manage her own little affairs. Lady Susanna had said an unfortunate word as to the unnecessary expense of four wax candles, when they two were sitting alone in the drawing-room. Lady George had said that it was pretty. Lady Susanna had expostulated gravely, and then Lady George had spoken out. "Dear Susanna, do let me manage my own little affairs." Of course the words had rankled, and of course the love which the ladies bore to each other had not been increased. Lady George was now quite resolved to show dear Susanna that she was not afraid of her duenna.

"We thought we'd venture to see if you'd give us lunch," said Mrs. Houghton.

"Delightful!" exclaimed Lady George. "There's nothing to eat; but you won't mind that."

"Not in the least," said Jack. "I always think the best lunch in the world is a bit of the servants' dinner. It's always the best meat, and the best cooked, and the hottest served."

There was plenty of lunch from whatsoever source it came, and the three young people were very merry. Perhaps they were a little noisy. Perhaps there was a little innocent slang in their conversation. Ladies do sometimes talk slang, and perhaps the slang was encouraged for the special edification of Lady Susanna. But slang was never talked at Manor Cross or Cross Hall, and was odious to Lady Susanna. When Lady George declared that some offending old lady ought to be "jumped upon," Lady Susanna winced visibly. When Jack told Lady George that "she was the woman to do it," Lady Susanna shivered almost audibly. "Is anything the matter?" asked Lady George, perhaps not quite innocently.

It seemed to Lady Susanna that these visitors were never going away, and yet this was the very man as to whom her brother had cautioned her! And what an odious man he was—in Lady Susanna's

estimation! A puppy—an absolute puppy! Good-looking, impudent, familiar, with a light visage, and continually smiling! All those little gifts, which made him so pleasant to Lady George, were stains and blemishes in the eyes of Lady Susanna. To her thinking, a man—at any rate a gentleman—should be tall, dark, grave, and given to silence rather than to much talk. This Jack chattered about everything, and hardly opened his mouth without speaking slang. About half-past three, when they had been chattering in the drawing-room for an hour, after having chattered over their lunch for a previous hour, Mrs. Houghton made a most alarming proposition. "Let us all go to Berkeley-square and play bagatelle."

"By all means," said Jack. "Lady George, you owe me two new hats already."

Playing bagatelle for new hats! Lady Susanna felt that if ever there could come a time in which interference would be necessary, that time had come now. She had resolved that she would be patient; that she should not come down as an offended deity upon Lady George, unless some sufficient crisis should justify such action. But now surely, if ever, she must interpose. Playing at bagatelle with Jack De Baron for new hats, and she with the prospect before her of being Marchioness of Brotherton! "It's only one," said Lady George, gaily, "and I daresay I'll win that back to-day. Will you come, Susanna?"

"Certainly not," said Lady Susanna, very grimly. They all looked at her, and Jack De Baron raised his eyebrows, and sat for a moment motionless. Lady Susanna knew that Jack De Baron was intending to ridicule her. Then she remembered that should this perverse young woman insist upon going to Mrs. Houghton's house with so objectionable a companion, her duty to her brother demanded that she also should go. "I mean," said Lady Susanna, "that I had rather not go."

"Why not?" asked Mary.

"I do not think that playing bagatelle for new hats is—is—the best employment in the world, either for a lady or for a gentleman." The words were hardly out of her mouth before she herself felt that they were overstrained, and more than even this occasion demanded.

"Then we will only play for gloves," said Mary. Mary was not a woman to bear

with impunity such an assault as had been made on her.

"Perhaps you will not mind giving it up till George comes back," said Lord George's sister.

"I shall mind very much. I will go up and get ready. You can do as you please." So Mary left the room, and Lady Susanna followed her.

"She means to have her own way," said Jack, when he was alone with his cousin.

"She is not at all what I took her to be," said Mrs. Houghton. "The fact is, one cannot know what a girl is as long as a girl is a girl. It is only when she's married that she begins to speak out." Jack hardly agreed with this, thinking that some girls he had known had learned to speak out before they were married.

They all went out together to walk across the parks to Berkeley-square, orders being left that the brougham should follow them later in the afternoon. Lady Susanna had at last resolved that she also would go. The very fact of her entering Mrs. Houghton's house was disagreeable to her; but she felt that duty called her. And, after all, when they got to Berkeley-square no bagatelle was played at all. But the bagatelle would almost have been better than what occurred. A small parcel was lying on the table, which was found to contain a pack of picture-cards made for the telling of fortunes, and which some acquaintance had sent to Mrs. Houghton. With these they began telling each other's fortune, and it seemed to Lady Susanna that they were all as free with lovers and sweethearts as though the two ladies had been housemaids, instead of being the wives of steady, well-born husbands. "That's a dark man, with evil designs, a wicked tongue, and no money," said Mrs. Houghton, as a combination of cards lay in Lady George's lap. "Jack, the lady with light hair is only flirting with you. She doesn't care for you one bit."

"I daresay not," said Jack.

"And yet she'll trouble you awfully. Lady Susanna, will you have your fortune told?"

"No," said Lady Susanna, very shortly.

This went on for an hour before the brougham came, during the latter half of which Lady Susanna sat without once opening her lips. If any play could have been childish, it was this play; but to her it was horrible. And they all sat so near together, and that man was allowed to put cards into her brother's wife's hand and

to take them out, just as though they had been brother and sister, or playfellows all their days. And then, as they were going down to the brougham, the odious man got Lady George aside and whispered to her for two minutes. Lady Susanna did not hear a word of their whispers, but knew that they were devilish. And so she would have thought if she had heard them. "You're going to catch it, Lady George," Jack had said. "There's somebody else will catch something if she makes herself disagreeable," Lady George had answered. "I wish I could be invisible and hear it," had been Jack's last words.

"My dear Mary," said Lady Susanna, as soon as they were seated, "you are very young."

"That's a fault that will mend of itself."

"Too quickly, as you will soon find; but in the meantime, as you are a married woman, should you not be careful to guard against the indiscretions of youth?"

"Well, yes; I suppose I ought," said Mary, after a moment of mock consideration. "But then if I were unmarried I ought to do just the same. It's a kind of thing that is a matter of course without talking about it." She had firmly made up her mind that she would submit in no degree to Lady Susanna, and take from her no scolding. Indeed, she had come to a firm resolve long since that she would be scolded by no one but her husband—and by him as little as possible. Now she was angry with him because he had sent this woman to watch her, and was determined that he should know that, though she would submit to him, she would not submit to his sister. The moment for asserting herself had now come.

"A young married woman," said the duenna, "owes it to her husband to be peculiarly careful. She has his happiness and his honour in her hands."

"And he has hers. It seems to me that all these things are matters of course."

"They should be, certainly," said Lady Susanna, hardly knowing how to go on with her work; a little afraid of her companion, but still very intent. "But it will sometimes happen that a young person does not quite know what is right and what is wrong."

"And sometimes it happens that old people don't know. There was Major Jones had his wife taken away from him the other day by the court, because he was

always beating her, and he was fifty. I read all about it in the papers. I think the old people are just as bad as the young."

Lady Susanna felt that her approaches were being cut off from her, and that she must rush at once against the citadel if she meant to take it. "Do you think that playing bagatelle is—nice?"

"Yes, I do; very nice."

"Do you think George would like your playing with Captain De Baron?"

"Why not with Captain De Baron?" said Mary, turning round upon her assailable with absolute ferocity.

"I don't think he would like it. And then that fortune-telling! If you will believe me, Mary, it was very improper."

"I will not believe anything of the kind. Improper! a joke about a lot of picture-cards!"

"It was all about love and lovers," said Lady Susanna, not quite knowing how to express herself, but still sure that she was right.

"Oh, what a mind you must have, Susanna, to pick wrong out of that! All about love and lovers! So are books and songs and plays at the theatre. I suppose you didn't understand that it was intended as a burlesque on fortune-telling?"

"And I am quite sure George wouldn't like the kind of slang you were talking with Captain De Baron at lunch."

"If George does not like anything he had better tell me so, and not depute you to do it for him. If he tells me to do anything, I shall do it. If you tell me, I shall pay no attention to it whatever. You are here as my guest, and not as my governess; and I think your interference very impertinent." This was strong language, so strong that Lady Susanna found it impossible to continue the conversation at that moment. Nothing, indeed, was said between them during the whole afternoon, or at dinner, or in the evening, till Lady Susanna had taken up her candlestick.

There had been that most clearly declared of all war which is shown by absolute silence. But Lady Susanna, as she was retiring to rest, thought it might be wise to make a little effort after peace. She did not at all mean to go back from what charges she had made. She had no idea of owning herself to be wrong. But perhaps she could throw a little oil upon the waters. "Of course," she said, "I should not have spoken as I have done but for my great love for George and my regard for you."

"As far as I am concerned, I think it a mistaken regard," said Mary. "Of course I shall tell George; but even to him I shall say that I will not endure any authority but his own."

"Will you hear me?"

"No, not on this subject. You have accused me of behaving improperly—with that man."

"I do think," began Lady Susanna, not knowing how to pick her words in this emergency, fearing to be too strong, and at the same time conscious that weakness would be folly—"I do think that anything like—like—like flirting is so very bad!"

"Susanna," said Lady George, with a start as she heard the odious words, "as far as I can help it, I will never speak to you again." There certainly had been no oil thrown upon the waters as yet.

The next day was passed almost in absolute silence. It was the Friday, and each of them knew that Lord George would be home on the morrow. The interval was so short that nothing could be gained by writing to him. Each had her own story to tell, and each must wait till he should be there to hear it. Mary, with a most distant civility, went through her work of hostess. Lady Susanna made one or two little efforts to subdue her; but, failing, soon gave up the endeavour. In the afternoon Aunt Ju called with her niece, but their conversation did not lessen the breach. Then Lady Susanna went out alone in the brougham; but that had been arranged beforehand. They ate their dinner in silence, in silence read their books, and met in silence at the breakfast-table. At three o'clock Lord George came home, and then Mary, running downstairs, took him with her into the dining-room. There was one embrace, and then she began. "George," she said, "you must never have Susanna here again."

"Why?" said he.

"She has insulted me. She has said things so nasty that I cannot repeat them, even to you. She has accused me to my face—of flirting. I won't bear it from her. If you said it, it would kill me; but of course you can say what you please. But she shall not scold me, and tell me that I am this and that, because I am not as solemn as she is, George. Do you believe that I have ever—flirted?" She was so impetuous that he had been quite unable to stop her. "Did you mean that she should behave to me like that?"

"This is very bad," he said.

"What is very bad? Is it not bad that she should say such things to me as that? Are you going to take her part against me?"

"Dearest Mary, you seem to be excited."

"Of course I am excited. Would you wish me to have such things as that said to me, and not to be excited? You are not going to take part against me?"

"I have not heard her yet."

"Will you believe her against me? Will she be able to make you believe that I have—flirted? If so, then it is all over."

"What is all over?"

"Oh George, why did you marry me, if you cannot trust me?"

"Who says that I do not trust you? I suppose the truth is you have been a little—flighty."

"Been what? I suppose you mean the same thing. I have talked and laughed, and been amused, if that means being flighty. She thinks it wicked to laugh, and calls it slang if every word doesn't come out of the grammar. You had better go and hear her, since you will say nothing more to me."

Lord George thought so too; but he stayed for a few moments in the dining-room, during which he stooped over his wife, who had thrown herself into an arm-chair, and kissed her. As he did so she merely shook her head, but made no response to his caress. Then he slowly strode away, and went upstairs.

What took place there need not be recorded at length. Lady Susanna did not try to be mischievous. She spoke much of Mary's youth, and expressed a strong opinion that Captain De Baron was not a fit companion for her. She was very urgent against the use of slang, and said almost harder things of Mrs. Houghton than she did of Jack. She never had meant to imply that Mary had allowed improper attentions from the gentleman, but that Mary, being young, had not known what attentions were proper and what improper. To Lady Susanna the whole matter was so serious that she altogether dropped the personal quarrel. "Of course, George," she said, "young people do not like to be told; but it has to be done. And I must say that Mary likes it as little as any person that I have ever known."

This multiplicity of troubles falling together on to the poor man's back almost crushed him. He had returned to town full of that terrible letter which he had

pledged himself to write; but the letter was already driven out of his head for the time. It was essentially necessary that he should compose this domestic trouble, and of course he returned to his wife. Equally of course after a little time she prevailed. He had to tell her that he was sure that she never flirted. He had to say that she did not talk slang. He had to protest that the fortune-telling cards were absolutely innocent. Then she condescended to say that she would for the present be civil to Susanna; but even while saying that she protested that she would never again have her sister-in-law as a guest in the house. "You don't know, George, even yet, all that she said to me, or in what sort of way she behaved."

OF FIDDLERS.

THE violinist is now an esteemed personage, but in his original condition, when he was known simply as a fiddler, he was the subject of much scornful consideration and severe usage. His instrument was thought to be of too vulgar a kind to be employed upon refined occasions—it was not proper for a concert, although it did well enough as an aid to dancing, or an incentive to mirth at fairs and festivals, wakes and weddings. The fiddler's presence, indeed, could scarcely be dispensed with at these celebrations, and the nobles and magnates of the time were wont to number the humble musicians among their retainers and domestic servants, bestowing small stipends upon them, with cloaks and badges displaying the cognisance or arms of the family. The fiddlers were much in the situation of the players, and, like them, probably had permission to stroll and tender their services in different places, with an understanding that their master or patron had the first claim upon their allegiance.

In an old play called *The Return from Parnassus*, or *The Scourge of Simony*, 1606, one of the characters thus addresses a company of fiddlers who seek payment for their performance: "Faith, fellow-fiddlers, here is no silver found in this place; no, not so much as the usual Christmas entertainment of musicians—a black jack of beer and a Christmas pye."

John Earle, Bishop of Worcester and afterwards of Salisbury, who published in 1628 his *Micro-cosmographie*—a curious collection of essays and sketches—has

humorously portrayed a poor fiddler of his period. The unfortunate performer is described as "one that rubs two sticks together, as the Indians strike fire, and rubs a poor living out of it." He is but little above a beggar; he is often hungry, and is apt sometimes to win a broken pate for his pains; "otherwise his life is so many fits of mirth, and 'tis some mirth to see him. A good feast shall draw him five miles by the nose, and you shall track him again by the scent. His other pilgrimages are fairs and good houses, where his devotion is great to the Christmas; and no man loves good times better. He is in league with the tapsters for the worshipful of the inn, whom he torments next morning with his art, and has their name more perfect than their men." Further, it is said of him that he prefers a new song to a new jacket, that he domineers at country weddings and Whitsun diversions, and that he hates naturally the Puritan as an enemy to his mirth. The description concludes quaintly: "The rest of him is drunk and in the stocks."

Our old English writers frequently allude to the performance of music in hostleries and taverns. The travellers of the sixteenth century who sought their ease in an inn, were usually offered the solace of sweet sounds among other sources of refreshment. Fynes Moryson, in his Itinerary, published in 1617, and containing his "ten years' travel through Germany, Bohmerland, Switzerland, Netherland, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland," furnishes a particular account of hotel life, manners, and customs at that time. It seems that musicians were attached to the more important inns, and might be classed among the servants and retainers of the house. Bishop Earle's statement as to the fiddler being in league with the tapster, is so far confirmed by Moryson. While the guest dines, "if he has company especially, he shall be offered music, which he may freely take or refuse; and if he be solitary, the musicians will give him the good-day with music in the morning." The price to be paid for this portion of his entertainment is not mentioned. It is included perhaps in the general reckoning, which the guest is to receive in writing at night or in the morning after breakfast, and which, "if it seems unreasonable, the host will satisfy him either for the due price or by abating part, especially if the servant deceive him

in any way, which one of experience will soon find."

The popularity of the fiddle, its presence at merrymakings, and the aid it furnished to the pleasure of the public, excited the indignation of the Puritans. In due time the fiddler shared the fate of the player, and was silenced and proscribed. An ordinance passed in 1658 contained the following clause: "And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any person or persons commonly called fiddlers or minstrels shall, at any time after the said first day of July, be taken playing, fiddling, and making music in any inn, ale-house, or tavern, or shall be taken proffering themselves, or desiring or entreating, any person or persons to hear them play or make music in any of the places aforesaid, that every such person and persons so taken shall be judged, and are hereby adjudged and declared to be rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall be proceeded against and punished as rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars within the said statute; any law, statute, or usage to the contrary hereof in any wise notwithstanding." Roundhead prejudices are confessed in the invectives of Hudibras against Crowdero and his profession, and reference is made to the ordinance against fiddling in the lines—

He and that engine of vile noise,
On which illegally he plays,
Shall dictum factum both be brought
To condign punishment as they ought, &c.

But no ordinance or Act of Parliament could abolish music or wholly suppress the fiddlers. They led proscribed lives, but still they lived. The theatres were closed against them; they might no longer occupy the music-room or the balcony above the stage, and provide harmonious accompaniments to the more important transactions of the drama. Nor could they now appear in the palaces or mansions of the great upon the occasion of balls, banquets, or other festivals. They had fallen upon sad, straitlaced, psalm-singing times. They could only play in a furtive, subdued way, in whispers, as it were. They hid their instruments under their ragged cloaks, and haunted the tavern doors, or peered in at the low windows of inns, not only because of the gratifying odours of mulled wine and cooked meats, or in envy of the warmth of the chimney corners, but in quest of a merry gentleman or two who might care for a tune by way of adding relish to their supper. "Will you have any

music, gentlemen?" humbly asked the poor fiddlers, sliding into the warm room and the hopeful presence of the merry gentlemen. They crept about in pairs, we are told, and were glad to accept the humblest dole in payment for their strains. But oftentimes these mendicant artists met with very insulting rebuffs from those who were disinclined to listen, or were without music in themselves, "nor moved by concord of sweet sounds."

Sometimes the habit of leading this wandering existence developed a taste for it; or the musicians could not or would not rise again to the position from which they had fallen, and continued therefore to be vagrants, long after the necessity for vagrancy had completely passed away. It is told of Thomas Eccles, a member of a family famed for their musical gifts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—(John Eccles set to music, among other works, Congreve's Ode to St. Cecilia and his masque *The Judgment of Paris*)—that he passed his whole life as a mendicant or street-musician. One who knew him and was, on the authority of Sir John Hawkins, "a good judge of music," relates: "It was about the month of November in the year 1735, that I with some friends were met to spend the even at a tavern in the City, when this man (Thomas Eccles), in a mean but decent garb, was introduced to us by the waiter. Immediately upon opening the door I heard the twang of one of his strings from under his coat, which was accompanied with the question: 'Gentlemen, will you please to hear any music?' Our curiosity and the modesty of the man's deportment inclined us to say Yes; and music he gave us, such as I had never heard before, nor shall again under the same circumstances. With as fine and delicate a hand as I ever heard, he played the whole fifth and ninth solo of Corelli, two songs of Mr. Handel, *Del minnaciari* in *Otho*, and *Spero si mio caro bene* in *Admetus*; in short, his performance was such as would command the attention of the nicest ear, and left us, his auditors, much at a loss to guess what it was that constrained him to seek his living in a way so disreputable. He made no secret of his name. He said he was the youngest of three brothers, and that Henry, the middle one, had been his master, and was then in the service of the king of France." Enquiry concerning Thomas Eccles led to the discovery that he was idle, dissolute,

and addicted to drinking. He lived in Butcher-row, near Temple-bar, and was well known to the musicians of his time, who thought themselves disgraced by his proceedings. It seems that this state of musical mendicancy was commonly known as "going a-busking." One of the *Leges Conviviales* drawn up by Ben Jonson, and inscribed in gold letters in the Apollo Room of the Devil Tavern, forbade the admission of such persons as fiddlers into the assembly.

With the restoration of Charles the Second, the players and the fiddlers were relieved of their disabilities, and allowed to enjoy their own again. The king's return, indeed, had a most important effect upon both music and the drama. Choral services were re-established in the churches, and a new kind of ecclesiastical music was introduced. The violin now began to take rank among musical instruments. It was summoned from the tavern to the concert-room. Viols of various sizes, specially tuned, were now joined with lutes, harps, cornets, and pipes, to complete a numerous orchestra. "A concert of viols" became a technical term in music. Charles the Second, in imitation of Louis the Fourteenth, established a band of violins. Tom Durfey's song of *Four-and-twenty fiddlers* all in a row, published in his *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, was written in ridicule of the famous band of the French king, which Lully conducted. Charles the Second's band was led by Thomas Baltzar, from Lubeck, accounted by Anthony Wood, himself a skilled performer, "the most famous artist for the violin that the world had yet produced." Upon Baltzar's death in 1663, John Banister, who had been taught by his father, one of the waits of the parish of St. Giles-in-the-fields, was appointed conductor of the king's band of violins. He incurred the loss of his office, however, and the royal displeasure, for asserting that the English violins were superior to the French. The fact that not half the musicians of France were at this time able to play at sight, was some warrant for Banister's statement. But in addition to the leader of the violins, a master or director of the king's music was also employed. After the Restoration, Matthew Lock filled this office.

Fiddlers were long contemptuously regarded, however, notwithstanding the promotion they had obtained from King Charles. Dryden, in his *Absalom* and

Achitophel, writing of the Duke of Buckingham—

A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome;
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long,
But in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon—

clearly did not employ the term fiddler in a complimentary sense. But the fiddlers were becoming of more and more importance. They figured prominently in theatrical orchestras, appearing on the stage, presumably, in those old-fashioned comedies which were wont to terminate with a general dance of all the characters. "Od zooks, here's a great deal of good company," says Wilful, at the last moment of *The Double Gallant*. "Ho! and it's a shame the fiddles should be idle all this while." "Oh, by no means," cries Careless. "Come, strike up, gentlemen!" And the stage direction is, "they dance." And so Sir Oliver Outwit exclaims at the end of *The Rival Fools*: "I'll let the world see thou hast a wise man to thy father. Give me the writing. There's my hand to it. And now strike up, music!" John Banister, a son of Charles the Second's violinist, was a member of William the Third's band, and played the first violin at Drury-lane Theatre, "as well when the opera was first performed there as ordinarily."

Little cordiality was wont to prevail, however, between the actors and the orchestra. Parke, the oboe player, in his *Musical Memoirs*, notes that the jealousy of actors in regard to the musicians had become "proverbial," and that the managers were only anxious that the orchestra should be of a certain number, and were indifferent as to the skill of the instrumentalists employed. The salaries of the musicians had been much reduced at this time; "a saving system" had indeed been in operation for some years; and performers of superior ability declined to remain in the orchestra. The tragedians were especially disposed to be scornful in regard to the fiddlers. Parke relates that, when the famous violinist, the elder Cramer, appeared at the Liverpool theatre in the course of a grand musical festival, and received peals of applause on account of his admirable performance of a concerto, Stephen Kemble, eminent rather for the size of his body than the scope of his mind, came from behind the scenes, opened the stage-door, and observed the musician with astonished eyes; then turning to those

about him, he said with a vacant stare: "What can all this mean?" It was inconceivable to the actor that a mere fiddler should be so applauded! So when, under John Kemble's management at Covent-garden, Weippert, the excellent harpist, was specially engaged to perform during the Ossianic ballet of Oscar and Malvina, and required for his services the moderate payment of one guinea per night: "What," cried Kemble, who was in receipt of a salary of seventy-five pounds a week, "a guinea a night! Does the man want an estate?" But to the actor the musician always seemed a subordinate creature, and Parke, at the expense of his own profession, curiously apologises for the tragedians: "It must be considered that, during the early part of their career, they were, perhaps, accustomed to see only one miserable drunken fiddler in the orchestra of the provincial theatres they were attached to, whose excesses induced an unconquerable aversion to the whole musical race." Macready declared: "I can make nothing of your musical fools!" As a manager, he had been much vexed by the failure of his efforts to combine the performance of opera with the representation of the legitimate drama. He announced, on his undertaking the management of Covent-garden in 1837, that, "as English opera had become an essential part of the amusements of a metropolitan audience, he had been anxious to procure the aid of native musical talent, and trusted he had succeeded in his engagements with composers, singers, and instrumental performers." But his own opinion of opera he has left on record in his journals. He writes in 1842: "Went to see *Norma*. Miss A. Kemble played *Norma*. It was a very, very clever performance, entitled to the highest praise for the skill and energy with which it is done; but oh heavens! an opera! That human beings can be found to disregard Shakespeare, and run after such nonsense! What must be the nature of a medium of expression that strips every comedy of its laughter, and every tragedy of its pathos?" However, he could admire Malibran and Schroeder Devrient, while he denounced "opera acting" as a system of "unnatural gesticulation, and redundant holding up arms, and beating of breasts." Paganini, too, he could admire, noting his surprising power over his instrument: "The tones he draws from it might be thought those of the sweetest flageolet and hautboy, and sometimes of the human voice; the ex-

pression he gives to a common air is quite charming. His playing of St. Patrick's Day was the sweetest piece of instrumental music I ever heard. But," he concludes, dismissing the violinist from his thoughts, "he is a quack!"

The tragedians have usually been indifferent to music. Garrick was wont to confess himself inferior to Barry; he could not sing a song, or tell an Irish story, as Barry could. Quin must have been something of a singer, however; for he was originally allotted the part of Captain Mac-heath in *The Beggars' Opera*, although he prudently relinquished it in favour of Tom Walker. John Kemble, impersonating Richard Cœur de Lion, contrived to sing a romance from behind his prison bars, to a loud accompaniment of French horns. "I did not think much of the vocal powers of the royal captive," noted Michael Kelly. Edmund Kean seems to have been a singer of some pretence. Hazlitt, while leaving it to be settled by "the connoisseurs and the ladies" whether Kean sang well or ill, describes his voice as clear, full, and sweet to a degree of tenderness; adding, "but we should have liked him better if he had displayed fewer of the graces and intricacies of the art." Elliston, who, however, shone more in comedy than in tragedy, played upon the violin with considerable skill. On a memorable occasion, his acquirement in this respect was of service to him, as well as to his royal patron, George the Third.

Weymouth was long the king's favourite resort for repose and fresh air. He was accustomed to stroll unattended about the streets and terraces of the little watering-place, and he liberally patronised its theatre—indeed the good-natured monarch patronised plays and players wherever he found them. In the course of one of his afternoon walks he had been overtaken by a shower of rain, when, the door of the theatre standing open, he entered, and, finding no one in attendance, he quietly made his way to the royal box and seated himself in his accustomed chair. The performances of the evening, it may be stated, were announced to be for the benefit of Mr. Elliston; and his majesty had promised to attend and support, by his presence, the efforts of the actor he greatly admired.

He was a trifle fatigued, perhaps, and the dim light of the empty theatre and the easy-chair induced drowsiness. In a few moments the king was fast asleep. Meantime Lord Townshend sought his royal

master in various directions, but in vain. He had dined at three o'clock, and quitted the palace shortly after dinner; he had not been seen since, and the queen and the princesses were somewhat uneasy about him, for it was now five o'clock. His lordship even made enquiry of Elliston, who was quietly proceeding to the theatre to make arrangements for the performances of the night; but Elliston could give no information, he had seen nothing of the king.

Arrived at the theatre, however, the actor was not long before he discovered the figure of a man asleep in the king's chair. He had, indeed, entered the box to assure himself that all was prepared for the occupation of his royal patron. For a moment he did not recognise the sleeper, and he was about to disturb his slumbers abruptly enough. Fortunately he discovered in time that he stood in the presence of the king. What was he to do? He dared not wake his majesty by touching him; he feared even to speak to him. It was clear, however, that something must be done; it was nearly time for lighting the lamps—and then the anxiety of the queen and the princesses had to be considered. Elliston hit upon this expedient. He took up a violin from the orchestra, and placing himself immediately under the royal box, he struck up *God save the King!* The king stirred, and presently springing up, exclaimed: "What! what! Oh yes. I see, Elliston. Ha! ha! rain came on—took a seat—took a nap. What's o'clock?"

"Nearly six, your majesty."

"Six! Six o'clock!" cried the king. "Send to her majesty—say I'm here. Stay, stay, this wig won't do, eh—eh? Don't keep the people waiting. Light up—light up. Let 'em in—let 'em in. Ha! ha! fast asleep. Play well to-night, Elliston—great favourite with the queen. Let 'em in—let 'em in."

At the close of the performance Elliston attended his royal visitors to their carriage, when the king, still occupied with his adventure of the afternoon, nodded and smiled as he whispered to the actor: "Fast asleep, eh, Elliston! Fast asleep!"

There are artists who have appeared with almost equal credit upon the stage and in the orchestra. One of these has been described, with much graphic force, his early experiences both as an actor and a fiddler. He was sadly in want of employment and of bread. Learning that the

Croydon Theatre was about to be opened for a short season, he applied to the manager for an engagement. He was asked, of course, what could he do? Walking gentleman. "Full." Utility. "Full." Harlequin and dancing. "Didn't do pantomime or ballet; besides, didn't care for male dancers, their legs didn't draw." Could a place be found for him in the orchestra? "Well," said the manager, with a suspicious look, "just now you were a walking gentleman." The applicant explained that he had received a musical education, and that necessity sometimes compelled him to turn it to account. "What's your instrument?" "Violin, tenor, violoncello, double bass, and double drums." A violin was brought, that the fiddler might give a taste of his quality. He began Tartini's Devil's Sonata, but after a few bars the manager stopped him, expressed satisfaction, and engaged him as leader at a salary of a guinea per week.

"I felt myself plucked out of the slough of despond. I had others to support. I had to board myself and to get out of debt. I resolved to walk to Croydon—ten miles—every day to rehearsal, and back to Shoreditch after the performance, on twopence per day—one pennyworth of oatmeal and one pennyworth of milk—and I did it for six weeks; Sundays excepted, when I indulged in the luxuries of shin of beef and ox-cheek." The visitors to the Croydon gallery were ill-mannered enough to pelt the orchestra with mutton pies. The fiddlers were at first very indignant; but upon reflection they thought it prudent, their hunger being considerable, to collect the fragments of rather heavy pastry and eat them under the stage. At the end of six weeks the leader was asked to give his specimen of his skill as a dancer, with a view to his engagement as harlequin at the Queen's Theatre, Tottenham-court-road, since called the Prince of Wales's Theatre. "I essayed the task, buoyed up with hope," continues our fiddler, "dashed on the stage, got through the double shuffle, the toe-and-heel, feeling very faint the while; but at last, despite every effort, I broke down from sheer exhaustion of strength, consequent upon a near approach to starvation, and I burst into an agony of tears." An engagement followed as walking gentleman and harlequin, and the fiddler made his appearance in London as Henry Morland in *The Heir-at-Law*—which, to avoid legal difficulties, was called *The Lord's Warming-*

Pan. From the Tottenham-street Theatre he went to the English Opera House, now known as The Lyceum; from there to Drury-lane, to The Haymarket, to Covent-garden, The Adelphi. His success was not immediate. "During that long period I did not, like Cæsar, thrice refuse the crown; but I thrice left the stage in despair of ever arriving at eminence—for to my thinking not to be something was to be nothing." When at last his opportunity arrived he "had, started and was doing well as a bookseller, being versed in old and rare literature." In 1825 he was summoned, upon the sudden illness of Harley, to undertake his part of Pompey in *Measure for Measure*. "I met with a very cold reception, but the audience warmed to me at the end of my first scene. At the termination of the great tale Pompey has to tell, three distinct rounds of applause greeted the poor unknown player; and the courage I had screwed up at this point sunk into my shoes, and I could scarcely carry them off. All the great actors came round me, I was led in a sort of triumph into the first green-room, which my salary did not entitle me to enter, and the press pronounced my performance the great hit of the evening. It is impossible for anyone to comprehend my excited feelings."

Thenceforward the poor fiddler prospered as an actor, and became known to fame as Benjamin Webster.

PANSIE.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note . . ."

"Chubby, if you say that out loud again, I'll—"

"Well, I suppose I must learn my lessons—stupid!"

I know that Chubby is putting on a detestable and impudent face, and shooting out his lips abnormally; I know that Nell, with eyes ablaze, is glaring at him across the table, as she looks up from the delights of Ivanhoe; and yet I will not raise my head from the paper whereon my pen is hurriedly tracing words that someone's eyes will gloat over to-morrow morning.

It is more than a week since I have been able to find a moment to write to Dick, and he will be hungry for a letter; at least, I think so, judging by my own sensations when three or four days go by without bringing me a big envelope,

directed in a clear hand, to "Miss Merivale, Morncliffe, near York." It is a good thing I am the eldest of the Merivale family, for my christian name might provoke the postman into a disrespectful smile.

"Pansie"—a quaint name truly, but mother and I know what it means, and we love it; at least she does; and I love it because it sounds so sweetly from her lips when she tells me that I am her "Heartsease." Well, as I was saying, things have seemed to come in a crowd of late, and mother has been suffering more than usual, so that I have left Dick without a letter for more than a week.

"Not a drum——"

Crash!

Ivanhoe has taken flight through mid-air, and Chubby is "hard hit."

There is a horrified gasp from Mand, who is seated by the window hemming a handkerchief, and pricking her little pudgy finger at every third stitch, and then she flings her work upon the ground, and lifting the corner of a not particularly clean pinafore, makes strenuous efforts to wipe poor Chubby's face, whereon combined tears and dirt are tracing sorry streaks of woe.

I look up at Nell, and see her standing before me a veritable figure of penitence; her head droops, her long black lashes lie upon her rose-flushed cheek. What a beautiful picture of shame and sorrow the little lassie makes!

But I am in no humour to appreciate the picturesque side of things just now. One of my rebellions fits is on me; I feel all one protest against the atmosphere of discomfort that pervades Morncliffe. I have none of a heroine's pleasure in trials and annoyances; I am simply weary of petty strife and miserable anxieties; and this noisy rioting among the youngsters seems to be the last straw that is doomed to break the back of that sorely-trying camel—my patience. Instead, therefore, of reproving the combatants, as in duty bound, I lean my head upon my hands, and splash goes a tear upon the paper before me, making a great blur upon Dick's letter!

"Pansie—Pansie—oh dear—I am so sorry!"

Thus Nell's voice, broken by sobs, pleads for pardon, the while two arms steal round my neck.

"I think it's me you ought to say that to," puts in Chubby, setting grammar at defiance, as he sits on the floor ruefully rubbing his injured crown.

"Well, and I am sorry—there!" says the offender, and then falls to hugging me again.

"Nelly ish solly," proclaims baby Maud triumphantly, smiling at poor Chubby, and standing a-tiptoe to investigate the nature of his injuries.

"I'm sure Nelly is sorry," I echo with an air of grave conviction, "and now she will help Chubby to finish learning his poetry."

Nell's bright eyes look somewhat pitiful as I stoop to pick up the prostrate Ivanhoe, and deposit him on the bookshelf above my head; but she accepts my suggested expiation of her wrong-doing, sits down bravely by Chubby's side, and the two little dark heads bend over the same book, and attack the difficulties of Sir John Moore's famous obsequies.

"I wish they hadn't never buried him at all," mutters Chubby, as these difficulties prove hard to surmount.

"You mean you wish nobody hadn't never written about it," rejoins Nell, with all the superior wisdom of twelve over eight and a quarter.

But I refrain from rebuking the superabundant negatives contained in these remarks. I am writing at railway speed: writing to tell Dick that at last the obstacles in the way of my leaving Morncliffe for four whole delightful weeks, seem to be overcome.

Aunt Emily, mamma's only sister, is coming to take charge of the house and children—I wonder how she and my dear undisciplined Chubby will hit it off!—and so, for the first time since I can remember, I am to go away upon a visit.

A long way too, down to the Cornish coast, where, in a grand old manor called Merlewood, dwells Mrs. Colquhoun, Dick's married sister. I have never seen any of Dick's relations yet, so this visit is rather a formidable affair to me; but for all that I look forward with great delight to the change. I suppose it is that when one is young, and in faultless health, the instinct that leads one to wish to enjoy life is strong. Looking back through the vista of my seventeen years, I cannot say that I have done much in that way hitherto. You see, what with the children, and mamma's bad health, and bills—and—well, and other things too, that papa and I know of—there isn't much time to think about enjoying oneself.

Our old nurse Janet, who has lived with us ever since I can remember—sometimes getting her wages at spasmodic intervals,

sometimes going wages-less altogether—says, that the worst piece of ill-luck that ever befel the Merivale family, was Cousin Stephen leaving Morncliffe and five hundred a year to papa.

Until that happened he used to work in a desultory kind of way, but still profitably, at his profession; afterwards, he just let his connection drop, and took to trying to live like an independent country gentleman; developed a taste for the turf, and—well, it is hard to tell the rest.

Mamma's health gave way under the ceaseless pressure of anxieties, and so it came about that I, Pansie Merivale, cannot remember ever feeling young. As soon as I had sense enough to think, it seemed as if mamma and I were all at once the same age, and weighed down by the same burdens. Then, as time went on, and she—dear patient martyr!—grew weaker, and suffered more and more bodily pain, I seemed to grow the elder of the two, and it began to feel a sort of sin to let things come to her knowledge, if I could possibly bear them on my own shoulders alone. Of course, some things she was obliged to know. When papa came home late, and brought noisy companions with him, I used to creep up to her room, and crouching down upon the floor by the side of her couch, lay my head against her shoulder, and hold her hand—how thin and worn a hand!—in mine. As now and then a louder burst of merriment came from below, she would press my hand close, and whisper to me that my love was precious to her, and that I was her dear, dear "Heartsease."

When the guests went away, and we heard papa coming up to his room, she would put me gently from her, and say: "Go now, darling," and kiss me with lips that trembled yet spoke no word of dread. And so I had to leave her: to what words of jeering cruelty, what sneers at her helpless pain, who could say? I used to steal softly and stealthily to my own room, and, kneeling by my bed, pray that the God of the fatherless and the widow would look down in pity upon those who were worse than fatherless, and upon that gentle, loving woman who was worse than widowed.

Strange experiences these for a girl! Well might all the buoyancy of youth die out under such cruel discipline. But when Dick came I seemed to grow young again all at once. It was as if I had been some swimmer fighting along a stream, bearing

up against the dead weight of a burden that threatened every moment to drag me down; and all at once, just when my heart began to fail me, lo! a blessed sense of help and comfort came upon me, and the weight of the burden that had seemed well-nigh too heavy to be borne, was suddenly lightened. God's hand had led me across the path of one who was fated to be my aid and comfort. A new courage, a new strength, was infused into my soul; nothing seemed too hard to bear, because there was Dick to share it with me. And now, as if all this light and gladness were not enough, Aunt Emily has come home from abroad, and so I am to go and see Dick's sister, and Dick is to be there too; and I am dazzled with so much happiness at once, like one that the sunlight blinds.

I have never allowed to myself before, how weary I have been sometimes; but now I do; and more than this, the excitement of this strange new life that is coming has upset my mental equilibrium, and I am irritable with the noisy young ones, and what baby Mand calls "coss."

Last night Janet was closeted a long while with mamma, and then went out on some mysterious errand. When she came back she was laden with parcels, and among their varied contents were yards and yards of black silk, enough to make me one of those trailing, rustling dresses that I have seen ladies wear at our grand old Minster, and that I have "coveted" with every fibre of my young heart, in spite of the decalogue plainly set forth upon the wall above my head. When Janet called me into mamma's room, and I saw the rustling silk laid across the couch by the window, saw the happy smile—how rare, how rare a thing to see!—upon her lips, saw the dear hands trembling with eagerness as they fingered the delicate ribbons and laces that were scattered all about—when I saw this sight, and knew that the great love of the mother-heart had thought of me so tenderly, I scarce could find words to utter, and in my troubled happiness it did not cross my mind how dearly the pretty things had been purchased. But later on, as we three—mamma, and Janet, and I—were holding solemn conclave on the matter of the form and fashion of my dresses, I missed the sparkle of a certain ring from mamma's finger.

Like a sudden revelation it came upon me then what she had done for me, and catching her hand in mine I kissed it once

and again, weeping for very joy to think of how well she loved me, and yet of all "the pity of it."

All this only happened last night, and I am hating myself for looking forward so eagerly to this coming visit. I am hating myself for my impatience with Nell's passion and Chubby's resentment. I have hardly patience to thread baby Maud's needle, for the fourteenth time; and my hand shakes so, as I write to tell Dick that it is "all right" about the going to Mrs. Colquhoun's, that he will certainly fancy me suffering from ague.

At length—at very great length—the Burial of Sir John Moore is disposed of, and I am thankful to see the children scampering about the ill-kept, neglected garden that surrounds Morncliffe on all sides, and of which I am so heartily ashamed. I have struggled to keep the flower-beds that are directly under the windows in something like order; but I can hardly wield a scythe, or remove the broken pedestal of an old sun-dial, that appears itself from amid a tangle of dock-leaves and nettles, and gives a dispiriting graveyard aspect to the whole. I don't think I ever realised how bad things at Morncliffe were, until Dick had to see them. Then I'm sure my cheeks must have got tired of blushing. True, Dick never seemed to see what an out-at-elbows household we were; perhaps it was for my sake he made believe to be blind—or was it that he saw only me, and had eyes for nothing else?

What a grand gift is the power of intuition in a man! Dick has it to perfection. It never seems necessary to explain matters to him; he understands just at once, not only how things are, but exactly how they affect one, and the look or word that can help most, is always ready. When you have struggled with things, and fought against giving in for year after year, and suddenly find a helping hand, you abandon yourself utterly to the exquisite happiness of having someone to cling to. It is the happiest experience to feel like this; but I wonder is there a lurking danger under its sweetness—a danger of falling into the sin of idolatry?

"Oh what a tired white face to greet a fellow with," said Dick one morning, as I went into the long low schoolroom, whose broad bay window commands a delightful view of the monumental column. "Have things been going very badly, little one?" he went on, stroking my head that lay against his breast.

"Yes, yes," I almost sobbed; "very very badly. But I don't mind—I don't care—as long as there is you." Then the thought of his exceeding preciousness came over my heart like a flood; I flung my arms about his neck, and held my head back, so that I could look into his dear true eyes. "Oh Dick, Dick!" I cried in the passionate gladness that his sympathy had called into being, "what should I do, my darling—if I lost you?"

Something in my words, or in my face, or in both combined, seemed to touch him strangely; and I saw, almost with fear, a mist gather in his eyes, as he turned away from me.

"He is afraid that I love him too much; that I am making an idol of him," I thought to myself in reviewing the matter afterwards.

But one day the time was to come—the bitter, cruel, weary time—when I was to know why Dick turned from me then.

The eve of my flight from Morncliffe has come at last. My modest luggage is corded, and stands in the back passage. Janet and I came to the conclusion that it was wiser to put it there than in the square front hall, for papa does not look with a favourable eye upon my departure, and the signs of that departure might call forth unpleasant comments.

Mamma is at once happy and tearful. The excitement of my preparations has made a hot pink spot burn on either of her sunken cheeks, and you realise in looking upon her, how beautiful she must have been when, an inexperienced girl of seventeen, she linked her fate with one who valued her for that beauty only, and had no mental eyes to discern the loveliness of her mind, or the tender faithfulness of her heart. In the selfishness of my own pleasant anticipations I have, so far, never thought of the pain it will be to her to part with me. I have never thought of how the children will miss me—nurse, governess, and mother, all in one—and feel being handed over to the care of a stranger. Aunt Emily has come. She and mamma have not met for years, and each is shocked with the change in the other; for auntie has had much sorrow, and is now a childless widow. She looks old and worn, but there is something that wins one's trust about her face, and a certain dignity in her carriage that I think frightens papa—a fact I am wicked enough to rejoice in. It comes upon me this last

evening that after all home is very dear to me. I go up, according to unvarying custom, to see the children when they are in bed. Nell holds me tight round the neck, but says nothing, as I bid her good-night; Chubby dives under the clothes when I have kissed him, and I dare not uncover his curly head because I feel that he is "weeping a little weep" in the friendly shelter of the counterpane. As I reach her crib-side baby Maud sits suddenly bolt upright, a little white-robed figure with a golden mane hanging about its shoulders, and her under-lip quivers piteously.

"We's be welly dood while you be's away, sissy; but we t'ant love auntie mush as 'oo." This is such an unexpected turn of matters to me that I am quite taken aback. I set down my candle hastily, catch up the little oracle in my arms, and volunteer that greatest of all favours—to sing her to sleep. She nestles down on my breast, and I wrap the thick skirt of my dress over the dear little pinky-white feet, and sing to her the songs she loves best. Gradually the long-lashed lids droop over the bonnie blue eyes, and baby Maud is asleep; so I loosen the hold of the tiny hand that has clung to the necktie at my throat, and lay her gently down, while a prayer arises in my heart that Heaven may watch over and keep my darling safe until I come again.

I have been vexed and irritated with the worry of them at times; I have been impatient when I ought to have been forbearing; I have rejoiced at the thought of getting away from an atmosphere of petty annoyances; but now, all at once, it comes over me that my disorderly, poverty-stricken home is very dear to me.

When the morning comes I go away; I hurry over saying Good-bye to mamma. It is our first parting—our very first since seventeen years ago I lay upon her breast, her first-born, the flower that God sent to be her Heartsease amid the troubles that even in those early days of her married life were closing round her! The children gather at the window to see me start; I catch a glimpse of a hand that waves farewell to me from the upstairs room, and, with a choking sensation in my throat, I lose sight of Morncliffe, as the cab that is my only chariot turns the corner of the road.

It is late in the dark autumn night when I reach my destination; yet the long day's journey has not seemed weary to me, for is there not Dick at the end of it?

Yes; he is there at the station to meet

me, and oh, joy and gladness, he is there alone! Mrs. Colquhoun's carriage waits outside, and very soon we are bowling along through the dusky night; but it is not dark to me, for Dick is by my side.

"I hope you will like my sister, Pansie," says he, as we turn into a long avenue densely dark with the shade of overhanging trees.

His arm is round me, and my hand nestles in his; so I am in a frame of mind to promise to like anybody and everybody. "She is much older than I am, and was a sort of mother to me when I was quite a little fellow. She is a woman of many sterling qualities, and great common sense; but if her manner is a little cold at first, you mustn't mind. It's Harriet's way to be reserved at first."

Thus says Dick as we traverse that fine real avenue, our carriage-lamps shining like enormous glowworms in the darkness.

Have I ever yet come across a person of "sterling qualities?" I wonder to myself as I slowly twirl round the ring upon Dick's little finger. But there is no time to wonder any more; the hall-door is open; Dick is handing me from the carriage; and there, at the top of the steps, stands a tall stately woman, while peeping over her shoulder is a little sandy-haired man, a head shorter than herself—Mrs. Colquhoun and her husband.

ONE MORE NATIVE GENTLEMAN.

THE gentleman, I take it, does not flourish in semi-civilised communities. We have discovered him amongst savages, and he is daily visible in Europe; but amongst people neither barbarous nor cultured he will be sought in vain. The late attempt to murder General Barrios has brought back to memory my travels in Central America, which were coincident with the chief's first deposition and romantic return. Whilst recalling my knowledge of him I kept my mind open for reminiscences of a "gentleman" hailing from those parts but none turned up. Some pleasant comrades and a few good fellows crossed my path in the republics; but none who properly fall under the definition. They had neither style nor simplicity, their courage was not chivalrous, whilst their generosity was affected. But the story

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vols. 1 and 19, pp. 280 and 136, "A Native Gentleman" and "Another Native Gentleman."

of Barrios has brought back to me the image of Don Hilario G., whose connection with it is shown in the pages following. Whatever strangers might think, Don Hilario was held by his countrymen, before they knew his crime, to be a model of graces, honour, and patriotism. Terms are comparative. My third instance of a native gentleman presents a type esteemed by the Latin races under a certain condition of progress, but no ideal for us of the north. I have used a licence which may be pardoned in making my host tell the tale of his own deed; the real fact is that we departed after dinner, quite unsuspecting the interest which was shortly to grow around him.

I was riding with a number of companions from Granada de Nicaragua towards Leon, bent partly on pleasure, and partly on government service. We were provided with a strong recommendation to Don Hilario, from the municipal council of Granada. It became necessary to apply to him for horses and a guide, so one afternoon we rode up to the hacienda. A large plantation of cacao surrounded it, then a field of tobacco, then a high wall of sundried bricks. The house itself was small but defensible, standing in the midst of a courtyard. A wooden verandah, cracked and gaping with dry heat, ran round two sides; from the middle thereof descended a flight of clattering steps, rough-hewn with the axe, and ignorant of paint. There had once been a tower above the great gate, and a covered way from it to the upper storey, in which doubtless the inhabitants hoped to make a stand if the wall were forced; but it had fallen outwards, and blocked the main entrance.

The court, never levelled or unfurfed, bore a ragged crop of hay, and a harvest of broken bottles, potsherds, bits of leather, hides stretched to dry, old barrels, every kind of rubbish except paper. In brick recesses below the covered way, heaps of maize-shucks revealed the peons' sleeping place. All along the house-wall stood cacao in heaps, set out to dry in rude baskets; round a pile of the fruit still crimson, two or three Indians lazily cracked the big nuts, and gossiped drowsily as they tore out the kernels. Where a few palm-trees leaned their glittering heads above the wall, a little group of panting mules crushed together, for the air swam with heat.

Don Hilario had gone to visit a neighbour, but he was expected shortly. No representative was there to ask us in, so

we stretched our rugs, and lay down in the verandah, smoking. The cicalas sang without intermission, a quavering whirl of sound which lulled one to sleep. From time to time a peon down below cried sharply: "Altro Indio!"—another Indian—and one of his comrades forthwith struck up some melody, nasal and monotonous, which overpowered the insect clamour. Very soon we all dozed off, for the journey had been long. Our nap was broken by the twang of a guitar; I raised myself, and beheld a tall, slender man seated on the steps, who could be only Don Hilario. He motioned me down, rather as one motions to a dog which seems about to jump, and then, finishing the prelude with a flourish, he began to sing. His voice was not bad, and it had been carefully trained, but the man's gestures would have spoiled any music. His face might have been pleasing enough, had he left it quiet. Features long and very dark; eyes black as ink, both pupil and iris slightly protruding, and shiny without brilliance; beard and hair long, thick, and perfectly straight, showed Indian blood. He rolled in his seat, threw up his eyes and his guitar, banged it and twanged it, half rose, dropped with a thump of despair, played in fact all the most fantastic of those tricks which musical rapture seems to provoke. Displeased with my reception, I lay and laughed without concealment, and my friends, all awake, did likewise.

The minstrel did not pay attention. When his song finished, with a sudden jerk, he gravely addressed the circumambient air. "To my mistress," he said, looking straight before him, "I dedicate this fragment of my soul!—Senors, at your service!" Thereupon, rising briskly, he shook hands all round, and offered his house, his servants, his wife and children—he had none—for our "disposition," hung his guitar upon the wall, kissed it fondly, and shouted for a chair. A ragged Indian girl brought it, and he sat down. "Cré grédin!" muttered old Barbachella, and threw himself flat upon his rug. So did we, but Don Hilario did not seem to notice that he alone had a seat. "We want horses and a guide," said Barbachella; "here is a letter for you." He held it forth, without rising, and the don took it gracefully. "Everything," he answered, "everything here is yours!"

"Then we should like dinner," said someone, and with extreme goodwill our host shouted for tortillas and chilés—oat-

cakes and pepper. It was too much. We rose in one bound, and our French comrade, white with passion, began an address of the extremest frankness.

"What!" interrupted Don Hilario, "these gentlemen are English? Why did I not know? I would have welcomed them with a song of their own country—The Last Rose of Summer, or Yankee Doodle, or what they will. Let me do so now, with ten million apologies. Five years I spent in England when a boy, but never, never could I learn the beautiful tongue of Shakespeare, of Dickens, of—of others. Dinner? It shall be presently, suddenly; and we will have punch. Meanwhile I shall sing to you." He did. Words were vain. He motioned us to our couches, snatched his guitar, and recommenced the antics of his earlier performance. We had his whole English repertoire in succession. The man possessed talent assuredly. Forgetting now and then both melody and words, he improvised the continuation without a break. We laughed long and loud, but he did not hear.

After half an hour's endurance Barbachella, who had small taste for music, rose to stop the songster. Don Hilario also rose, and trotted up and down, the Gaul pursuing. One twanged and sung, the other swore and snatched; and we laughed. Just as Barbachella brought the fun to a crisis by bodily seizing the infuriated musician, the ragged girl announced dinner, and thus prevented a quarrel. Instantly relaxing his austere brow, Don Hilario led the way into a ruinous chamber, where, upon naked boards, roast pork, chickens, and tortillas were displayed.

We sat upon boxes, and fell to; our host behaving with such ceremony as is proper at a banquet of princes. After the pork and the chickens appeared the punch—a flaming compound of aguardiente, or cane-spirit, limes, guava jelly, and orange-flowers. It was potent, but agreeable, and Don Hilario drank deep. Presently he bounded to seek his guitar, but I vowed that singing is destructive after punch, no better than suicide for the throat. At first the trusting don was inconsolable, but it was suggested to him that as things had gone so far, he had best carry them farther and take another bowl. So he did, and immediately afterwards he began telling us his affaires du cœur, which were numerous and varied. Then he became patriotic, and mourned with tears the decadence of his native land. "What a

difference you must observe," he said, "between Granada, or even our Leon, and your capitals! Ah, Paris; ah, London! But wait awhile, seniors. The despots are driven out, and the traitors are dead. Enough! What are they talking of at Granada?"

"They are talking," said Barbachella, "of the banishment of Barrios, and the assassination of Palacios in Realejo."

"They may talk, the white-hearted Aristos! Who shot Palacios, think they?"

"Nothing is known yet, but that the man came from San Salvador."

"He did not—he did not! I'll tell you the secret, my friends. Did he die instantly?"

"Palacios? No, the bullet broke his jaw, but he will recover."

"No, no, no! I saw his head fall on the table, and the blood pouring through his hair. The dog is dead—dead!"

"Tell us how you did it," said Barbachella, quietly.

Don Hilario had been drinking glass after glass of the compound. His eyes, bright as a bead of jet, had grown filmy; his hair had fallen in lank locks across them, wet with perspiration. He looked round at us, scarcely seeing, and spoke with a bitter enthusiasm.

"Barrios was my friend," he said. "To me he confided his aims and his devoted hopes. The Liberals of Guatemala knew that he meant to expose their shams and trickery, and they called him an Aristo. The Aristos hated him as bitterly. They would have killed him had they dared. Their ladrones caught him at night, and carried him to Istapa. Not an Indian but would have died for Barrios, but he was gagged, and no one saw him. So he was sent away. Three months since he tried to return, and in our waters, at Realejo of Nicaragua, this filibuster Palacios boards the vessel, with our police at his heels, takes out Barrios, and thrusts him into our prison. What would they say in Europe, if the Comte de Chambord, returning home, were seized in a German ship at Manchester by English policemen, ordered by a French officer, who imprisoned him in Manchester jail? That was what Palacios did, and our Government, corrupted by his gold, approves the act. What became the patriot's duty? I knew. Some of our politicians talked big, others wrote protests—I shot Palacios."

With unsteady hand he poured himself a mug of punch, and went on. We looked at one another in some bewilderment.

"He was living at Realejo, to keep his victim in sight. Palacios is rich, but he took a little house by the jail, and scarcely quitted it. Half-a-dozen bullies came from Guatemala, and he thought himself safe under their protection. It was a small Indian house, with fruit-trees about it, and the window which looked towards the jail had a grenadita bush overhanging. There Palacios sat all day watching, and there he sat at night writing lies, spinning webs like a spider. His Guatemalans were never off guard. One lay under this window, one under that at back; two lounged before the door, and two slept—always it was so, day or night.

"I tried to bribe the Guatemalans, but they almost killed my messenger. Night after night I hung around the hut in shadow of the jail, spying where I might get a shot; but the grenadita bush fell across the window. Through its branches I could see Palacios sitting under his lamp, but nowhere could I get a certain aim. Then I thought of waylaying him with an air-gun, but that would have been cowardly, seniors. It occurred to me also to fire the thatch, but there would have been much risk of failure, and besides, that sort of thing is brutal, like a Guatemalan. I wished to meet my enemy face to face, and shoot him, to fire through the window."

"Gran Dios!" we ejaculated breathlessly. Barbachella laughed; twenty years in Nicaragua had made him cynical.

"There was one Guatemalan," Don Hilario continued—and his eyes wandered, his speech came thicker—"who was more dog-like than the rest, an Indian pure-blood. He came one day to Doctor—what's-his-name, the American? I know him like my brother, but his name escapes me. And he complained of being bewitched. The doctor—what is he called?—he laughed, as he always does, and told the brute that the pretty girl at the wine-shop had bewitched him, intending a joke. Mad was the Indian, and he vowed by his gods to kill her. The doctor, alarmed, gave her warning, but she is a brave girl, and ridiculed the Guatemalan rowdy. I said to her: 'Frighten him. Say you will come at night and torment him, if he threatens you!' She told him that, and more. He vowed he would shoot her when she came, but Tita only laughed, and said bullets could do a witch no harm.

"Then I'll use steel!" said the brute."

"Ce bon peuple!" muttered Barbachella, bitterly.

"A night or two afterwards it was this

dog's turn to watch beneath the window—a misty, drizzly night; Palacios' lamp was shining through that cursed grenadita, and I heard the Guatemalan growling below it. I slipped out from the shadow of the jail, with a white cloth round me, and cried, "Peist!" like a girl. The creature came at that rag like a bull; I had but just time to fall back, roll it, throw it in the high grass, and dodge him, slipping away to the right. Luck was with me. For the jailer's wife had hung her linen out to dry, and forgotten it till that very moment. The Guatemalan saw her figure dimly, with the white clothes on her back which she was carrying in, and bounded at her growling. Before he could strike, I stood at the window, looking Palacios in the face, as he sat writing—only the glass betwixt my gun and him. I'll cut my hand off, if he's not dead!"

"Then cut it off, assassin!" cried one of our party; "for Palacios will recover!"

"What's that, athathin? Wath Brututh athathin? Where'th guitar? A com-pothed thong about Brututh—want thing it."

His head fell on the table as dead, to all seeming, as did his victim's. We saddled our horses and went away. Don Hilario was accused, some weeks after, of the famous attempt to murder Palacios; and in the charge against him were just these facts I have narrated. What with the enthusiasm born of music, the warmth instilled by patriotic communism, and the frankness brought out by punch, he made too many confidants. Don Hilario fled the country, and I know not what became of him. Don Enrique Palacios recovered, as all know who feel interest in Central American affairs; and Barrios, after some months' honourable captivity, was dismissed, to try his luck again. Be sure he avoided Realejo next time. The jailer's wife had little hurt, if I remember correctly.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER V. PROSPER.

PROSPER in all his glory was not what Walter Gordon had come to see. But he had lived nearer to the rose than anybody else present, for he had once in his life been within some-five-and-twenty miles of her—which is the exact distance from The Five Adzes to Deepweald.

"Good evening," said Walter, more on that account than on any other. "It is rather a better climate here than when we last had the pleasure of meeting. I hope you did not get very wet that night, at Laxton?"

Prosper surveyed him for a moment with a grand air.

"Ah, you were there? No, monsieur. I did not get wet—I got drowned. It was not rain—it was a deluge. Yes; it is better here."

"When are we to hear Clari again?"

Prosper shrugged his shoulders, and frowned.

"If you wish to hear of Clari, you will not come to me. I have not the honour to be in the confidence of mademoiselle. I have drowned for her; but I shall not wash my hand for her—no, never again—no; not one finger more. She is dead, monsieur."

"Dead!"

"As a sardine in oil. It is equal—she has quarrelled with me."

"That is a misfortune indeed!" said Walter, relieved. For he could less have associated the idea of death with Clari than with daylight, for all that prime donne, even the greatest, have their day, and that even days must die.

"It is a terrible misfortune," said Prosper.

"And, if I may ask, how came so clever a woman to be so unwise?"

"Souvent femme varie, bien fou qui s'y fie. La Donna è mobile qual piuma al vento, muta d'accento e di pensier. Voilà la Clari—voilà la femme."

"I should say there are women with fewer caprices in the world."

"Caprice!—if that were all! Ah monsieur, you know not the story. I have made her—I. I gained her her first début. I have been her teacher, her financier, her head, her right hand—in one word, her career. What would she be without Prosper? A concert singer of the third class, who would sing pretty well. She is not a caprice, monsieur. She is an ingrate. She is more—she is ingratitude. I soap my hands of her. I soap my hands and my feet, if she crawls on her knees."

"May I ask what she has done?"

"I want all the world to know. We are in Lyons. She sings there—I obtain for her a furore. Observe—I obtain. We are to sup at the hotel. It is to be a good supper; and we are to commence with oysters; the great green oysters you know not here. Monsieur, all the world knows that one commences with five oysters if

the supper is to be great and good; not one less, not one more. I say so, in passing; it is a simple aphorism of gastronomy, that one does not say in a maison de santé, because there alone one would have contradiction. She contradicts me. She asserts that one should commence with six—six whole great green oysters of Normandy, monsieur. It shows her brain begins to grow weak—I tell her so. It vexes her. She says she will eat twelve oysters if it pleases her. It is an outrage on the first principles of art; I say so, for it is true, and I know. It is a topic on whom I feel strongly—I, who have eaten oysters before she was born. She says, if I eat but five oysters all at one time she has devoured more; she says—but no matter. Yes, mademoiselle, I answer—they eat much, who have starved; if it had not been for me, you had never set one eye on the great green oyster of Normandy. You would be eating stock-fish in the Ghetto, and call it divine."

"Yes," said Walter, "I have always heard that France is as distinguished for taste as for politeness."

"It is beyond question, monsieur. It is an insult to the nation that a woman out of the Ghetto of Rome should contradict a compatriot of Brillat Savarin. It is not the question of an oyster, monsieur. It is art; it is patriotism; it is philosophy."

"And what did she say to all this?"

"She ordered twelve more oysters and devoured them—all. And then she said—but no matter. I should have said 'Sortons!' if she had been a man. But she shall see."

Walter Gordon knew that the less the cause, the greater the quarrel; and that Clari was quite clever enough to make an irreconcilable quarrel over a single oyster-shell, if she chose. He could imagine that a considerable quantity of gunpowder must inevitably have gathered about the relation of Clari and Prosper, which only wanted a spark to explode it; and the story of the quarrel seemed to imply a good deal that was "no matter." However, he had given up speculating about Mademoiselle Clari. His ears were Prosper's, but his eyes belonged to the door.

Prosper went on talking to the door-post—that is to say, to one of those men who, in crowded rooms, have such a natural affinity to the posts of the door as to be indistinguishable from them, physically or intellectually. But they have their uses—they are in high favour with great talkers.

"Yes, my lord; we shall see. We shall

save the season—but Clari? *Où sont les reiges d'autan?* Pouf—Prosper blows; she is gone."

"Have you seen Comus?" asked the door-post.

"Ah!" said Prosper, but whether approvingly or otherwise it was hard to say. "It'll be hard to beat that, any way."

"No, my lord. Not of the all; all to the contrary. It is English, after all—a *bêtise*."

"Yes; France is as famous for politeness as for taste," thought Walter. "I don't agree with you," he said. "I differ from you as much as Clari did about the oysters. Comus is the finest opera of the age."

Prosper smiled—as a grown man may upon the nonsense of a child.

"Quite right to stand up for your name, Gordon," said the door-post.

"I don't see why one shouldn't believe in a work because it happens to be one's uncle's. Yes, I do stand up for Comus—through thick and thin. If it wasn't English—if it had been composed by some herr or signor—it would have been one of the works of the world. But we are improving. It is an English work; and it pays. Even Monsieur Prosper can't say it doesn't pay."

"Ah!" said Prosper again, and he sighed. "You are the nephew of your uncle, monsieur?"

"I have that honour."

"Ah! it is a pity he knew not Prosper. Is he alive?"

"No; he died—in Italy. But one doesn't expect foreigners to know the history of English musicians. At least we suppose he died. If he had lived, the composer of Comus must have been heard of again."

"Yes; Comus pays," said Prosper, meditatively. "Without question it pays. I should like to know that Gordon—monsieur your uncle, monsieur. He would have liked to know me. I wonder what he does now."

Prosper was a famous diplomat in his way; and, like all great diplomats, wasted little labour in concealing the works of his mental machine. Walter could see, without effort, that Prosper had lost more by his quarrel with Clari than she, and that "something that paid" was at present his philosopher's stone.

"Ah, if Gordon was alive! If he has left behind him some work—no? Ah, it would be the second blow on the nail, and drive him in. Yes; I would pay well for some English *bêtise* of Gordon. It would

be the rage—it would be the thunder after the lightning; it would pay—me." He paused, and thought, while fresh arrivals parted Prosper and Walter from both door-posts, and left them in company on the landing.

"You are your uncle's nephew—vraiment?" he asked abruptly, after a pause.

"I am the nephew of Andrew Gordon."

"He has left no work behind him—none?"

"I only wish he had, and that I were the owner."

"Think, monsieur. There is no musician but leaves behind him some sketch—some idea. Comus is the rage."

"It's no good thinking. Comus was the beginning and the end."

"Ah, you English! I would find one thousand works of any musician, what you please, when he is the rage. Are you a musician, monsieur?"

"I?—I don't know. I was at Lindenheim; so, at any rate, I have lived with the rose."

"And your name is Gordon? You can compose?"

"I have spoiled some music-paper. Why?"

Prosper shrugged his shoulders.

"You are Gordon—you compose—Comus is the rage!"

"Well?"

"Mark me, monsieur. If you bring me some opera by Gordon—some little song, if you please—I shall be happy to make it worth the while. That is all."

"You mean it is something to be even one's uncle's nephew?"

"Pardon, monsieur, if I think you dull. If I were the nephew of your uncle—presto! There would not be one little song. There will be ten—twenty—one thousand! It is to make hay that the sun shines. What good is the sun, if there is no hay? If you will look among the papers of your uncle, you will find an opera. If it is not in his desk, it will be in yours; if it is not in your desk, it will be in your head, monsieur."

"I see. I've often wondered how it is that, as soon as a dead man gets famous, he sends down new works from the skies—very nearly as good, sometimes, as the worst he wrote when he was alive. But I can give you a better way than you suggest, by a long way."

"Ah?"

"Revive the real man. He might not have died after all, you know. Discover him—make a romance of him. Make him

a victim of the Jesuits, or the Czar; bring him from Siberia, or the Piombi. Of course, he composed an opera in prison, with a bit of charcoal on the walls of his cell. You must have a presentable-looking man of the proper age; say fifty or fifty-five. If he doesn't know an allegro from a semibreve, write an opera yourself, or get some poor devil who wants money more than fame. Put in a bar or two of Comus, to give the critics some internal evidence to mumble. There! what do you say to British *bêtise* now?"

Prosper was as blind to sarcasm as Comrie; and Walter had spoken as seriously as Prosper.

"Ah! it is an idea—certainly it is an idea; but where is your poor devil?"

"In England. We are the nation of shopkeepers, you know; and everything and everybody on earth is to be found in London. Why, there isn't a back slum where you wouldn't find a man who wouldn't call himself any name you like for the price of his keep; only, let my uncle be decently presentable."

"Certainly, it is an idea; and I have known such things. I will speak with you to-morrow, monsieur, if you will favour me with your card. Perhaps you will search in your desk a little, my good friend—hein? One must seek to find."

"Does the fellow really think I'm in earnest?" thought Walter. "I've half a mind to send him flying downstairs—only it would spoil his shirt-front; and three-quarters of a mind, any how, just to see how far impudence will go. Well, my prodigal uncle has got fame with a vengeance now; and it is strange that everything that he must have written besides Comus should have disappeared with him from the world. Ah Fräulein Celia!"

In one moment Prosper and Clari, oysters and impudence, fell out of his mind. His plan had succeeded—Park-lane was filled with a breeze from Lindenheim.

It was just as well that he was at the head of the stairs. Celia had made the journey from Saragossa-row to Park-lane very bravely, or, at any rate, with the blank courage of despair. Her father's daily bread depended on her finding work anyhow; and a lost chance would have been a sin. But, now that she was here, she suddenly felt more lost than when she first found herself at sea in Lindenheim.

And, in spite of all the superlative excellence of Walter's plan, her arrival

was none the less a miracle. True, the mantilla had removed the main difficulty of her costume, and more completely than if she had known that people in Park-lane are not in the habit of dressing in that style. And even had she known it, it would have troubled her but little; for she knew only too well what had never even suggested itself to Walter—that, by the time Thursday arrived, not a half-penny would be left out of the six shillings for a needful pair of gloves and for a cab-fare one way, not to speak of the numberless little things that the most ignorant of girls must have, before she can overstep the boundary between the Row and the Lane. The six shillings did somehow prove a widow's cruse—the widow being Mrs. Snow, who did not choose to have it on her conscience that the correspondent of countesses should starve before that rent was paid, for which a coronet on an envelope is ample security everywhere. Her simple mind was as much impressed by such an emblem as if she kept a great hotel, or a shop in the West-end, where confidence in coronets is the first principle of trade.

But, nevertheless, Celia no more dreamed in her heart of actually wearing the mantilla that evening than she dreamed of turning it into gold—an obvious way of keeping off the wolf a little longer that should surely have occurred to John March long ago, if he had not, indeed, put every last atom of his wits into the score. She could not walk in it alone through the streets; nor could she enter Quorne House with ungloved fingers. She sighed when Thursday morning came; but it was a sigh of relief that the dreaded chance had slipped away without any fault of her own.

And then came the miracle. Was she indeed the godchild of a fairy?

No sooner had she needed a dress, than her penniless father produced from nowhere a robe of lace fit for a queen of Spain. And then when the robe did not prove enough—lo! on the breakfast table lay a box containing no fewer than six pairs of white gloves—brought by a messenger who left no message; not even one from the skies. Yes, though; a note, in a strange hand, lay on the top of the gloves—a pumpkin, turned into a cab, would call for her at half-past eight. No mention, indeed, was made of a pumpkin, which would obviously have been one of Lord Quorne's own prize cucumbers from Hinchford; but it must have been a gourd

as surely as that the driver would be a transformed rat—the creatures abounded in the Row.

The slipper of glass alone was omitted from her costume, when she stepped into the magic cab and left behind her her seat among the ashes. Who had sent the gloves? Lady Quorne could not know her size; and they fitted her as if they had been made for her. Did they come with the mantilla? Were they part of that mystery? But there was no good in wondering, and long before she had puzzled the matter out, her cab was among the carriages at the door of Quorne House in Park-lane.

Thrice fortunate for her that she was dark and dark-eyed, so that she suited the mantilla. Foreign artists were common at Lady Quorne's, and foreign artists may dress as they please, and do not always achieve the supreme taste that Mademoiselle Clari, however she might err in gastronomy, invariably showed in the matter of costume. That a girl who looked like a Spaniard should come in her national dress was not strange there, however remarkable it might be elsewhere; and the mantilla has at least this merit, that it never looks really out of place anywhere.

But Celia felt terribly alone; and the old shyness of Lindenheim came back in a flood over her. She placed herself behind some new arrivals, and followed them upstairs. If only, as on that first day of Lindenheim—

Was every want that day to be supplied—every wish, before it was expressed, fulfilled? With the ubiquity which at Waaren had seemed to be part of his nature, which had there brought him always, and all at once, everywhere and wherever he was wanted, there he was now—at the head of the stairs, as ready to receive her as if he had been there for the very purpose. By sheer force of habit her shyness left her. And for her, too, a breeze from Lindenheim blew through Park-lane.

"I am so glad you are come," he was saying. "I was getting afraid—but never mind. You will speak to Lady Quorne, of course; and then she will ask you to sing."

"But—all these people! I didn't know——"

"The more the better. It isn't a Lindenheim audience; half won't listen, and those that do will think you first-rate, just because this is Lady Quorne's. And you look—charmingly. So you've left Deepweald? Come and speak to Lady Quorne. I'll be your chaperon."

Celia suddenly felt a pair of eyes upon her; and she felt herself at her old trick of colouring. They were Prosper's eyes; and, in truth, they were regarding her strangely, and in a way that might make any girl colour less with confusion than with anger.

"Mademoiselle is an artist?" he said to Walter. "Permit me to be introduced to mademoiselle."

"Miss March—Monsieur Prosper," said Walter, hastily and ungraciously. "Come; we will speak to Lady Quorne now."

"Pardon—one moment," said Prosper. "I forget not faces—I have met mademoiselle? In Spain? In Italy? No?"

The door was getting crowded, and not easy to pass. Celia remembered the voice well enough—the first foreign voice she had ever heard—a memory of that day in Deepweald when Clari sang, which would always remain the first among all her memories. What had happened—what had not happened since then? She had lived; she had seen Clari face to face; she had known Walter; Deepweald had become a dream; her father had grown deaf; the wolf of hunger was upon them; "Finis" had been written to the score; and now she was speaking once more to the man who seemed to have opened the door to all these things, when he let her into the Shire Hall without paying. She fell a little behind Walter's arm. All these things might be, but were no reason why Prosper's eyes should so devour her, from her head to her heels.

But his next words were the last to be expected as the outcome of such a stare.

"Mademoiselle wears face. It is magnificent, it is exquisite, it is superb, it is divine, it is very pretty."

"Come," said Walter.

And Celia, relieved, instead of fearful, followed him through the door into the world of Lady Quorne.

"No; I forget not faces," Prosper was saying to the door-post. "I have met La Mantilla in Spain? In Italy? Si!"

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE DEAN RETURNS TO TOWN.

"Do you mean to say that you have any objection to my being acquainted with Captain De Baron?" This question Mary asked her husband on the Monday after his return. On that day Lady Susanna went back to Brothershire, having somewhat hurried her return in consequence of the uncomfortable state of things in Munster Court. They had all gone to church together on the intermediate Sunday, and Lady Susanna had done her best to conciliate her sister-in-law. But she was ignorant of the world, and did not know how bitter to a young married woman is such interference as that of which she had been guilty. She could not understand the amount of offence which was rankling in Mary's bosom. It had not consisted only in the words spoken, but her looks in the man's presence had conveyed the same accusation, so that it could be seen and understood by the man himself. Mary, with an effort, had gone on with her play, determined that no one should suppose her to be cowed by her grand sister-in-law; but through it all she had resolved always to look upon Lady Susanna as an enemy. She had already abandoned her threat of not speaking to her own guest; but nothing that Lady Susanna could say, nothing that Lord George could say, softened her heart in the least. The woman had told her that she was a flirt, had declared that what she did and said was improper. The woman had come there as a spy, and the woman

should never be her friend. In these circumstances Lord George found it impossible not to refer to the unfortunate subject again, and in doing so caused the above question to be asked. "Do you mean to say that you have any objection to my being acquainted with Captain De Baron?" She looked at him with so much eagerness in her eyes as she spoke, that he knew that much at any rate of his present comfort might depend on the answer which he made.

He certainly did object to her being acquainted with Jack De Baron. He did not at all like Jack De Baron. In spite of what he had found himself obliged to say, in order that she might be comforted on his first arrival, he did not like slang, and he did not like fortune-telling cards or bagatelle. His sympathies in these matters were all with his sister. He did like spending his own time with Mrs. Houghton, but it was dreadful to him to think that his wife should be spending hers with Jack De Baron. Nevertheless, he could not tell her so. "No," he said, "I have no particular objection."

"Of course, if you had I would never see him again. But it would be very dreadful. He would have to be told that you were—jealous."

"I am not in the least jealous," said he, angrily. "You should not use such a word."

"Certainly I should not have used it, but for the disturbance which your sister has caused. But after all that she has said, there must be some understanding. I like Captain De Baron very much, as I daresay you like other ladies. Why not?"

"I have never suspected anything."

"But Susanna did. Of course you don't like all this, George. I don't like it. I have been so miserable that I have almost cried my eyes out. But if people will make mischief, what is one to do? The only thing is not to have the mischief-maker any more."

The worst of this was, to him, that she was so manifestly getting the better of him. When he had married her, not yet nine months since, she had been a little girl, altogether in his hands, not pretending to any self-action, and anxious to be guided in everything by him. His only fear had been that she might be too slow in learning that self-assertion, which is necessary from a married woman to the world at large. But now she had made very great progress in the lesson, not only as regarded the world at large, but as regarded himself also. As for his family—the grandeur of his family—she clearly had no reverence for that. Lady Susanna, though generally held to be very awful, had been no more to her than any other Susan. He almost wished that he had told her that he did object to Jack De Baron. There would have been a scene, of course; and she, not improbably, might have told her father. That at present would have been doubly disagreeable, as it was incumbent upon him to stand well with the dean just at this time. There was this battle to be fought with his brother, and he felt that he could not fight it without the dean.

Having given his sanction to Jack De Baron, he went away to his club to write his letter. This writing really amounted to no more than copying the dean's words, which he had carried in his pocket ever since he had left the deanery, and the dean's words were as follows:

"Munster Court, 26th April, 187—.

"MY DEAR BROTHERTON,—I am compelled to write to you under very disagreeable circumstances, and to do so on a subject which I would willingly avoid if a sense of duty would permit me to be silent.

"You will remember that you wrote to me in October last, telling me that you were about to be married. 'I am to be married to the Marchesa Luigi,' were your words. Up to that moment we had heard nothing of the lady or of any arrangement as to a marriage. When I told you of my own intended marriage a few months before that, you merely said in answer that you might probably soon want the

house at Manor Cross yourself. It now seems that when you told us of your intended marriage you had already been married over two years, and that when I told you of mine you had a son over twelve months old—a fact which I might certainly expect that you would communicate to me at such a time.

"I beg to assure you that I am now urged to write by no suspicions of my own; but I know that if things are left to go on as they are now, suspicions will arise at a future time. I write altogether in the interests of your son and heir; and for his sake I beseech you to put at once into the hands of your own lawyer absolute evidence of the date of your marriage, of its legality, and of the birth of your son. It will also be expedient that my lawyer shall see the evidence in your lawyer's hands. If you were to die as matters are now, it would be imperative on me to take steps which would seem to be hostile to Popenjoy's interest. I think you must yourself feel that this would be so. And yet nothing would be further from my wish. If we were both to die the difficulty would be still greater, as in that case proceedings would have to be taken by more distant members of the family.

"I trust you will believe me when I say that my only object is to have the matter satisfactorily settled.—Your affectionate brother,
"GEORGE GERMAIN."

When the marquis received this letter he was not in the least astonished by it. Lord George had told his sister Sarah that it was to be written, and had even discussed with her the dean's words. Lady Sarah had thought that as the dean was a sagacious man, his exact words had better be used. And then Lady Amelia had been told, Lady Amelia having asked various questions on the subject. Lady Amelia had, of course, known that her brother would discuss the matter with the dean, and had begged that she might not be treated as a stranger. Everything had not been told to Lady Amelia, nor had Lady Amelia told all that she had heard to her mother. But the marchioness had known enough, and had communicated enough to her son to save him from any great astonishment when he got his brother's letter. Of course he had known that some steps would be taken.

He answered the letter at once.

"MY DEAR BROTHER," he said—"I don't

think it necessary to let you know the reasons which induced me to keep my marriage private awhile. You rush at conclusions very fast in thinking that because a marriage is private therefore it is illegal. I am glad that you have no suspicions of your own, and beg to assure you I don't care whether you have or not. Whenever you or anybody else may want to try the case, you or he or they will find that I have taken care that there is plenty of evidence. I didn't know that you had a lawyer. I only hope he won't run you into much expense in finding a mare's nest.—Yours truly, "B."

This was not in itself satisfactory; but, such as it was, it did for a time make Lord George believe that Popenjoy was Popenjoy. It was certainly true of him that he wished Popenjoy to be Popenjoy. No personal longing for the title or property made him in his heart disloyal to his brother or his family. And then the trouble and expense and anxieties of such a contest were so terrible to his imagination, that he rejoiced when he thought that they might be avoided. But there was the dean. The dean must be satisfied as well as he, and he felt that the dean would not be satisfied. According to agreement he sent a copy of his brother's letter down to the dean, and added the assurance of his own belief that the marriage had been a marriage, that the heir was an heir, and that further steps would be useless. It need hardly be said that the dean was not satisfied. Before dinner on the following day the dean was in Munster Court. "Oh papa," exclaimed Mary, "I am so glad to see you." Could it be anything about Captain De Baron that had brought him up? If so, of course she would tell him everything. "What brought you up so suddenly? Why didn't you write? George is at the club, I suppose." George was really in Berkeley Square at that moment. "Oh yes he will be home to dinner. Is there anything wrong at Manor Cross, papa?" Her father was so pleasant in his manner to her, that she perceived at once that he had not come up in reference to Captain De Baron. No complaint of her behaviour on that score had as yet reached him. "Where's your portmanteau, papa?"

"I've got a bed at the hotel in Suffolk Street. I shall only be here one night, or at the most two; and as I had to come suddenly I wouldn't trouble you."

"Oh papa, that's very bad of you."

This she said with that genuine tone which begets confidence. The dean was very anxious that his daughter should in truth be fond of his company. In the game which he intended to play, her co-operation and her influence over her husband would be very necessary to him. She must be a Lovelace rather than a Germain, till she should blaze forth as the presiding genius of the Germain family. That Lord George should become tired of him, and a little afraid of him, he knew could not be avoided; but to her he must, if possible, be a pleasant genius, never accompanied in her mind by ideas of parental severity or clerical heaviness. "I should weary you out if I came too often and came so suddenly," he said, laughing.

"But what has brought you, papa?"

"The marquis, my dear; who, it seems to me, will, for some time to come, have a considerable influence on my doings."

"The marquis!"

He had made up his mind that she should know everything. If her husband did not tell her, he would. "Yes, the marquis. Perhaps I ought to say the marchioness, only that I am unwilling to give that title to a lady who I think very probably has no right to it."

"Is all that coming up already?"

"The longer it is postponed the greater will be the trouble to all parties. It cannot be endured that a man in his position should tell us that his son is legitimate, when that son was born more than a year before he had declared himself about to marry, and that he should then refuse to furnish us with any evidence."

"Have you asked him?" Mary, as she made the suggestion, was herself horror-stricken at the awfulness of the occasion.

"George has asked him."

"And what has the marquis done?"

"Sent him back a jeering reply. He has a way of jeering which he thinks will carry everything before it. When I called upon him he jeered at me. But he'll have to learn that he cannot jeer you out of your rights."

"I wish you would not think about my rights, papa."

"Your rights will probably be the rights of someone else."

"I know, papa; but still——"

"It has to be done, and George quite

agrees with me. The letter which he did write to his brother was arranged between us. Lady Sarah is quite of the same accord, and Lady Susanna——"

"Oh papa, I do so hate Susanna." This she said with all her eloquence.

"I daresay she can make herself unpleasant."

"I have told George that she shall not come here again as a guest."

"What did she do?"

"I cannot bring myself to tell you what it was that she said. I told George, of course. She is a nasty evil-minded creature—suspecting everything."

"I hope there has been nothing disagreeable."

"It was very disagreeable, indeed, while George was away. Of course I did not care so much when he came back." The dean, who had been almost frightened, was reassured when he learned that there had been no quarrel between the husband and wife. Soon afterwards Lord George came in, and was astonished to find that his letter had brought up the dean so quickly. No discussion took place till after dinner, but then the dean was very perspicuous, and at the same time very authoritative. It was in vain that Lord George asked what they could do, and declared that the evil troubles which must probably arise would all rest on his brother's head. "But we must prevent such troubles, let them rest where they will," said the dean.

"I don't see what we can do."

"Nor do I, because we are not lawyers. A lawyer will tell us at once. It will probably be our duty to send a commissioner out to Italy to make enquiry."

"I shouldn't like to do that about my brother."

"Of course your brother should be told; or rather everything should be told to your brother's lawyer, so that he might be advised what steps he ought to take. We should do nothing secretly—nothing of which anyone could say that we ought to be ashamed." The dean proposed that they should both go to his attorney, Mr. Battle, on the following day; but this step seemed to Lord George to be such an absolute declaration of war that he begged for another day's delay; and it was at last arranged that he himself should on that intervening day call on Mr. Stokes, the German family lawyer. The marquis, with one of his jeers, had told his brother that, being a younger brother, he was not

entitled to have a lawyer. But in truth Lord George had had very much more to do with Mr. Stokes than the marquis. All the concerns of the family had been managed by Mr. Stokes. The marquis probably meant to insinuate that the family bill, which was made out perhaps once every three years, was charged against his account. Lord George did call on Mr. Stokes, and found Mr. Stokes very little disposed to give him any opinion. Mr. Stokes was an honest man who disliked trouble of this kind. He freely admitted that there was ground for enquiry, but did not think that he himself was the man who ought to make it. He would certainly communicate with the marquis, should Lord George think it expedient to employ any other lawyer, and should that lawyer apply to him. In the meantime he thought that immediate enquiry would be a little precipitate. The marquis might probably himself take steps to put the matter on a proper footing. He was civil, gracious, almost subservient; but he had no comfort to give and no advice to offer, and, like all attorneys, he was in favour of delay. "Of course, Lord George, you must remember that I am your brother's lawyer, and may in this matter be called upon to act as his confidential adviser." All this Lord George repeated that evening to the dean, and the dean merely said that it had been a matter of course.

Early on the next morning the dean and Lord George went together to Mr. Battle's chambers. Lord George felt that he was being driven by his father-in-law; but he felt also that he could not help himself. Mr. Battle, who had chambers in Lincoln's Inn, was a very different man from Mr. Stokes, who carried on his business in a private house at the West-end, who prepared wills and marriage settlements for gentlefolk, and who had, in fact, very little to do with law. Mr. Battle was an enterprising man with whom the dean's acquaintance had arisen through the Tallowaxes and the stable interests—a very clever man, and perhaps a little sharp. But an attorney ought to be sharp, and it is not to be understood that Mr. Battle descended to sharp practice. But he was a solicitor with whom the old-fashioned Mr. Stokeses would not find themselves in accord. He was a handsome burly man, nearly sixty years of age, with grey hair and clean-shorn face, with bright green eyes, and a well-formed nose and

mouth—a prepossessing man, till something restless about the eyes would at last catch the attention and a little change the judgment.

The dean told him the whole story, and during the telling he sat looking very pleasant, with a smile on his face, rubbing his two hands together. All the points were made. The letter of the marquis, in which he told his brother that he was to be married, was shown to him. The concealment of the birth of the boy till the father had made up his mind to come home was urged. The absurdity of his behaviour since he had been at home was described. The singularity of his conduct in allowing none of his family to become acquainted with his wife was pointed out. This was done by the dean rather than by Lord George, and Lord George, as he heard it all, almost regarded the dean as his enemy. At last he burst out in his own defence. “Of course you will understand, Mr. Battle, that our only object is to have the thing proved, so that hereafter there may be no trouble.”

“Just so, my lord.”

“We do not want to oppose my brother, or to injure his child.”

“We want to get at the truth,” said the dean.

“Just so.”

“Where there is concealment there must be suspicion,” urged the dean.

“No doubt.”

“But everything must be done quite openly,” said Lord George. “I would not have a step taken without the knowledge of Mr. Stokes. If Mr. Stokes would do it himself on my brother’s behalf it would be so much the better.”

“That is hardly probable,” said the dean.

“Not at all probable,” said Mr. Battle.

“I couldn’t be a party to an adverse suit,” said Lord George.

“There is no ground for any suit at all,” said the lawyer. “We cannot bring an action against the marquis because he chooses to call the lady he lives with a marchioness, or because he calls an infant Lord Popenjoy. Your brother’s conduct may be ill-judged. From what you tell me, I think it is. But it is not criminal.”

“Then nothing need be done,” said Lord George.

“A great deal may be done. Enquiry may be made now, which might hereafter

be impossible.” Then he begged that he might have a week to consider the matter, and requested that the two gentlemen would call upon him again.

PETTICOAT KNIGHTS.

Of all the trappings of chivalry the orders of knighthood are the sole survival, and these are curiously warped from their ancient significance. There is not much occasion at the present moment, for gallant soldiers of a monkish turn of mind to band themselves together for the defence of the Temple, or the waging of perpetual war against the Infidel. It was not always so, and it is not so very long since the Crescent was rather a thing of terror than an object of sentimental admiration. Not invariably, however, were the soldiers of Islam the object of the valour of the warrior monks of the Cross. In the north of Europe the Teutonic order of knights had their regular crusades, and waged war against the Infidel after their fashion. It is not quite certain what the Wends, and other poor devils who fell into the clutches of the Teutonic knights, did or did not believe, but, like the Irish gentleman who decided that “for fighting purposes any man who changed his shirt twice a week was a gentleman,” the Teutonic knights no doubt thought that, for purposes of conquest, any frontiersmen were Infidels enough. The Teutons were hard masters, but not harder than the Templars and the Knights of St. John, and their existence is comprehensible enough in a certain condition of society. What is more curious, is the institution of female orders of knighthood—not for belligerent purposes, but with objects less clearly perceptible by the ordinary intelligence.

On hearing that an order of female knights had been founded by the Queen—to wit, the Imperial Order of the Crown of India—I at once retreated to my library, and fell back upon the volumes which form my constant study. I mean not works on literature and art, science, taste, and the like, for I allow very few of these to encumber my shelves. The volumes I prefer may be styled the canonical books of that mysterious and loosely defined body known as society. In this kind of literature our own country is fairly prolific, but above even the fame of the peerage and baronetage of England soars the chief book of the social hierarchy—the Koran of rank and

dignity—the Almanach de Gotha. This volume, diminutive in size but gigantic in power, devotes particular attention to the orders of knighthood at present and formerly existing in Europe. First of these, before the list of countries arranged in alphabetical order, stands the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem—itsself a potentate; somewhat of the “has been” order, it is true, and known to the many as the Knights of Malta. The monastic character of this institution prevented it from having any female members, but it was by no means an unknown thing for ladies to participate in knightly honours in the good old days. More recently, orders of petticoat knights have existed without the admixture of the male element, and my social Koran tells me that, up to the first of January of this present year, a round dozen of petticoat knightly communities were registered in the archives of various European countries. Among these one order is epicene, but there is no mention by the man of Gotha of the not generally known fact that the Order of the Garter, itself the most glorious of extant orders of knighthood, was originally founded for the benefit of both sexes, and was worn by them for the first hundred and fifty years of its existence. It must be recollected that the time at which the Order of the Garter was founded—the middle of the fourteenth century—was precisely that when chivalry existed, if it ever did so. It was, at any rate, a period when profuse adoration was paid to women. That they were robbed of their rights by husbands and other legal guardians, and sometimes poniarded, has nothing to do with the present subject. It was the fashion to associate beauty and valour together, and frequent tournaments afforded ladies of rank and wealth plenty of opportunity for displaying their charms, in the most attractive costumes. The jousts at Windsor, which formed the occasion of the institution of the Order of the Garter, were celebrated with extraordinary magnificence. All the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war were brought to bear on the occasion; and it was amid these environments that was founded that order which, says Selden, “exceeds in majesty, honour, and fame, all the chivalrous orders in the world.”

That ladies were among the earliest Knights of the Garter is made evident, not only by the archives of the order, but by the record of sculptured stone. Sir Bernard

Burke tells us that, a few years ago, a friend of his was engaged in literary work at the Bodleian Library, and on one occasion, being weary, sought a change by visiting some of the historical scenes, of which there are so many around Oxford. “Let me tell you,” wrote the correspondent of Ulster King of Arms, “of a trip I have made to Stanton Harcourt, the ancient seat of the Harcourt family, about six miles west of Oxford. It was theirs for more than six hundred years, but they reside no longer in it, and the manor-house has been taken down. The ancient kitchen, however, still stands—a great square building below, octagonal above, like the baptistery of Salisbury Cathedral, or, to descend in comparison, like some great glass manufactory. The gardens remain, and in them an ancient garden-house, wherein Pope composed his translation of the Fifth Book of Homer, as recorded by himself with a diamond on the window glass; for the poet was a great friend of Lord Chancellor Harcourt, and repaid his kindness in the epitaph on his only son, Simen Harcourt—who died in 1720—to be read on his monument in the adjoining church. It is this church which recalled you so strongly to my recollection, not for its architecture, though pronounced very fine, but for the assemblage of well-preserved monuments of the Harcourts. They are of various dates, the earliest the most pleasing, for some of the later ones represent peers lying on altar tombs, their robes, their coronets, and their eyes painted. They produce a painful effect. All the repose—which is the great charm of statuary—is gone. After life’s fitful fever they do not sleep well, but seem still to look back to life. But amongst the very early ones is a lady’s tomb, so strange and unparalleled, that I cannot forbear calling your attention to it. Lady Harcourt, whose effigy it is, is represented with the garter of the celebrated order of knighthood on her arm, carved in stone. Did you ever hear of this, or can you give any account of it?”

This question was addressed to the right man, who cleared up the mystery at once. Sir Bernard Burke recollected that the tomb of the Countess of Suffolk, the daughter of Sir Thomas Chaucer, and granddaughter of Chaucer the poet, is still to be seen in good preservation at the church of Ewelme, in the same county as Stanton Harcourt, with the lady’s left arm encircled with the garter.

Not only is the garter fastened round Lady Harcourt's left arm, but at the head of the tomb appear the bearings of her husband, impaling within a garter the lady's own arms. Modern heraldry precludes a knight from bearing his wife's arms within the ribbon or collar of his order, but this restriction is of modern date. The old stall plates of the Knights of the Garter afford proof of this, and give several instances of husband's and wife's arms impaled within the garter.

It is now perfectly certain that this famous order of knighthood was, as the legend of the Countess of Salisbury implies, instituted in honour of the fair sex, and that ladies participated in its rites and honours. The queen consort, the wives and widows of the knights, received permission, by royal sanction, to wear the habit of the Order of the Garter on the feast days of St. George; and robes were annually given out to them from the royal wardrobe, of the same material and colour as the surcoats of the knights, and embroidered like them, with numerous small garters encircled with the motto: "Honi soit qui mal y pense." Each lady of the order wore on her left arm a garter similar to that of a knight, was considered a member, and was styled Lady of the Society of St. George. Sir Harris Nicolas states that, though nothing is now known of the form or manner of the reception of the ladies, the description applied to them in records leaves no doubt of their having been regularly admitted into the fraternity.

Between the time of John of Gaunt and the extinction of the Plantagenets, many noble ladies were members of the Order of the Garter. The first roll extant is of the time of Richard the Second. In it figure the king's mother, Joan Plantagenet, "the Fair Maid of Kent"—the widow of that mirror of chivalry and greatest mercenary soldier in Europe, the Black Prince—and the king's half-sisters, the Duchesses of Brittany and the Lady Courtenay, "the fairest lady in all England," as Froissart styles her. It comprises also the Queen of Spain, whose husband was not a knight of the order, and the ill-used Countess of Oxford, the Lady Philippa de Conoy, grand-daughter of Edward the Third, whom her husband De Vere repudiated, for no other reason than his wish to marry one Lancerona, a Portuguese girl—an awkward fact, by-the-way, for believers in chivalry. In the

reign of Richard the Second, the two daughters of the Duke of Lancaster—Philippa, wife of John, King of Portugal, and Catherine, wife of Henry, Prince of Asturias—were also Knights of the Garter.

I am quite aware that, up to this point, the Garter Roll proves no more than that the ladies of the family of the sovereign were admitted to the order; but in the succeeding reigns the limits of knighthood were largely extended. Among the names occur those of the Countesses of Buckingham, Pembroke, Salisbury, Huntingdon, Kent, Derby, Westmoreland, Arundel, Warwick, and Richmond; the Ladies Mohun, Le Despencer, Poynings, Swynford, Fitzwalter, De Ros, Waterton, and Burnell. The last lady Knight of the Garter was Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry the Seventh. What was it that extinguished the lady knights? Was it the general savagery brought about by the long fight between York and Lancaster, or the mere fact that for many years there was no particular king or court; and the nobles of England amused themselves in the intervals of fighting in the field with cutting off each other's—tolerably thick—heads under some judicial form? Had the female Order of the Garter come to an end a century later, its death might have been assigned to the cessation of tournaments; but, as a matter of fact, the jousts went on merrily all through the Wars of the Roses, as if people had not enough genuine serious fighting to do without playing at it at odd times. It seems strange that the sun of York, whose beams shone somewhat too brightly on English beauty, made no lady Knights of the Garter, and that the reign of the first genuine English despot should have been marked by the extinction of an outward form of chivalry. Yet so it appears to have been. After the battle of Barnet, there is no trace of a woman having been added to the list of the Knights of the Garter. Possibly the order was Lancastrian in general tendency, and was therefore ignored on political grounds; but, whatever the cause, the female branch died out under the House of York, and was ignored by the House of Tudor. Henry the Eighth has the credit of abolishing the female knights; but it is more probable that he simply declined to revive the ancient practice in their favour. Perhaps his experience of womankind was not sufficiently encouraging to induce him to revive an extinct custom; but it is yet strange that

while he was under the reign of Anne Boleyn, for instance, the Order of the Garter was confined to men. It is less strange that Elizabeth never dreamt of extending the privileges of her own sex to their ancient limit. Probably the tradition had in her day become faint and dim. Between the birth of Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth Tudor a new world had sprung up, and the old order was being rapidly swept aside to make way for the new.

It was not till nearly a century after the death of the Defender of the Faith, that any attempt was made to restore the knighthood of the Garter to women. In 1638, it was proposed in a chapter of the order: "That the ladies of the knights companions might have the privilege of wearing a garter about their arms, and an upper robe at festival times, according to ancient usage." This was hardly a revival of the original custom, according to which we have seen that ladies might wear the garter, although their husbands were not members of the order; but it was at least a step towards it. King Charles, on being informed of the proceedings of the chapter, commanded that the queen should be acquainted therewith, and her pleasure known, and the affair left to "the ladies' particular suit." Charles Stuart, however, had just then sundry weightier matters on his hands than stars and garters—the collar of the George already sitting somewhat loosely on his royal neck. So nothing was done, and the would-be female knights waited till all pretty vanities were trampled under foot at Naseby Field. Charles the Second, as a typical ladies' man, would, if he had thought of it, made the Order of the Garter a species of Abbey of Theleme, and have exchanged "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" for "*Fay ce que voudras*;" but the idea did not occur to the Merry Monarch.

Once again, and in the reign of that poetic monarch the first George, an attempt was made to obtain the re-admission of ladies to the order. In an address to the Earl of Pembroke, Anstis urged their claim in a strain of grandiloquent penny-a-lining, delightful to students of the English language. Thus Anstis: "In a nation so tender of the rights and privileges of the fair sex, and where beauty seems to have fixed her empire, it is really surprising that any custom in their favour should be disused, while no reasonable pretence has been assigned, or in

my humble opinion can be assigned, for the discontinuance of it. The Order of the Garter was a political institution."—Anstis here endeavours to catch the king on what Hans Breitmann would call the "angles of the political oxygen."—"It is not easy to conjecture by what maxims of polity that prince"—there is a grand vagueness here—"governed himself, who first relinquished a right exercised by his predecessors, of giving so honourable a distinction to ladies of superior quality or merit; since such ladies, if they do not preside, must at least be allowed to have always a very powerful influence in society. The consorts and relicts of the knights companions, especially, seem to have a more peculiar claim to any relative honours of the order, which the sovereign shall think fit to confer; but it may, with all submission, be more proper to enquire whether so valuable a privilege of the sovereign might not, upon good and wise reasons, be resumed, than how the exercise of it came to be originally discontinued. One of the most heroic actions by which the patron of the order"—a fraudulent contractor—"is said to have signalised himself, was in the defence of a young lady no less distinguished by her personal accomplishments than by her high birth."—Oh Anstis, precursor of Jenkins!—"I am under no obligations"—cautious Anstis!—"to verify all the circumstances of that story; however, I may inoffensively say that the moral of it may be extended, to show that it is very consistent with an order nominated by St. George, that all the advantages at any time belonging to the other sex should be inviolably preserved to them; and that it will be unaccountable if, among so great a number of heroes, several champions should not be found to assert and espouse their cause. In all probability"—here the cloven foot shows itself—"they would not at this time have wanted any advocate, if the rebellious war"—traitorous Anstis!—"had not prevented the revival and the re-establishment of the custom by Charles the First, a prince who, as the noble historian characterises him, 'kept state to the full, which made his court very orderly.'" This supplication caused some little talk, and, in 1731, a report was spread that Queen Caroline entertained an idea of conferring degrees and stars of honour on ladies of quality. There appears no valid reason why she should not have done so, if the saying of a late nobleman be as clever as it was

thought. He declared that he coveted the garter, "because it was the only English order given without reference to merit." Neither the supplication of Anstis, nor the wish of George the Second's amiable queen, was spontaneous. They were suggested by the foundation of the Austrian Order of the Starry Cross, the most ancient of purely feminine orders of chivalry.

The Austrian Order of the Starry Cross owes its origin to Eleanor Gonzaga, widow of the Emperor Ferdinand the Second. The origin of the order was a miracle. The House of Hapsburg has long asserted that it has in its possession a small piece of the true cross, and the Emperors Maximilian and Frederick the Third wore that relic about their persons, enclosed in a cross of gold. After the death of the latter, Leopold the Third, his successor, presented it to the widowed empress, daughter of Duke Charles the Second of Mantua, to comfort her in her widowhood. She kept it very carefully locked in a small box, adorned with crystal and enamel, and covered with silk. It happened that in the night of the 2nd of February, 1668, a fire suddenly broke out in the imperial castle at Vienna, just below the apartments of the Empress Eleanor; the fire soon reached them, and the empress only escaped with difficulty. On the following day search was made for the relic, and it was discovered among the ruins, fortunately untouched by the conflagration, with the exception of the metal, which was partly melted. The empress was so rejoiced at the incident that she ordered a solemn procession, and resolved to found a female order—not only, as the statutes say, to commemorate the miraculous event, but also to induce the members to devote themselves thoroughly to the worship of the Holy Cross, and pass their lives in the exercise of religion and works of charity. Pope Clement the Ninth confirmed the new order by a bull, the Emperor Leopold confirmed the statutes, and the order received its name after the constellation in the southern hemisphere. It is not difficult to believe that a feminine decoration has undergone several changes of fashion since 1668. It now takes the form of an oval medal, with broad blue enamelled edging, encompassing the Austrian eagle, with golden claws, upon which rests a green enamelled golden cross, mounted in brown wood. Upon it is, in black letters upon a white ground, the motto of the

order, "Salus et gloria." It is worn on the left side, suspended by a bow of black silk ribbon.

The next founded of female orders has a very different origin. It was established in 1714 by the Czar Peter, in honour of Martha Rabe, a Livonian woman, the wife of a Swedish dragoon, who, after a variety of unedifying adventures, induced the Czar to make her Empress of Russia, under the name of Catherine the First. Originally men were received into this order, but at a later period the decoration was strictly confined to ladies. The order is divided into two classes, the number of the grand crosses being limited to the princesses of the imperial family, and twelve noble ladies of the highest Russian aristocracy. This order has, within a few years, been conferred on three of our own princesses—the Princess Helena, the Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, and the Princess Beatrice. The grand cross, adorned with diamonds, is worn across the right shoulder towards the left side, by a broad poppy-red ribbon with silver stripes. This ribbon was formerly blue—but "souvent femme varie." On the ribbon is embroidered the equivalent in Russian for "For Love and Fatherland." The reverse is very curious, showing an eyrie at the top of an old tower, at the foot of which two eagles, with serpents in their beaks, are seen in the act of carrying them up as food for their young. Above are the words, "Æquat munia comparis," in allusion to the services rendered by the young Catharine to the much older Peter. The costume consists of silver stuff with gold embroidery, and of hat and bow of green velvet.

Holy Russia has another decoration for ladies—the Maria Medal, founded in 1828 in memory of Maria Feodorowna, by her son, the Emperor Nicholas. It is a decoration "reserved solely for ladies of unblemished character, for faithful service," and is generally conferred on the directresses of institutions founded by the Empress Maria. The Maria Medal has one peculiarity: "the possessors cannot, under any circumstances, be deprived of it." The ribbon is of the same crimson and black stripe as that of the Order of St. Vladimir. Bavaria boasts four female orders. To become a member of the Order of St. Elizabeth, a lady must be a Roman Catholic, and be able to show her sixteen quarterings—the proof of noble descent running through sixteen generations of her own or her hus-

band's ancestors. The badge, a white enamelled cross, with a figure of St. Elizabeth, is worn on the left breast by a blue ribbon with red borders. This ornament entails responsibilities. No one entitled to it can appear in public without it, except by fine of one ducat. Two Bavarian orders are in honour of St. Ann—one at Munich, and the other at Würzburg; both partake of a coconventual character, and both demand orthodoxy and the sixteen quarterings as qualifications. The Order of Theresa was founded by the late Queen of Bavaria for unmarried noblewomen, and includes a pension, which ceases with marriage. If, however, the noble damsels marry suitably, according to their rank, they are allowed to wear the insignia for the future as honorary ladies. This is no slight privilege to blondes. The badge is a cross, worn by a bow of a white watered ribbon, with two sky-blue stripes, fastened to the left breast; and on gala days, when at court, a similar broad ribbon is thrown across the right shoulder towards the left hip. The costume is a dress of bright blue silk.

Bavaria's neighbour, Wurtemberg, boasts only one female order and that of recent formation, having been created at the conclusion of the Franco-German war by King Charles, in honour of his queen, Olga, the eldest sister of the Czar. Spain has the Order of Maria Louisa, which is episcene. The queen nominates the lady members, who are bound to visit, once a month, one of the hospitals for females or some other similar institution, and also to order mass to be read in their presence once a year for the souls of departed members. The badge is worn across the right shoulder by a broad violet ribbon, with white stripes in the middle. Portugal has an exclusively feminine order—that of St. Isabella, founded by the Prince Regent, Don John, in 1801. This order is limited to twenty-six ladies—besides princesses of the royal family and of foreign reigning houses—who must be married, or, in default of marriage, be of the full age of twenty-six years.

One of the best known distinctions for ladies is that of the Order of Louisa of Prussia; a decoration created by the father of the present Emperor of Germany, in memory of his gifted and high-spirited queen—she who faced Napoleon before the Treaty of Tilsit, and experienced rough treatment at his hands. It was originally a decoration for services rendered by women

in hospitals and otherwise, to the wounded and sick military in the war of 1813 and 1814. No quarterings are necessary to qualify for this decoration.

Prussia has a second feminine decoration. At the close of the Franco-German War, the Emperor added a female branch to the Cross of Merit—a distinction at one time purely military, but now, like the Order of the Bath, both civil and military. Another order of recent growth is that of Sidonia of Saxony, founded in 1871. The Order of the Wendish Crown—Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Strelitz—is partially episcene; that is to say the grand cross is given to ladies.

Other family orders there are for ladies, which do not possess any great amount of general interest, and may be left undescribed here.

It is not strange that, even in the bright roll of ladies' orders of chivalry, there should be a dark and saddening line. Among the dead and gone tinsel—shot on the rubbish heap, as it were, but euphemistically styled by the man of Gotha, "Orders conferred by the sovereigns of states no longer existing, and orders which are not acknowledged by the government of the countries to which they belong"—is mention of the Order of St. Charles, for ladies, founded by the unfortunate Maximilian, some time Emperor of Mexico, by the grace of foreign bayonets. "The empress," adds the man of Gotha, "conferred this decoration in concert with the emperor, to recompense piety, humility, and charity." Alas, poor lady knight!

OLD LETTERS.

AY, better burn them. What does it avail
To treasure the dumb words so dear to us?
Like dead leaves tossed before the autumn gale
Will be each written page we cherish thus,
When Time's great wind has swept them all away—
The smiles, loves, tears, and hatreds of to-day.

Living, we hoard our letters, holding them
Sacred and safe, as almost sentient things;
So strong the yearning tide of grief to stem,
So true, when doubt creeps in, or treason stings;
Parting may smile, each golden bridge between;
Change cannot come, where such stamped faith has
been.

Dying, we leave them to our children's care,
Our well-prized solace, records of the time
When life lay spread before us, rich and fair,
And love and hope spoke prophecies sublime;
Lore slowly gathered through laborious hours,
Wit's playful flashes, sweet poetic flowers.

All these to us, to us—and for awhile,
Our loved will guard the casket where they lie,
Glancing them over with a tearful smile,
Touching their yellowing foldings tenderly;
A little while—but Life and Time are strong,
Our dearest cannot keep such vigils long.

And by-and-by, the cold bright eyes of youth,
Lighting on such old floesams of the past,
The shattered spars of trust, and hope, and truth,
On the blank shore of Time's great ocean cast,
Will read and judge, with naught of soft behaving,
Dissecting, sneering, anything but loving.

So, let us burn them all, the tottering words
The guided baby fingers wrote us first,
The school-boy scribble—lines the man affords
To the old eyes that watched—old hands that nursed,
The girl's sweet nonsense, confidence of friend,
And these, our own, ours only, till the end.

Heap them together, one last fervent kiss,
Then, let them turn, ere we do, into dust,
Ashes to ashes. Well and wise it is,
To meet the end that comes, as come it must;
And leave no relics to grow grey and rotten,
Waiting the certain doom of the forgotten.

PANSIE.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

I HAVE been ten days at Merlewood. Never in my life have I seen such scenery as that which greets my eyes every morning, as I pull up the blind of my window and look forth into the dawn of a new day. Merlewood lies at the head of a bay, formed by a deep and narrow chasm in the rugged Cornish coast. At the entrance of this bay, on either hand, stands a sentinel rock, and between and beyond these lies a broad surface of scintillating sea; purple when the clouds cast changeful shadows on its breast, blue when the sky is clear above. Cloud and sky are now and again the background for some white-winged gull, whose graceful flight, and still more graceful swoop to touch the shimmering water, I am never tired of watching. When I come to think of it, it is strange that I, a visitor in the house where Dick is also a guest, should spend so much time looking through that window, and watching the cloud-shadows play hide-and-seek with each other in the rocky dells. The fact is, the atmosphere doesn't suit me. To put it plainly, I find that I don't like people who possess "many sterling qualities;" in other words, I don't like Dick's sister.

There seems a sort of disloyalty in admitting that I don't like anyone belonging to Dick, even to myself. And then it is so difficult to analyse what I mean and feel about Mrs. Colquhoun. If a person is simply perfect as to appearance, manner, and dress, faultless as a hostess in all the refinements of hospitality, and yet you feel miserable in her presence, and catch yourself wishing that you had never seen her, and that she had never seen you, the position is a difficult one to define.

Every hour since I came to Merle-

wood, every day that Dick and I have been together in the society of Harriet—Mrs. Colquhoun—I have felt as if an awful, intangible something was drifting Dick from me; and as if I were some poor, helpless child, standing on the bank of a dark river, whose current bears away the sweetest blossom that my hands have ever gathered.

Nothing can be kinder than my hostess, nothing more considerate; and yet I feel ashamed of even a happy, loving glance flashing from Dick's grey eyes, and finding a response in mine; and as he holds my hand in a lingering clasp when I bid him good-night, I meet Mrs. Colquhoun's cold, calm, all-seeing, all-comprehending eyes, and feel as if our tenderness for each other were something contraband. I feel that I am growing foolishly timid and absurdly shy in my manner to Dick; but I cannot help it; and I have a suspicion that Dick feels the same strange power gathering about him, struggles against it as I do, and equally vainly. Mrs. Colquhoun must always have been utterly above all such tender follies as happy glances and lingering hand-clasps; she must have been the same from the beginning—cold, calm, passionless, faultless. Even in undisciplined youth she can never have got into a passion like Nell does when Chubby—

As the thought of those dear, faulty, tiresome children comes over me, oh what a flood of longing rises in my soul! A longing just for one of the good old twilight romps in the long, narrow school-room; a regular scramble, with baby Maud in the middle, and Chubby making believe to be the fiercest of wolves, whose den is behind the bookcase!

Only once in all these ten long days have I got Dick to myself. We were out in the beech-woods, and it was late in the evening. The leaves, now falling fast, rustled under our feet. Here and there a faint white mist lay close, and above all, the harvest moon sailed in a glorious sky, whose purple depths set off the brightness of her beauty to the utmost.

When we started for this after-dinner stroll, we were a *partie carrée*—Mrs. Colquhoun and her husband, Dick and I. We had fallen into the usual procession these expeditions resolved themselves into: Dick and his sister leading the way, with the diminutive owner of Merlewood and myself bringing up the rear: when all at once someone—upon whose pathway in life may

all blessings rest!—required the presence of our hostess, and with an unwillingness that not all her tact could conceal, she left us. Hardly had the stately figure of his wife vanished from our sight, when Mr. Colquhoun's little green-grey eyes gave me a meaning and sympathetic look, and, presto! he too moved quickly off among the golden-brown beech-trees that surrounded us on all sides. Having mentally hugged the little man for his considerate departure, I caught fast hold of Dick's arm with both my hands, and tried to put into words the content I felt.

"Oh Dick—darling—I am so glad!"

He gave a comprehensive glance round, and seeing no indication of our solitude being disturbed, drew me to his side, and I stood on tip-toe to meet the kiss that dropped upon my happy mouth. I dare say it was very undignified to show my gladness and my love in such open fashion; but it seemed as natural to me to let Dick read my inmost heart, as it is to a flower to unfold its blossom when the sun shines upon it.

All through those ten days of restraint I had been garnering up things to say to Dick when I should get the chance; and now that the chance had come—behold, I was dumb! For the greater number of the questions I had meant to ask had reference to his sister Harriet, and something warned me that they would sound unwelcomely in his ears; I had gradually come to realise the fact that some subtle strength of influence about her character had been a life-long power over Dick, and that even while at times he winced under it, he could not shake it off. So I was silent; happy too, for the time being, with the moonlight shimmering down upon us, and here and there a glimpse of the curling sea showing through the gaps in the massed branches of the trees. We paced slowly on, Dick's curly head bent low, his eyes full of a restful, tender light, his hand on mine. . . . Is it nothing, think you, to be perfectly happy just once? To have one day—one evening—one hour—to look back upon and say: "It had no flaw?"

Sometimes in my dreams I wander in that wood again, and hear the sea moaning in the hollow rocks, and the breeze whispering among the leaves, crisp with autumn; I hear the voice, that none can ever equal for sweetness in my ears, murmur as we go upon our way, "Heart-ease, my little Pansie—"

We are going to a party to-night. It is

the first bit of dissipation that has offered itself since my arrival at Merlewood, and I am anxious to make a creditable appearance. I feel that if my toilette is unbecoming, Mrs. Colquhoun's deliberately critical inspection will make me shrivel up, and feel as if I ought to apologise for offending her sense of the beautiful. My resources are limited, very much so, in fact; but we Merivales, though often almost reduced to penury as regards our wardrobes, are not deficient in good taste; and a slender figure goes a great way towards making the plainest dress look presentable.

I plait my hair, which is long and plentiful, into a coronal, thereby artfully adding a couple of inches to my insignificant stature; and then I don the black silk robe that Janet had pronounced "fit for a queen." Perhaps Janet's experiences of royal ladies is limited; at all events I hardly feel very royal in my sombre attire, though I am glad its fit is so faultless and its trained skirt so long. I try the effect of one deep crimson rose in my hair, and another at my breast, by way of relieving the general gloom, and consider the idea a success, more especially when combined with pearl-grey gloves. As I study my general effect in the tall pier-glass, I give a short quick sigh to think that mamma cannot see me, and then smile to think how Nell would clap her hands, and Chubby would blow out his cheeks and make impertinent comments on my grandeur. Then I wrap myself round in an Indian scarf that mamma unearthed from the few treasures still remaining to her, and descend to the drawing-room, with its crimson velvet portières and endless mirrors. There I find the three others assembled; Mrs. Colquhoun gorgeous in crimson and gold. It is a long drive to our destination, and I daresay I should weary but for the happy chance that has placed Dick at my side, and the delightfully cloudy condition of the sky, which obscures the moon, and allows my hand to lie snugly in his without fear of detection.

This is my first experience of "society," and I am quite dazzled by the glare of light and the crowd of people. I am presented to the hostess, a little fat woman, who greets Mrs. Colquhoun with gushing fervour, and then Dick and I wander away together through the suite of drawing-rooms. As we are entering the third—a small octagonal room, luxuriantly furnished as a lady's boudoir, and lighted by a

hanging lamp—Dick stops suddenly, and as I look up at him I see, to my great terror, that all trace of colour has left his cheek, and that his eyes are fixed in silent wonder, and with something in them that is half fear, half joy, upon a woman who is standing just where the light falls full upon her lovely haughty face and graceful form. She too is strangely moved, and grows as white as the pearls that wreath her raven hair and clasp her milk-white throat, while the same mingling of passionate gladness and nervous dread dawns in her eyes as they meet his. A moment or two and she bends low, yet with the dignity of a queen; and Dick—my Dick—trembles as he returns her greeting, while I feel that his moustache hides a lip that quivers with some sudden emotion that the sight of that woman has evoked.

Then Dick and I pass on in silence. I am choking, and could not speak though my life depended on my eloquence. It is as though a gulf had suddenly yawned at my feet, and across its dark abyss I gazed at the man I love, for ever and for ever parted from me.

"I have been looking for you everywhere," says an even, quiet voice at my shoulder, and there is Dick's sister. I see a meaning look pass between them, pleading as it seems to me on his side, almost threatening on hers; and then I find myself drifted to a couch, while Mrs. Colquhoun subsides gracefully into a place by my side, and I know that I shall never get rid of her again the whole evening.

And I never do.

People come and go, and make clever remarks and imbecile remarks, and comment on the weather, and the harvest, and the birds that are the yield of that season's shooting, and the various ailments, and misfortunes, and good fortunes of their friends and relatives; but Mrs. Colquhoun never leaves my side, and Dick has vanished, and I am "a-weary, a-weary," like that mournful maiden in her moated grange. Indeed I begin to think I shall see Dick no more that evening, when all at once I catch a glimpse of him, towering above his fellows, and looking earnestly—yearningly—and as if spellbound against his will, at something.

A moment more enlightens me as to the object of his gaze, for through the archway that leads into the farther room we have a view of the piano; and there, slowly drawing off the gloves from her slender white hands, stands the lady of the

raven locks and gleaming pearls. She takes her place upon the music-chair, strikes a few plaintive chords, and then soft, full, low, vibrating notes of melody rise and fall, and every voice is hushed under the spell of their surpassing sweetness.

We've journeyed together so long, sweetheart,
That it's sad to be parted now.

How distinctly each word thrills to the hearts of the hearers, with what passionate longing is each tremulous tone laden! If a man had ever loved that woman, how could he look and listen, and forget?

As we drive home through the still, dark night, Dick's hand does not seek mine. Once I hear him softly hum the refrain of the song that her lips had uttered, and as we pass through the dimly-lighted streets of a country town, I see a self-complacent smile on Mrs. Colquhoun's lips.

When we reach Merlewood it is Mr. Colquhoun, not Dick, that hands me from the carriage. The little man's face wears a troubled look, and his hand presses mine in a squeeze that I know is meant to be comforting and reassuring. In some way or other I have long since intuitively recognised the story of this man's life—learnt that Harriet Ferris, in the zenith of her youth and beauty, married him for his possessions—married him to be the mistress of Merlewood and the sharer of his ample rent-roll; that she had never had even the feeblest love for him, and let him know this quickly enough, once the advantages that alone made him desirable as a husband in her eyes were secured. All this knowledge had come to me intuitively, and created a link of sympathy between me and the lonely little man who led a life of isolation as complete as though he were the inhabitant of some desert island; and now, in the hour of my bitter trial, there was comfort in the mute expression of his pity. I think he was going to offer me the support of his arm up the steps; but be this as it may, a peremptory call from his liege lady causes him to hurry to her side; and I—cold, miserable, and weary, beyond all power of words to say—hurry into the house alone, fearing nothing just then so much as the touch of Dick's hand, or the sound of Dick's voice. I meant to go upstairs; but all at once my heart begins to beat heavily, and a glamour comes over my sight, and makes my feet falter; so I turn aside into the drawing-room, and, crouching

down upon a sofa, hide my face upon my hands.

What is it that has come upon me? What is the story that forms a link between Dick Ferris—the man whose promised wife I am—and that woman with the soft dark eyes and maddening voice? Bewildering thoughts gather themselves into inexplicable knots of confusion in my mind, and all the time a throbbing pain beats across my brow, and there is a singing sound in my ears.

There is some other sound in my ears too, shortly; for Dick and his sister have come hurriedly into the next room. It is lighted up by the faint disc of a reading-lamp, while the one that I am in has no light beyond the glow of a few dying embers in the grate, and the heavy portières are more than half closed.

"Harriet, did you know that Margaret Power was here—in Cornwall? Did you know that we should meet her to-night?" says Dick, in a voice that is bereft of all its usual calm.

We all have our good points, I suppose, and apparently Mrs. Colquhoun's is a truthful courage; for she answers very quietly, yet with a certain triumphant defiance:

"Yes, I did know that we should meet Margaret Power to-night; and the result of that meeting has, I think, shown you the state of your own heart. Dick, you must not marry that girl—you must not marry Pansie Merivale. I have never told you so yet, but now I may say plainly that I do not like her."

"What has that to do with my marrying her?" says Dick, and I know by the sound of his voice that he is white with rage, and has taken up arms in my defence.

"Nothing, if you choose to count it so," she answers, still in the same measured tones; "but I am free to hold what opinions I choose, and I say again that I do not like her. She is insignificant in body and in mind, and I see no one quality about her that is any compensation for her being the penniless daughter of a—black-leg."

I have never heard this term applied to my father before, I have assuredly no right to hear it now; I am doing the meanest action of which anyone can be capable—listening to a conversation that is not meant for my ear. But evil possesses me; my great agony dulls my sense of right and wrong—my perception of honour and dishonour. I clench my

teeth as Mrs. Colquhoun's words hit like blows; but I do not stir. To add to my pain a voice within me cries out, "It is true; it is true. You know it is; you are just that and nothing more—the penniless daughter of a blackleg! You have nothing to bring to this man—nothing save the great love that is even now rending and tearing at your heart, and blinding your eyes with tears. Think of that woman's face as her glance fell upon him, and ask yourself if you are any better dowered in love for him than she is?"

"Of course, my opinion may be—allow me to say it is, for the first time, Dick—nothing to you; but there is a stronger reason why you should not marry this girl whose colourless character and sentimental love for you soothed your wounded self-love, sore from that parting with Margaret Power—you do not love her."

I slip from the couch as Mrs. Colquhoun speaks; I fall upon my knees in the darkness, cowering down as from a blow that I know is about to fall.

"Harriet, you shall not speak such words to me. She loves me, my poor darling, my little Heartsease, with all her gentle heart!"

In that moment I have read the story of the past. I know it all, as though some tongue had told it over to me, word by word, and I know that Dick has never loved me as he once loved Margaret Power; or as he loves her now when she has once more, in her beauty and her charm, crossed his pathway.

"You are not the first man," I hear Dick's sister continue, "who has fancied his heart caught on the rebound; and I can well imagine the child's adoration of you soothed the old pain; but, if you vaunt her love for you, I can match the boast. Margaret Power quarrelled with you—loving you all the while; sent you from her—loving you all the while——"

There is a smothered exclamation from Dick; but she takes no heed.

"In the passion of her pain and her resentment she promised to become the wife of a man, at once titled and a millionaire—loving you all the while; but at the last, at the very last, she dare not, could not carry out her pledge. She told him all the truth, and he released her——"

"I never knew—you never told me!"

The words come from Dick's lips like a cry of pain.

"It was too late; you were engaged, to

that child whom you had met, and in whose love you told me you had found 'rest and healing.' I knew you well enough to know you would be true to her, for honour's sake, unless by some coup d'état I could unveil to your eyes the enormity of the sacrifice, and the state of your own heart—and Margaret's——"

"Oh my God!"

I know the words are uttered by white lips; white with the anguish that her words cause. He would not care for my being the "penniless daughter of a black-leg;" he would not sell his soul for wealth and position as his sister has done; but, he loves this dark-eyed lovely woman with a passion and intensity that he never has given, and never can give to me!

What a beautiful thing is the death of a day!

A line or two of pale orange-pink on the horizon; overhead just a faint rose-tint here and there; an opal-tinged mist in the distance; the river lying dark and still, a mirror in which each separate pollard has its clear reflection—a reflection so clear as to be a duplicate of itself; and above all, the grand massive towers of the Minster keeping watch over the venerable city.

It is at the close of such a fair eventide, that once again I near the city of York. I have travelled all day, from early dawn; and I suppose the usual number of hours have been consumed in the journey. I cannot, however, gauge or define the duration of time; for surely it is a lifetime since I crouched in that darkened room, and listened to words that sounded in my ears as "the crack of doom."

There has been nothing romantic or mysterious in my flight from Merlewood. No one is uncertain as to my route, nor yet is it needful to have the grounds searched or the bay dredged for my possible corpse. I do not believe in interviews, and scenes, and picturesque partings between people who must be torn asunder. "If 'twere done, then 'twere well it were done quickly," is to my mind one of the wisest sayings on record.

Somehow, I hardly know how, I got to my room that night, after hearing the story of Dick's "first love;" somehow, I wrote to him, and though I daresay the words were tremulously penned, and I know that a tear splashed down upon the paper more than once, I am sure the sense

of what I wanted to say was clear, and to the purpose.

"I could not help it, Dick; I overheard you and your sister talking to-night. I know all about how you love Margaret Power. I am glad I have been some little comfort to you, sometimes. When I have written this I am going to push it under your door. Then I am going to pack up a few things in my hand-bag, and walk to the station in the early morning before any of you are stirring. I shall catch the first train that passes through to the north. No one need be anxious about me; no one need to come and see after me, for I am going straight home to mamma, and I know the children will be pleased to have me back. There is only one thing I want you to do for me, and that is—never try to see me, and never write to me about anything. Nothing can do any good; and that you know as well as I do. Good-bye, dear Dick." I did not sign any name to the letter; he would know quite well without that, that it came from her whom he used once to call his "little Heartsease." Sometimes, even now, when life's journey is very far traversed, I seem to see, as in a dream, that other journey, when a wan, white-faced girl lay huddled in the corner of a railway carriage, and moaned in the exceeding bitterness of her pain, "Oh Dick! I thought you loved me, dear, indeed I did!"

And then I fancy I see her—poor young weary creature—walking slowly up the avenue, through the ragged and neglected garden of her home, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but ever straight on—straight on, towards one whose love she knows can never fail. At last, reaching the "haven where she would be," I see her sink upon her knees beside her mother's couch and hear her cry.

"Mother—it is I—your child—Pansie—come back to you, never to leave you any more! Dear—it is you who must be my 'Heartsease' now!"

FRENCH ALMANACKS.

It is recounted of the present Chancellor of the German Empire, that when he was in Paris as ambassador, he wrote to his wife that he had a clock in each room in his house, but that he could never discern what time it was. The traveller in

France, who has frequently left the Bastille at eight o'clock, to arrive at the Madeleine only to find himself calmly confronted by an innocent clock-face testifying to half-past seven, has probably felt the sense of utter confusion which annoyed Prince Bismarck. Each Frenchman believes emphatically in his own clock, to the exclusion of all others, and sets it to suit himself. Perhaps there is no city in the world where the hour of twelve is sounded so many times as in Lutetia. The ponderous dozen of strokes from some tall, old-fashioned church-tower, is followed by echoes throughout the neighbourhood from clocks large and little, clocks squat and clocks tall, the gorgeous clock of the epoch of Louis the Fourteenth, and the wee brass clock gracing the mantel of the humble sewing-girl.

I was once foolish enough to fix a business appointment for mid-day, at some distance from my lodgings. I took the necessary precaution to look at my watch, and was gratified to perceive that I had half an hour to spare, just at the moment that a spectre clock, in some invisible apartment near by, sounded twelve. Doubt instantly seized me; I grasped my hat and cane, and darted out. The workmen in the great packing-shop on the street-corner were laying aside their aprons, and preparing to go to what they are pleased to call their breakfast; it was, therefore, but eleven A.M. I looked in at the apothecary's; a dull little time-piece, which seemed to have been dosed with mineral poisons until its enfeebled constitution was tumbling to ruin, assured me that it was ten minutes past eleven. A glance in at the baker's window forbade me to expect any testimony there to my punctuality, for it mentioned five minutes past twelve. At last I approached the jeweller's. Great goddesses of the rolling hours! the largest clock in the gilded window sternly informed me that it was half-past twelve. I jumped into a carriage, hastened to the place named for the rendezvous, where the most coquettish and daintiest of clocks was just denoting half-past eleven with loud and musical ting!

Frenchmen enjoy differing from their neighbours in clocks, as in ideas. With what emphasis does the grocer at the corner of the Rue des Enfants Perdus compel you to silence by the startling conclusion: "Our discussion is of no avail, my friend; you have your fixed ideas—I have mine." It would seem as ridiculous

to him to agree with you on some question which had been in dispute, as to set his clock by his neighbour's. Who ever saw two Gauls compare watches? They would scorn to do it. Indeed, if the grocer could invent a new system for keeping time, something which should be for all others a total mystery, a puzzle past finding out, he would do it with the utmost pleasure.

As in clocks, so in almanacks; which brings me to my subject. Do not for an instant fancy that all the good people of France could force themselves to accept a standard Old Farmer's Almanack. One clique would swear by its predictions, while another would deny them in toto. The consequence of this individuality of thought has been the gradual accumulation, during the last hundred years, of eighty or ninety calendars of the seasons, each one of which is adapted to a special class of readers, and to that class alone. Each journal publishes its almanack; each trade has one especially prepared for it, and under the protection of its particular patron saint. Dream not that the Almanack for Young Mothers is ever heard of by the solemn bourgeois, who annually renews his subscription to the Tall Lane Messenger of Strasbourg, a calendar, whose origin, as the cockney says of that of Paris itself, "is lost in the night of time." The stately dames and melancholy-looking messieurs who read no paper except the Univers, would scarcely admit to their households the new Almanack of Games, or the Almanack-Manual of Tricks with Cards, both of which festive publications are sold seriously, and contain the names of all the saints in their calendar.

The serving classes here have their especial almanacks, from which nothing can turn their attention. With what intense interest, akin to reverence, does Augustine, the cook, seated at night in her little kitchen, in front of the range, in which the frail heat of the ephemeral charcoal has died away, turn the leaves of the tiny squat volume, called The Oracle of Ladies and Misses! The cabalistic pictures on the cover frighten her; she sees ghosts in the kitchen corner. Tremblingly, according to the somewhat complicated directions in the first pages of the book, she consults the future concerning her health and her matrimonial prospects; and she believes each answer implicitly. Surely she could nowhere else in the great city, for fifty centimes, procure such transports of soul as she gets from this volume, which she

places carefully in her bosom when she goes to rest. Alphonse, the barber, who sometimes passes by her kitchen, and utters a few pleasant words to the poor "slavey" among her pots and kettles, has, perhaps, purchased the Almanack of Dreams, on the flaming covers of which, a bevy of devils, dancing on the stomach of a sleeping man, is depicted. In this miraculous volume, Alphonse finds, duly catalogued, the interpretation of all dreams or visions which lighten or horrify his slumbers during the year. It is gratifying to his mind to possess an authority which can duly warn him, in case he dreams of red vinegar, that he is about to receive an affront; or if white vinegar appear, that he is to insult someone else. How sweet to dream of the Pope, when, on awakening, you discover by reference to the alphabetical catalogue, that it ensures you happiness in the next world; yet how mystifying at the same time, to discover that, if in your dream you make a bargain with the devil, it indicates success. Alphonse scarcely needs this almanack, because his guild, which numbers many thousands of busy workers in Paris, has one of its own, marvellously decorated with most astounding capillary designs. He yields to the temptation to purchase, however, because it is well to pass in the quarter for a man of talent; and one can readily do that, if he knows—as the Almanack of Dreams can teach him—how to tell fortunes from the little pool of black coffee left on the table of the humble restaurant where he dines, or can give "counsels to the ladies" whose tresses he adorns and braids. As for the Astrological and Prophetic Almanacks, they are the joy of antique and snuff-besprinkled concierges. As it is eminently necessary that these ancient females, who leave their roof-trees hardly twice a year, should know all the signs of the weather, the almanacks which they specially affect are filled with such valuable information as the following: "When a storm threatens, the ass wags his ears in lively fashion; the dog launches into air his howl, so plaintive and so sad; the horse is unquiet, and moves about constantly; as for the cat, who does not know with what attentive care he licks his fur when it is about to rain, and with what perseverance he licks his paw and passes it, moistened, behind his ear?" Now it is absolutely necessary to the happiness of every antiquated concierge that she should possess a cat; and what emotions arise in

her soul when she suddenly discovers, by means of her almanack, that the faithful animal is an infallible barometer! Nor is this all. The Astrological and Prophetic Almanacks give many lengthy and exciting accounts of strange occurrences, calculated to thrill even the venerable blood of these women-of-all-work. As the concierges have much climbing of stairs, much sweeping of passage-ways, much grumbling at lodgers to perform, and as their rest is broken at night by clamorous demands for admission from belated folk, the almanack generally lasts the year round, and the dames have the agreeable excitement of the arrival of a new pleasure before the old one is exhausted. Most of the concierges have heard of Nostradamus, and it fills them with a species of awe to discover that the Prophetic Almanack is edited by a nephew of the famous sayer of prophecies. This book is looked upon with fear and trembling, and when the nightly reading is finished, it is laid away in a cupboard, or hidden in a vase on the diminutive chimney-piece.

The newspaper's almanack, now and then, comes under the paternal eye of an over-wise government, anxious to dictate taste in literature to its subjects. In the palmy days of the De Fourtoun-De Broglie ministry, the almanack which the editors of *La République Française*—Gambetta's journal—thought fit to offer to the world's attention was instantly seized, and the edition went into some black-hole which no one wots of. Such would be the fate of any almanack which should presume to trifle with the names of the saints in the calendar, or to poke fun at the magistracy's wigs or the prelates' gowns. Joyous and erratic publications like the almanack of the Charivari, the Parisian Punch, pass on to the bookseller's counter after but trifling inspection, for their mission is to provoke laughter; and so long as they do not turn the governmental authorities to ridicule, they may do pretty much as they please. For your ridicule is a terribly destructive agent in France, and may not be aimed at state or church, although it may pound away at social follies as hard as it can. It may, likewise, be exercised upon the stranger; for unless the ordinary Frenchman can see something ridiculous in the visitor from other climes, he finds him rather annoying, and begrudges him the place which he fills in the street, the theatre, and the restaurant. Maitre Charivari, with his terrible pencil,

yearly transpires many a sham, and some day he will, doubtless, be permitted to print whatever he desires concerning political windbags and ecclesiastical mummers. But just now, the prey which he most delights in is the fop of the boulevard; the promiscuous crowds which gather in gardens, theatrical exhibitions, and balls, to which the entrances are not guarded with severity; and the faces always to be found in the parlours of the highest society. It is but natural that Grévin should also have an almanack, and should make sportive use of it. Grévin is a comic artist of marvellous force, vivacity, and skill. With half-a-dozen strokes of his agile pencil he brings before one's eyes the astonishingly ridiculous types which the French produce in such large numbers, and which never seem to the mass of them other than comely and quite natural. Grévin designs costumes for those theatres which devote themselves to the productions of fairy spectacles and melodramas. On a recent occasion, his fruitful imagination brought forth the sketches for eleven hundred different dresses, destined to figure in the enormous fantasy of *Rothomago*, at the *Châtelet Theatre*. At another time he employed an afternoon in sketching one hundred and eighty various dresses for *Johann Strauss's* latest opera bouffe. His almanack has a preface, unlike many of its humbler brethren—a preface in which it is announced that, “if in this volume manners and customs are attacked, it is only the bad ones; the good are never troubled.” The double almanack of the merry *Boquillon* follows upon the heels of its superior, the *Grévin*. *Boquillon* is the joy of the tiny soldiers who come up from the provinces to occupy, for a specified time, the great gloomy barracks scattered here and there throughout Paris. Little enough of gaiety or of even moderate pleasure has the small awkward soldier in his garrison-days, and the *Boquillon* which he reads furtively, and with occasional glances over his shoulders, when he is out on leave, brings him a certain amount of sunshine, which not even the flask of red wine, or the raspberry sirup diluted with soda-water, furnished to him in the wine-shop, can afford. If the grave, sardonic colonels who promenade the boulevards from four to six of a fine afternoon, and who twirl their moustaches with ferocious emphasis when a blond stranger passes, murmuring to themselves, “It is a Prussian!”—if these valiant sons of Mars

should find the poor soldier with *Boquillon's* almanack in his hand, they would, perhaps, send him to the guard-house for a term varying from three days to three weeks; for *Boquillon* is at heart a Republican, and the scrupulous representatives of law and order have decided that no Republican documents may enter the barracks of the armies of the Republic. But the soldier is shrewd; he learns by heart the sharp stories told by *Boquillon*, at the expense of monsieur the curé, or the Bonapartist deputy, or the monarchical aspirant to the throne, and he recites them with glee to his comrades when neither drill-sergeant nor colonel is near at hand. And thus is *Boquillon* a mighty force in the land, despite press-laws, and guard-rooms, and bombastical threats, which seem ridiculous enough in the nineteenth century.

The element of patriotism certainly is not lacking in these almanacks, and the *Little National* is especially devoted to the encouragement of the heroic spirit. It has an old-fashioned fierce *Zouave*, a souvenir of the Italian and Crimean campaigns, on its handsome cover; and that *Zouave* grasps in his brawny hands the flag of France, while his coarse lips seem intoning the exhilarating *Marseillaise*. The volume is filled with military statistics, and with many useful instructions for the defence of villages, of cities, and, in short, ten thousand things which a people perpetually menaced by powerful neighbours needs to know.

The *Young Mother's Almanack* has, fortunately, many thousands of readers, and possibly to this beneficent work and others of its class the increase in the population of France, demonstrated by the last census, is due. A laureate of the Institute, a worthy and efficient physician, was the originator of this annual; and he wrote sermons in it which set careless mothers thinking. The good doctor boldly establishes, in his preface, the fact that, of the three hundred and sixty thousand babes who die in their first year in France, nearly all perish from neglect of proper hygienic precautions; and he adds, alas! that the mothers and the nurses are alone culpable, because of their gross inexperience. There are few things more striking than the laureate-physician's list of customs of nurses and mammas, with regard to their offspring, compared with the necessary and proper practices. It appears that when *Monsieur Français* or *Mademoiselle*

Française comes into the world, nurse or mamma at once considers it a solemn duty to mould the infant's head. Now the infant's head must not be moulded. They confine the poor child's arms and legs in a strait-jacket, whereas the arms and legs should be left absolutely free. They crown the baby with three nightcaps, when one is sufficient, and sometimes too much. They give it all sorts of things to drink, when it should be allowed only a small draught from what Micawber so touchingly calls the "maternal fountain." They lay it in bed beside the mother, when it should be allowed to remain in its cradle. They rock it violently in its rocking-bed, when it should be rocked scarcely at all. They—horror of horrors!—rarely wash the new-born, when it should be washed often daily. They make it eat from the first day of its birth, when they should not allow it to eat until its teeth have appeared. They will not vaccinate it, whereas it must be vaccinated. They roll its little life out in perambulators, when they should invariably carry it in their arms. When its hair has grown they wait until the new moon before they cut it, whereas they should cut it irrespective of Luna's gentle ray. They insist that the child shall walk before its legs are strong enough to support it. They—but we have already quoted enough to show what pressing need for the laureate-doctor's almanack existed.

This charitable almanack also gives an interesting account of the crèches of Paris; establishments where infants are received and cared for, while their mothers are at work in the street or in manufactories. The object of the crèches is to enable poor mothers to have their babes with them some hours of each day, and to discourage the fatal practice of sending them into the country, where they are committed to the tender mercies of professional baby-farmers, or of rude peasants, who alienate them by gradual process from their parents. These institutions, now quite numerous, and the Society of Maternal Charity, founded in Paris in 1788, under the auspices of Marie Antoinette, save the lives of hundreds of infants every year.

Our brave doctor exhibits in startling colours goodly numbers of the causes which contribute to place France lowest in the rank of European nations with regard to the increase of population; and he prides himself upon the statement that

for each additional ten thousand mothers who read his almanack, he may count on ten thousand new defenders of the soil.

What shall we say of the joyous almanack of Polichinelle, the annual for the babes of France? It is a pretty book with a picture of Master Punch on the cover; and it is filled with little plays, such as the juvenile population of Paris is wont to attend at the open-air theatres in the Champs Elysées. What wonder that our neighbours are theatrical when, with their first lip, they are made acquainted with dramatic forms! The history of the jounnd Polichinelle might not be considered exactly edifying, in a moral sense, by teachers in our Sunday schools; but it has its pathetic passages, although for the most part it is infinitely diverting, and provokes to uproarious laughter. Now and then one sees a crowd of little folks bathed in tears, because of a tragic adventure enacted on the tiny scene before them; and one cannot repress a smile as he reflects that, twenty years hence, the same persons will grow pale at the Comédie-Française or the Gymnase, because of the misfortunes of some imaginary hero or heroine of adult comedy.

"All France is a great ball," said Sallentin; and it is quite appropriate that the French should have an Almanack of the Dance, filled with descriptions of waltzes, polkas, mazurkas, and minuets, and so daintily printed withal that even a great lady might condescend to take it in her gloved hands. This odd publication is sold by thousands yearly. Its companion, the Almanack of Social Games, is also held in high esteem, and offers so many receipts for amusement of the most innocent kind that one cannot imagine a family ever making the acquaintance of the demon ennui during the long evenings in the country. The Almanack of Young French Song contains the successful pieces from the répertoire of the café concerts, and has great vogue among shop-girls, and artisans of the better sort. Here are to be found the songs of Bordas—the screaming woman who, under the Second Empire, was popularly supposed to personify the people and its aims and aspirations. Bordas was mighty in her nervous strength, and it was quite worth the labour of a walk to the gloomy faubourg in which she sang to hear her shriek forth the notes of The Tricolour or The Song of France. There were moments when her action, ordinarily

vulgar, approached the fine; but these were rare. Hundreds and thousands of persons in the humbler walks of life, however, adored and still adore her, which accounts for the great sale of The Almanack of Young French Song.

Our amiable and eccentric friend the French peasant is amply provided for by the makers of almanacks. Some of these useful pamphlets are even translated into the numerous dialects spoken north, south, east, and west, in the land of the olive and the vine; and sometimes they carry with them political hints, which the Gallic Hodge, notwithstanding his look of intense indifference and stupidity, is not slow to seize. The Cultivator's Almanack resembles no whit its more flippant brethren of dance and song. Its covers are of sombre hue, and its pages are crowded with facts and directions necessary to the conduct of an intelligent farmer. In its calendar the exact time for planting, for cultivating, for reaping, is indicated. If the farmer live in a latitude where he may cultivate the vine, The Perfect Wine-grower will startle him with its mass of information, enliven him with its quaint and curious proverbs, and alarm him with ghastly details of the ravages of the phylloxera. If the wine-grower cannot read, the village priest will perhaps while away a few hours in the evening by giving him an idea of the volume's contents; for good Saint Vincent himself, the patron of vineyards, receives a most flattering notice in this almanack. The proverb says, in halting verse:

Look sharp on Saint Vincent's Day,
For if then thou mayst truly say
The sun fair and clear doth shine,
We shall have less water than wine.

These proverbs are familiar friends to most of the wine-growers, who rely implicitly on them. If it thunders in February the hard-handed toilers begin to grumble, for they are sure that the year's wine-crop will be small. A dry and fine March, says the almanack, will fill cellar and cask. The rats will eat the grapes unless the vines are pruned on Good Friday. A cold April gives bread and wine. No wine, if it rains on Saint Philip's Day. It may thunder in August as much as it pleases; the critical season is over, and the happy peasant is sure of fine grapes and good must. When many stars fall in September, the wine-casks are too small in November. It may even rain in September; that helps the vine.

Of wine at Saint Martin drink your fill,
And leave the water for the mill.

The pious Catholic folk of France have a dozen almanacks exclusively devoted to the recital of the virtues of departed saints, the excellence of the water of Lourdes, and many other matters of vast interest to the devout; but these would merit a special article. It must suffice in a general way to observe that there is scarcely any class so humble that an annual calendar has not been provided for it. The theatrical, although hardy, French sailor has not been forgotten. He can beguile his leisure, if he does not choose to occupy it in perfecting his dainty and inimitable wardrobe, in studying in an ample volume the names of poets and marine officers, and the details of the rising and setting of the sun. After endeavouring to digest the immense mass of information in this Marine Almanack, Jean Baptiste may persuade himself that he is indeed a tar, and that those critics in perfidious Albion who persist in refusing him praise are envious of his jaunty hat and his miraculously flowing trousers.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VI. STEFANO CARALDA.

WALTER GORDON need not, after all, have been so shocked by Prosper's notion that a genius like the composer of Comus should not be allowed to pass from the world without leaving something behind him, if only a song. It is a simple law of political economy that supply follows demand so surely as night follows day. Suppose a mountebank makes a sudden sensation by the skill with which he dances the fandango after the amputation of one leg, straightway half-a-dozen one-legged dancers appear to share the harvest, as if six people had been simultaneously practising the art of one-legged dancing for years; and they are lucky if, at less than a week's notice, somebody does not cut them all out by dancing with no legs at all. And then, as they came in, so they all go out together, and none can tell whence they came or whither they go.

And, if he had thought for a moment, he would have recalled to mind the posthumous history of many another great musician, as well as of many a great painter, who did enough for fame, but not quite enough for the needs of trade; for it is noticeable that, as in the encyclopædias,

so in real life, art and commerce go hand in hand. Of course it would be better if a dead musician could still be kept writing, especially as he would cost so little; but the arch-magician, commerce, has never yet been balked by such accidents as death, or the non-transferable nature of the human brain. There is a great deal of Mendelssohn about that people would not think much of if they knew who composed it; and Schubert never heard his own Adieu. Songs of Schubert were wanted in Paris—Presto! a new song by Schubert came. Music by the composer of Comus was wanted in London, and surely what a French tradesman has done a French tradesman may do. Walter Gordon had as much right to be shocked, as if, on entering the wine trade, it had been proposed to him to improve good wine by giving it a better label. These things are so well understood, and the result is so satisfactory to all concerned, that only cynics and a few other simpletons dream of fault-finding. A good bush needs no wine.

Prosper, as a man of experience, knew that the nephew of a great musician is by nature a man in whom need rhymes with greed, and who is absolutely certain to be keeping back a few choice specimens of his uncle's genius till market-time comes. It is far better, as a rule, to deal with an artist himself than with his nephew. The spirit of trade, like the gout, is apt to come out all the more strongly for having been suppressed, wholly or partially, in a generation. But the success of Comus was so great that it would be worth while to drive even a hard bargain; and meanwhile there was a great deal to be said in favour of finding somebody who would be to Andrew Gordon what the unknown Russian song writer was to Schubert. But now his speculations seemed to have taken another turn.

"Charming!" suddenly said the opposite door-post, or at any rate the particular habitué of drawing-room doorways who happened just then to be its mouthpiece.

Prosper started from his reverie.

"Charming? It is superb."

"Professional, of course? One's always safe from amateurs at the Quornes'—at least, from common amateurs," continued the door-post.

"Fifty pounds at the very least," said Prosper.

"What—a song? On an evening? She's somebody then?"

"A song? You call it a song—Grand Dieu! Fifty guineas a yard, if it is one halfpenny," said Prosper, with enthusiasm.

"What, do they pay for their music by the yard?"

"And what is more, they never make it, none such, now. Miss — Ah, your English names never stay between the ears. It is unique—I must see."

"What was she singing?" asked another amateur near the stairhead. Most of Lady Quorne's non-professional friends were "amateurs"—that is to say, in English, people who love music so dearly and so jealously that they hate one another.

"*Dolce amor mio*," said the first amateur, languidly; "out of Zelia." He had scored one. His rival had not recognised a well-known air—a terrible misfortune for an amateur.

"Ah, of course—hum, hum, tum, tum, tum. I've sung it myself scores and scores of times, in the other key. Of course—'*Dolce amor mio*,' from Brunacei's Zelia. Hum, tum——"

"I beg your pardon," said the first. "I've sung it myself, in the real key, and it goes tum, hum."

"Hum, tum——"

"Prosper, which did Brunacei write: hum, tum, or tum, hum?"

"Ah, you think Brunacei did write '*Dolce amor*?' " said Prosper. "Brunacei wrote '*Dolce amor*,' so much than God Save the Queen. He write Zelia? Bah! No more as Comus—no."

His mind could not leave its groove. Has the story ever yet found its way into print, of how Stefano Caralda, the lazzarone, seized hold of all Italy by its ears? It ran in those of Prosper, from the moment he found that, while he had been appraising lace, he was supposed to be listening to '*Dolce amor*.' Brunacei was the only modest musician ever known. One day he laid a wager that his name was his only merit, and that, if he put it as a label to the veriest rubbish, that rubbish would be swallowed as if it were musical nectar. But he had his believers, nay, his worshippers—a strange accident for a modest man. The wager was accepted—it was ten thousand scudi. Brunacei was not only modest, but rich withal—a stranger combination still. That there might be no doubt about the rubbish—for he was honest into the bargain—he picked up the first lazzarone he could find on his way to Santa Lucia, and offered him five soldi—that is to say, sixpence—to make a song in one

hour. The lazzarone grinned, scratched his head, and asked for a day—and the day ended in 'Dolce amor.'

Brunacei stared. Not only had his lazzarone made the song, but had written it down, with pens, ink, paper, harmonics, and all. But he had assumed that it must be rubbish—so rubbish it must be. He put his name to it—it turned into wild-fire. He demanded his ten thousand scudi.

"No," they said. "You have put your name to a chef-d'œuvre."

He opened his eyes—it was true. Never even had the composer of *La Festa di Gioja* made a more exquisite melody. He made another expedition towards Santa Lucia, and found his lazzarone, as before, lying on his back and staring at the sky.

"What is your name?"

"Stefano Caralda, eccellenza."

"You are a musician. Write me an opera."

"It is written, signore."

"Let me see it."

Stefano Caralda pulled out a manuscript from—somewhere.

"But you are a genius. This must be heard."

"As you please, eccellenza."

Stefano Caralda never moved from his back, or took his eyes from the sun.

"I will do you a good turn, Stefano," said the modest and honest maestro. "I am the great Brunacei."

"As you please, eccellenza."

"I will bring out this opera of yours as my own. That will mean fame—for you. I will write some stupid stuff, and bring it out as yours. That will mean—a few scudi for me. No matter how; and as to the scudi, we will go shares."

"As you please, eccellenza."

Zelia surpassed even *La Festa* in honour and glory. And then the great Brunacei, like an honest man, ascribed the fame to Stefano Caralda. But people pointed to some rubbish published under Caralda's name, and said:

"The man who wrote this, never wrote Zelia. Zelia is his who wrote its finest air—'Dolce amor.'"

Brunacei grew weary of contradiction—perhaps, he grew convinced himself that it was so, in time. What can one man do against the world? And so the great Brunacei grew yet more famous, and yet more rich, while Stefano Caralda, the lazzarone, dreamed of unheard music, and lay on his back and stared at the sun. Both, I think, were content—but I am

sure that Stefano Caralda was the more content of the two.

"And oh," thought Prosper, "if I could but find a Stefano Caralda!"

Meanwhile, John March was sitting once more—alone. And, for the first time, he felt lonely. It was not altogether because the work of his life was done—that was a matter of some weeks old now. Nor was it that Celia was away for an evening. At least, it could not have been so, for she had been away for years at Linden-heim, and he had never missed her. But want of thought for the mind, and of even external companionship such as Celia could give him, left his brain swept and garnished for other thought-devils to enter in and dwell there.

What had made him keep that bit of lace all these years, and yet so much out of sight, that hunger had not sufficed to call its worth in gold? He had never so much as looked upon its fairy-tissue, that had been spun for a queen, since the day when he had carried off his child from her mother. It was sacred to none but evil memories. The first time he had set eyes on it, it was worn by Noëmi Baruc on the Corso. In effect, it had been her wedding-robe—a strange one for a beggar-girl. It was a film of the moonlight under which he had said to her, "Come." And what had made him think of this treasure, hoarded without a reason, when the child took the rôle of Cinderella, that had been laid down by her mother years and years ago?

Let it be remembered that his heart had been resolutely closed to every feeling that came without a passport viséd by the brain for five-and-twenty years. And in such a state hearts are apt to fancy that they have committed suicide. He had never let one emotion, save just indignation, come between himself and the work to which he had given body, brain, and soul. But was it only that his heart had but been packed up with the veil in a trunk, and that, when it first felt the outer air again, it felt, first, blind and dazed—then desperately alive? The light of heaven is too strong for eyes that have for too long been closed.

When Celia left the Row for the Lane, he had given her just one quick look before she started, and no more. No; she was not like her mother, except in the eyes and in a slightly un-English tint of skin; and that she might have owed less

to the Ghetto than to the Border-tents from which the first vagrant Gordon had presumably come. But he could not forget how Noëmi had looked in the moonlight through that very mantilla; and a sort of horror came upon him as he realised that he had sent Celia out into the world in the fatal dress of Noëmi. He was the best man on earth to have superstitious fancies; but how could he forget all that this mantilla had meant to him. It was the visible symbol of all that he had brought up Celia not to be. When a queen first puts on her robes, she first feels and knows herself a queen. Character clings to clothes, and character is destiny. He would sooner have dressed Celia in the robe of Nessus than in the veil of Clari. It felt like the outward, proven knowledge that his work and his life had failed; that art, as represented by Celia, was doomed to end as a prima donna after all.

And, if his work and his life had failed, what then? Simply that he had thrown away all that makes life worth having on the thinnest ghost that ever flickered out of dreamland. Supposing that he had been content to love Noëmi for her faults and flaws, as men love women, and not as artists think they love ideas. She was beautiful, yet unconscious of beauty; passionate, yet docile; and with an infinite capacity for joy. With all her flaws he might surely have made something out of a living woman; and what, with all its glories, could he possibly expect to get out of a dream? Of course, compared with high art, the perfect companionship of a far better wife than Noëmi is a thing not worth regarding. What does it matter what becomes of a man in comparison with what he can do? But yet—he drew a deep sigh, and felt desperately alone. Of course, with all his heart he hated Clari. But better a dinner of herbs where hate is, than a stalled ox and loneliness therewith.

There was Celia. But, somehow, it never occurred to him to think of her. People are apt not to pay much regard to what lies at their feet when they have got a trick of star-gazing.

It cannot be said that he heard the door open, for obvious reasons; but being alone—he was not applying a mental microscope to his score—and so he saw it open and Comrie enter.

He did not look pleasantly at his visitor. In the first place he remembered him without knowing him; and, in the second

place, the intrusion of the raw-boned young Scotchman disturbed his dream. It was an idle dream—well-nigh a desperate one; but there is a tenderness about a dream of any sort that makes it cry out when broken. "What shall I do with my life?" is a terrible question at times, when some human creature is tempted to believe that all is vanity. That, however, settles itself; but "What have I done with it?" was the burden of John March's dream, with which Comrie jarred. He was a man who looked as if he never dreamed.

Nor did he, though one instance has been recorded to the contrary. Nor did he look as if he were thin-skinned, or minded a welcome both silent and dry. He filled his pipe, and sat down by the fireplace opposite to John March. Under the circumstances, silence was not remarkable; nor was smoking an uninvited pipe with a neighbour an unheard-of occurrence in Saragossa Row. Neither the Reform nor the Carlton is so great a clubhouse as poverty where the black ball is unknown.

There is not only an actual, but an occult, significance in physical size. The pluckiest schoolboy recognises the right of inches without a battle, and the boy is the father of the man. The certain result of an impossible battle underlies the social intercourse between man and man, just as surely as the uncertain issue of a possible amour underlies that between man and woman. If the comparative size of Comrie and of John March had been reversed, Comrie would not have dreamed of sitting there. As things were, John March never thought, despite all his irritation, of driving him away.

Presently—

"You—are—a—musician?" scribbled Comrie.

John March read the note, crumpled it up, and threw it where the fire should have been. The action was not without dignity; but it signified only too pathetically, even to Comrie, the conscious impotence of a man who feels in himself a strength that is curbed and chained. That is the worst doom of the deaf, the dumb, and the blind.

"I—am—a—pupil—of—Maurel."

John March stared at the second communication blankly.

"I don't know anything of Maurel, however he may be. But I know that music ought to mean manners, if nothing more."

Comrie, forgetful of his national motto, remained as patient as a lamb.

"Maurel—was—an—aurist. He—used—to—say—'Nature—and—health—are—lovers; the—surgeon—is—their—peace-maker.'"

"And—what the devil are my ears to you?"

For all answer Comrie took from his breast-pocket a small twisted tube, of which he carefully polished one end with his sleeve.

John March was a man of sufficiently strong will, as his whole life had shown. The score showed that, and all its history. The will of the man who has but one idea must needs be concentrated essence of will, and of won't also. But Comrie, too, was a man of one idea. And what must happen when such men collide?

Ask any schoolboy—the man of inches wins. We may not have yet come to measuring music by the yard, though it is just as good a standard as any other; but we measure by it a great many things that are just as intangible. Comrie's one idea was the aggressor just then, and the smaller, older, and physically weaker man had to give way. There was something in the touch of the surgeon's bony fingers that made him as lamblike in submission as the surgeon himself had been in patient serenity.

And suppose there were hope after all? He frowned, and submitted sullenly; but he made no attempt to disturb the speculum in its operation. And, so long as his patient kept quiet, it was absolutely indifferent to Comrie whether the quiet were gracious or no. He removed the tube so as to arrange the light better, and then recommenced his examination.

The case must have been difficult, or Comrie unready at diagnosis, for the examination lasted long enough to give downright pain. But pain spurs the will, and gives hope something definite to hold by. John March might not be able to resist his surgeon, but he might restore his self-respect by resisting the pain his surgeon gave. He bore it as unflinchingly as it was given—and then, if the experiment ended in actual hope, after all! Meanwhile Comrie treated him as if he were a piece of wax-work, and not the least

more delicately. Would he have been quite so rough if the ears had been Celia's? Perhaps not; but it had been another axiom of the great Maurel:

"Tender hearts never knew a heart-timid touches never probed a wound. The more knowledge, the better care; and the deeper knowledge, the more pain."

John March was too deaf, Comrie too absorbed, to hear the clock strike, or the creaking door turn on its hinges. And yet the clock had struck one, and many minutes had followed after, when Cinderella returned, without her mantilla having turned to rags, or either of her feet having lost its shoe. It is true that midnight is no longer as late as it used to be.

"Hush! Good-night, and thank you," she said, hurriedly, to someone behind her, and then stood still just within the room. Whatever adventures she had gone through that evening, she forgot them all in the picture of hope that she saw before her, as represented by a raw-boned young Scotchman probing an old man's ear with a speculum. Anxiety contemplating Hope would have been the subject for the sculpture, and, for once, anxiety would have been the far fairer figure, as she stood there, flushed with excitement and fatigue, hardly daring to breathe lest she should spoil the work of this heaven-fallen surgeon.

But the picture of still life lasted barely a minute. Celia felt her mantilla nervously clutched from behind, as if someone were about to tear it from her shoulders.

"Hush!" she exclaimed impatiently, and in an agony lest some crucial test should be marred.

But all the world seemed deaf. Her "hush!" was as unheard by her invisible companion as by the patient or his doctor.

"I have know it—I have know her—I have know he! It is him, per Stefano Caralda!"

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXVII. THE BARONESS BANMANN AGAIN.

A DAY or two after the meeting at Mr. Battle's office, there came to Lord George a letter from that gentleman, suggesting that, as the dean had undertaken to come up to London again, and as he, Mr. Battle, might not be ready with his advice at the end of a week, that day fortnight might be fixed. To Lord George this delay was agreeable rather than otherwise, as he was not specially anxious for the return of his father-in-law, nor was he longing for action in this question as to his brother's heir. But the dean, when the lawyer's letter reached him, was certain that Mr. Battle did not mean to lose the time simply in thinking over the matter. Some preliminary enquiry would now be made, even though no positive instructions had been given. He did not at all regret this, but was sure that Lord George would be very angry if he knew it. He wrote back to say that he would be in Munster Court on the evening before the day appointed.

It was now May, and London was bright with all the exotic gaiety of the season. The Park was crowded with riders at one, and was almost impassable at six. Dress was outvying dress, and equipage equipage. Men and women, but principally women, seemed to be intent on finding out new ways of scattering money. Tradesmen no doubt knew much of defaulters, and heads of families might find themselves pressed for means; but to the

outside West-end eye looking at the outside West-end world, it seemed as though wealth were unlimited and money a drug. To those who had known the thing for years, to young ladies who were now entering on their seventh or eighth campaign, there was a feeling of business about it all which, though it buoyed them up by its excitement, robbed amusement of most of its pleasure. A ball cannot be very agreeable in which you may not dance with a man you like and are not asked by the man you want; at which you are forced to make a note that that full-blown hope is futile, and that this little bud will surely never come to flower. And then the toil of smiles, the pretence at flirtation, the long-continued assumption of fictitious character, the making of oneself bright to the bright, solemn to the solemn, and romantic to the romantic, is work too hard for enjoyment. But our heroine had no such work to do. She was very much admired and could thoroughly enjoy the admiration. She had no task to perform. She was not carrying out her profession by midnight labours. Who shall say whether now and again a soft impalpable regret—a regret not recognised as such—may not have stolen across her mind, telling her that if she had seen all this before she was married instead of afterwards, she might have found a brighter lot for herself! If it were so, the only enduring effect of such a feeling was a renewal of that oft-made resolution that she would be in love with her husband. The ladies whom she knew had generally their carriages and riding horses. She had only a brougham, and had that kept for her by the generosity of her father. The dean, when coming to

town, had brought with him the horse which she used to ride, and wished that it should remain. But Lord George, with a husband's solicitude, and perhaps with something of a poor man's proper dislike to expensive habits, had refused his permission. She soon, too, learned to know the true sheen of diamonds, the luxury of pearls, and the richness of rubies; whereas she herself wore only the little ornaments which had come from the Deanery. And as she danced in spacious rooms and dined in noble halls, and was fêted on grand staircases, she remembered what a little place was the little house in Munster Court, and that she was to stay there only for a few weeks more before she was taken to the heavy dulness of Cross Hall. But still she always came back to that old resolution. She was so flattered, so courted, so petted and made much of, that she could not but feel that had all this world been opened to her sooner her destiny would probably have been different; but then it might have been different, and very much less happy. She still told herself that she was sure that Lord George was all that he ought to be.

Two or three things did tease her certainly. She was very fond of balls, but she soon found that Lord George disliked them as much, and when present was always anxious to get home. She was a married woman, and it was open to her to go alone; but that she did not like, nor would he allow it. Sometimes she joined herself to other parties. Mrs. Houghton was always ready to be her companion, and old Mrs. Montacute Jones, who went everywhere, had taken a great liking to her. But there were two antagonistic forces—her husband and herself; and of course she had to yield to the stronger force. The thing might be managed occasionally—and the occasion was no doubt much the pleasanter because it had to be so managed—but there was always the feeling that these bright glimpses of Paradise, these entrances into Elysium, were not free to her as to other ladies. And then one day, or rather one night, there came a great sorrow, a sorrow which robbed these terrestrial Paradises of half their brightness and more than half their joy. One evening Lord George told her he did not like her to waltz. "Why?" she innocently asked. They were in the brougham, going home, and she had been supremely happy at Mrs. Montacute Jones's house. Lord George said that he could hardly

explain the reason. He made rather a long speech, in which he asked her whether she was not aware that many married women did not waltz. "No," said she. "That is, of course, when they get old they don't." "I am sure," said he, "that when I say I do not like it, that will be enough." "Quite enough," she answered, "to prevent my doing it, though not enough to satisfy me why it should not be done." He said no more to her on the occasion, and so the matter was considered to be settled. Then she remembered that her very last waltz had been with Jack De Baron. Could it be that he was jealous? She was well aware that she took great delight in waltzing with Captain De Baron, because he waltzed so well. But now that pleasure was over, and for ever! Was it that her husband disliked waltzing, or that he disliked Jack De Baron?

A few days after this Lady George was surprised by a visit from the Baroness Banmann, the lady whom she had been taken to hear at the Disabilities. Since that memorable evening she had seen Aunt Ju more than once, and had asked how the cause of the female architects was progressing; but she had never again met the baroness. Aunt Ju had apparently been disturbed by these questions. She had made no further effort to make Lady George a proselyte by renewed attendances at the Rights of Women Institute, and had seemed almost anxious to avoid the subject. As Lady George's acquaintance with the baroness had been owing altogether to Aunt Ju, she was now surprised that the German lady should call upon her.

The German lady began a story with great impetuosity—with so much impetuosity that poor Mary could not understand half that was said to her. But she did learn that the baroness had in her own estimation been very ill-treated, and that the ill-treatment had come mainly from the hands of Aunt Ju and Lady Selina Protest. And it appeared at length that the baroness claimed to have been brought over from Bavaria with a promise that she should have the exclusive privilege of using the hall of the Disabilities on certain evenings, but that this privilege was now denied to her. The Disabilities seemed to prefer her younger rival, Miss Doctor Olivia Q. Fleabody, whom Mary now learned to be a person of no good repute whatever, and by no means fit to address the masses of Marylebone. But what did the baroness want of her?

What with the female lecturer's lack of English pronunciation, what with her impetuosity, and with Mary's own innocence on the matter, it was some time before the younger lady did understand what the elder lady required. At last eight tickets were brought out of her pocket, on looking at which Mary began to understand that the baroness had established a rival Disabilities, very near the other, in Lisson Grove; and then at last, but very gradually, she further understood that these were front-row tickets, and were supposed to be worth two shillings and sixpence each. But it was not till after that, till further explanation had been made which must, she feared; have been very painful to the baroness, that she began to perceive that she was expected to pay for the eight tickets on the moment. She had a sovereign in her pocket, and was willing to sacrifice it; but she hardly knew how to hand the coin bodily to a baroness. When she did do so, the baroness very well knew how to put it into her pocket. "You will like to keep the entire eight?" asked the baroness. Mary thought that four might perhaps suffice for her own wants; whereupon the baroness repocketed four, but of course did not return the change.

But even then the baroness had not completed her task. Aunt Ju had evidently been false and treacherous, but might still be won back to loyal honesty. So much Mary gradually perceived to be the drift of the lady's mind. Lady Selina was hopeless. Lady Selina, whom the baroness intended to drag before all the judges in England, would do nothing fair or honest; but Aunt Ju might yet be won. Would Lady George go with the baroness to Aunt Ju? The servant had unfortunately just announced the brougham as being at the door. "Ah," said the baroness, "it would be ten minutes, and would be my salvation." Lady George did not at all want to go to the house in Green Street. She had no great desire to push her acquaintance with Aunt Ju, she particularly disliked the younger Miss Mildmay, and she felt that she had no business to interfere in this matter. But there is nothing which requires so much experience to attain as the power of refusing. Almost before she had made up her mind whether she would refuse or not the baroness was in the brougham with her, and the coachman had been desired to take them to Green Street. Throughout the whole dis-

tance the baroness was voluble and unintelligible; but Lady George could hear the names of Selina Protest and Olivia Q. Fleabody through the thunder of the lady's loud complaints.

Yes, Miss Mildmay was at home. Lady George gave her name to the servant, and also especially requested that the Baroness Banmann might be first announced. She had thought it over in the brougham, and had determined that if possible it should appear that the baroness had brought her. Twice she repeated the name to the servant. When they reached the drawing-room only the younger Miss Mildmay was present. She sent the servant to her aunt, and received her two visitors very demurely. With the baroness, of whom probably she had heard quite enough, she had no sympathies; and with Lady George she had her own special ground of quarrel. Five or six very long minutes passed, during which little or nothing was said. The baroness did not wish to expend her eloquence on an unprofitable young lady, and Lady George could find no subject for small talk. At last the door was opened and the servant invited the baroness to go downstairs. The baroness had perhaps been unfortunate, for at this very time Lady Selina Protest was down in the dining-room discussing the affairs of the Institute with Aunt Ju. There was a little difficulty in making the lady understand what was required of her, but after a while she did follow the servant down to the dining-room.

Lady George, as soon as the door was closed, felt that the blood rushed to her face. She was conscious at the moment that Captain De Baron had been the girl's lover; and that there were some who said that it was because of her that he had deserted the girl. The girl had already said words to her on the subject which had been very hard to bear. She had constantly told herself that in this matter she was quite innocent, that her friendship with Jack De Baron was simple, pure friendship, that she liked him because he laughed and talked and treated the world lightly; that she rarely saw him except in the presence of his cousin, and that everything was as it ought to be. And yet, when she found herself alone with this Miss Mildmay, she was suffused with blushes and uneasy. She felt that she ought to make some excuse for her visit. "I hope," she said, "that your aunt will understand that I brought the lady here

only because she insisted on being brought." Miss Mildmay bowed. "She came to me, and I really couldn't quite understand what she had to say. But the brougham was there, and she would get into it. I am afraid there has been some quarrel."

"I don't think that matters at all," said Miss Mildmay.

"Only your aunt might think it so impertinent of me! She took me to that Institute once, you know."

"I don't know anything about the Institute. As for the German woman, she is an impostor; but it doesn't matter. There are three of them there now, and they can have it out together." Lady George didn't understand whether her companion meant to blame her for coming, but was quite sure, from the tone of the girl's voice and the look of her eyes, that she meant to be uncivil. "I am surprised," continued Miss Mildmay, "that you should come to this house at all."

"I hope your aunt will not think——"

"Never mind my aunt. The house is more my house than my aunt's. After what you have done to me——"

"What have I done to you?" She could not help asking the question, and yet she well knew the nature of the accusation. And she could not stop the rushing of the tell-tale blood.

Augusta Mildmay was blushing too, but the blush on her face consisted in two red spots beneath the eyes. The determination to say what she was going to say had come upon her suddenly. She had not thought that she was about to meet her rival. She had planned nothing, but now she was determined. "What have you done?" she said. "You know very well what you have done. Do you mean to tell me that you had never heard of anything between me and Captain De Baron? Will you dare to tell me that? Why don't you answer me, Lady George Germain?"

This was a question which she did not wish to answer, and one that did not at all appertain to herself—which did not require any answer for the clearing of herself; but yet it was now asked in such a manner that she could not save herself from answering it. "I think I did hear that you and he—knew each other."

"Knew each other! Don't be so mealy-mouthed. I don't mean to be mealy-mouthed, I can tell you. You knew all about it. Adelaide had told you. You knew that we were engaged."

"No," exclaimed Lady George; "she never told me that."

"She did. I know she did. She confessed to me that she had told you so."

"But what if she had?"

"Of course he is nothing to you," said the young lady with a sneer.

"Nothing at all;—nothing on earth. How dare you ask such a question? If Captain De Baron is engaged, I can't make him keep his engagements."

"You can make him break them."

"That is not true. I can make him do nothing of the kind. You have no right to talk to me in this way, Miss Mildmay."

"Then I shall do it without a right. You have come between me and all my happiness."

"You cannot know that I am a married woman," said Lady George, speaking half in innocence and half in anger, almost out of breath with confusion, "or you wouldn't speak like that."

"Psha!" exclaimed Miss Mildmay. "It is nothing to me whether you are married or single. I care nothing though you have twenty lovers if you do not interfere with me."

"It is a falsehood," said Lady George, who was now standing. "I have no lover. It is a wicked falsehood."

"I care nothing for wickedness or falsehood either. Will you promise me, if I hold my tongue, that you will have nothing further to say to Captain De Baron?"

"No; I will promise nothing. I should be ashamed of myself to make such a promise."

"Then I shall go to Lord George. I do not want to make mischief, but I am not going to be treated in this way. How would you like it? When I tell you that the man is engaged to me, why cannot you leave him alone?"

"I do leave him alone," said Mary, stamping her foot.

"You do everything you can to cheat me of him. I shall tell Lord George."

"You may tell whom you like," said Mary, rushing to the bell-handle and pulling it with all her might. "You have insulted me, and I will never speak to you again." Then she burst out crying, and hurried to the door. "Will you—get me—my—carriage?" she said to the man through her sobs. As she descended the stairs she remembered that she had brought the German baroness with her, and that the German baroness would probably expect to be taken away again. But when she

reached the hall the door of the dining-room burst open, and the German baroness appeared. It was evident that two scenes had been going on in the same house at the same moment. Through the door the baroness came first, waving her hands above her head. Behind her was Aunt Ju, advancing with imploring gesture. And behind Aunt Ju might be seen Lady Selina Protest standing in mute dignity. "It is all a got-up cheating and a fraud," said the baroness; "and I vill have justice—English justice." The servant was standing with the front door open, and the baroness went straight into Lady George's brougham, as though it had been her own. "Oh, Lady George," said Aunt Ju, "what are you to do with her?" But Lady George was so taken up with her own trouble that she could hardly think of the other matter. She had to say something. "Perhaps I had better go with her. Good-bye." And then she followed the baroness. "I did not tink dere was such robbery with ladies," said the baroness. But the footman was asking for directions for the coachman. Whither was he to go? "I do not care," said the baroness. Lady George asked her in a whisper whether she would be taken home. "Anywhere," said the baroness. In the meantime the footman was still standing, and Aunt Ju could be seen in the hall through the open door of the house. During the whole time our poor Mary's heart was crushed by the accusations which had been made against her upstairs. "Home," said Mary in despair. To have the baroness in Munster Court would be dreadful; but anything was better than standing in Green Street with the servant at the carriage window.

Then the baroness began her story. Lady Selina Protest had utterly refused to do her justice, and Aunt Ju was weak enough to be domineered by Lady Selina. That, as far as Mary understood anything about it, was the gist of the story. But she did not try to understand anything about it. During the drive her mind was intent on forming some plan by which she might be able to get rid of her companion without asking her into her house. She had paid her sovereign, and surely the baroness had no right to demand more of her. When she reached Munster Court her plan was in some sort framed. "And now, madam," she said, "where shall I tell my servant to take you?" The baroness looked very suppliant. "If you vas not busy I should so like just one half-

hour of conversation." Mary nearly yielded. For a moment she hesitated, as though she were going to put up her hand and help the lady out. But then the memory of her own unhappiness steeled her heart, and the feeling grew strong within her that this nasty woman was imposing on her—and she refused. "I am afraid, madam," she said, "that my time is altogether occupied." "Then let him take me to 10, Alexandrina Row, Maida Vale," said the baroness, throwing herself sulkily back into the carriage. Lady George gave the direction to the astounded coachman—for Maida Vale was a long way off—and succeeded in reaching her own drawing-room alone.

What was she to do? The only course in which there seemed to be safety was in telling all to her husband. If she did not it would probably be told by the cruel lips of that odious woman. But yet, how was she to tell it? It was not as though everything in this matter was quite pleasant between her and him. Lady Susanna had accused her of flirting with the man, and that she had told to him. And in her heart of hearts she believed that the waltzing had been stopped because she had waltzed with Jack De Baron. Nothing could be more unjust, nothing more cruel; but still there were the facts. And then the sympathy between her and her husband was so imperfect. She was ever trying to be in love with him, but had never yet succeeded in telling even herself that she had succeeded.

WHAT IS PUBLIC OPINION ?

AFTER a struggle of some centuries, it has become an established and recognised fact, that the true and only king in this country, is King Public Opinion. He is the potentate, whose universally acknowledged supremacy is the chief, indeed the sole solid outcome of the intestine wars which have been waged, of the political battles which have been lost and won, of the individual reputation of statesmen, intriguers, trimmers, which have been made and unmade. The contest commenced at Runnymede, and ended with household suffrage; and among the results of that contest are the removal of the ancient land-marks of private influence, of faction, to a great extent even of organised partisanship. Public opinion has superseded the domination of the great houses, and the composition of

a cabinet or a ministry has ceased for ever to be nothing more than a mere matter of private arrangement between noble lords and distinguished commoners. Public opinion, again, has overridden the distinctions, and compelled politicians to abandon the characteristic bases of party; the programme of the "ins" is accommodated, not so much to the traditions of the great organisation of which the "ins" are the representatives, as to the dictates of the popular will; and the "outs" know, that directly this ceases to be the case, their chance will come, and that their tenure of place and power will be on the same terms. In a word, public opinion it is, and public opinion only, which installs and turns out ministries; which wages war, and concludes peace; which places millions to the credit of a department, or dismisses the official requesting the sum for his exorbitant demand; which declares what are the true objects of national policy or interest; in whose presence heaven-born statesmen are dumb or impotent, or both; which claims successfully to decide, not only what is wise or unwise, but what is right and what is wrong.

What, then, are the main elements in this omnipotent abstraction, this most real entity of shadowy, uncertain, ever-shifting form, whose hues change with the swiftness of the tints of shot silk, this supreme quality, which is the distilled essence of the whim or resolution of the greatest number? It is as difficult to be sure that one has fairly secured public opinion, as it was for the swain in Virgil to bind the limbs of the monster Proteus. Public opinion, in fact, not merely undergoes a perpetual series of vicissitudes, but assumes simultaneously half-a-dozen different shapes in as many localities. The public opinion of the North is not that of the South; it wears one guise in the agricultural, and another in the manufacturing districts of England. The public opinion of labour is not, for the most part, that of capital. The public opinion of the club is not that of the village pot-house; and again, rival clubs and pot-houses give each other, on the expression of their sentiments, the lie direct. What is the explanation of this inconsistency? Error is manifold; truth only one. A whole legion of statements may be false together, but cannot be true at the same time; and if public opinion is infallible in the long run, and as a whole, there are periods at which

it must be wrong, and subdivisions of the vast complex aggregate which must err. It comes then to this—public opinion is the mingled outcome of education and feeling, of intelligence and emotion, of reason and prejudice, of tradition, sentiment, and interest. The balance that may be struck between these various and more or less conflicting ingredients, is the public opinion of a neighbourhood; the balance which can be struck between the competing public opinion of different neighbourhoods, is the public opinion of the country. What are the causes which make it; what are the elements which guide it?

The first place amongst these is due by conventional courtesy to the press; and indeed, when one notices how certain students of newspapers give one, in their conversation, diluted paraphrases of the leading articles in their favourite organs, one may admit that journalism is an elemental force with the English public. The British squire is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, an educated, intelligent, refined gentleman. If he is not a rich man, he probably spends most of his time on his country estate, has very likely no house in London, and contents himself and his family with a month in town in hired apartments, or a two months' continental trip—perhaps every year, perhaps in alternate years. He is, of course, something of a politician. He receives yesterday's paper at breakfast, or, if he receives the journal to which he subscribes on the actual day of publication, at or after the hour of dinner, reserves a more careful perusal of it for the morrow. He is struck by the acuteness, the good sense, the man of the world air of the observations of the journalist on the topics of the day. He is similarly impressed every day of his life. The newspaper, which shall be nameless here, but whose title ingenious readers may conjecture for themselves, is in fact written with a view to commend itself to the sentiments and prejudices of the average specimen of a cultivated English gentleman, who does not hold extreme views; and the English country gentleman is gratified, and perhaps a little flattered, at finding his own "ideas to a T" ably and happily expressed. In this case, the newspaper, if not an actually creative force, is a regulating and organising force, and that really comes to much the same thing.

Let us look at the other end of the social scale. We are in a workshop in one of the great centres of manufacturing industry in

the North; or, it may be, in the taproom of the public-house; or possibly in the miserably-furnished chamber in which father, mother, and children, ill-clad, ill-fed, ill-conditioned, are huddled together. Here the newspaper is a genuine power. But the tone in which it speaks is no longer that of the easy-going, worldly-wise, comfortably-cynical Major Pendennis of the press. Its principles are violent, its utterances are those of anger: "What we want," says the typical demagogue in Albert Smith's *Adventures of Mr. Ledbury*, "is a rattling revolution, stalking up and down the land like a galvanic battery;" and this, by a somewhat hyperbolic figure, may be described as the central idea of that press, which is seldom studied by eyes polite, but which is a growing power with the English proletariat. After all, it is not a really practical power—that is, not as yet. The British working-man is, on the whole, the most orderly, best-behaved, best-tempered specimen of his class in the whole world. He has, save indeed in a few instances, not the slightest notion of acting upon the propaganda which it is attempted by his newspaper mentor, very often in a remarkably vigorous manner, to instil into him. Still he likes to read it, just as the far from particularly honest, virtuous, and devout washerwoman, in *Mrs. Oliphant's Chronicles of Carlingford*, used to like to listen Sunday after Sunday to "real rousing-up discourses," delivered from the pulpit of the local Little Bethel. For the most part, these denunciations of all existing institutions, of the rich as tyrants, of the landlords as a bloated, indolent aristocracy, of capitalists as despots and vampires, give their readers a delight akin to that which would be derived from a perusal of the *Mysteries of Udolpho* or any other wildly improbable romance. They take them out of the familiar atmosphere of their daily life; they depict a state of things which pleases the imagination. Of course they have, and must have, in a good many cases, a more permanent effect than this. Several newspapers of the class of which we now speak exist, and of these some are written with real ability, with a thorough knowledge of the class to which they appeal, and with a tolerably close acquaintance with the social and economic questions which mainly concern this class. But what chiefly neutralises any of the more sinister influences that this sort of journalistic preaching might exercise, is

the practical common sense of the English nature; and the chief opportunities of this admirable quality are conversation and discussion.

There is nothing like oral argument, whether conducted ill or well, for brushing away moral and mental cobwebs; for elucidating obscure points; for drawing a line between theory and practice. If there exist in England wild and revolutionary prints, there exists, also, an ineradicable and most salutary habit of free discussion of the texts which these prints give. Wherever a knot of working-men assemble—in tavern taproom, in beershop, in cottage, in mechanics' institute—you have a parliament in embryo; in a manner rude and imperfect, but for all that not ineffective; they do their best to "talk the matter out." They may be at heart pretty much of the same way of thinking, though it is not easy to ascertain what that way is; but, as when flint is rubbed up against flint the product is not stone but fire, so the friction of their tongues generates neither fallacy nor folly, but sound sense. For fallacy, however clumsy the debater may be, is the one thing which debate exposes; just as debate reveals, also, the absurdity of the impracticable. The public opinion of the working-classes is, for the most part, never formed except after the discussion of what they have read, or of what has been read to them. If their real sentiments are to be correctly gauged, one should not go to their representative organs or literature; but to the places where they themselves congregate. It is readily conceivable—it is, perhaps, even certain—that the blessings of a perfectly free and unfettered press, such as we have in England, may be compensated by a few disadvantages. It is equally certain that, so long as these exist, the freedom of discussion is not less free. Nothing is to be dreaded as the result of these advantages. So true is it that Liberty, if trusted entirely, provides her own checks, her own sure system of control.

Elsewhere than in the quarters just particularised, is the habit of testing the judgments and advice in the crucible of conversational discussion growing and acquiring a regularly organised form. There are debating clubs by the score in London and in the provinces. The standard of the oratory may not be very high, but then neither is that of the most worshipful House of Commons. Still, on the whole,

the language, and the common sense which that language clothes, are very far from being worthy of contempt, and the result of the entire discussion has a very distinct representative value.

Literature is also brought to bear upon public opinion and its formation. Eminent authorities and experts conduct controversies, by attack and counter-attack, reply and re-reply, in periodical publications, on the events of the day, from the most solemn to the most trivial. In fact, there is a distinct tendency to make organs of a particular party or section, vehicles for the interchange of the most opposite views, and grounds for the thinking out of the most profound or puzzling problems. A yet more significant proof of the existence of a public opinion, independent of the public press, is the alteration in tone of what were once purely party newspapers. If the newspapers have educated the public, the influence of the public is now beginning to tell upon the newspapers, whose proprietors and conductors have at last awoke to the truth, that when a journalist is pledged to wholesale vituperation of the "outs" and unqualified panegyric of the "ins," quite independent of the action of the one or the other, the gravity or character of his censure may well be rather closely enquired into, or, at least, should not be taken for granted as fair or even rational.

In London, or in any great city, there is not a club or institution which is without a certain value as being a school of opinion. The ordinary club politician may best be described as a refined and superior edition of the pot-house politician. He has views, perhaps, quite as strong, but they are couched in language which can advance a juster claim to epigram. The controlling influence with him is rather that of cynicism, than emotion or impulse. He speaks with the assumption of a special and exclusive knowledge, which, however, is after all only an improvement upon that arrogated by the tavern Thersites. The latter has been informed, in general terms, of the existence of European conferences, of the financial difficulties of kings and statesmen, of the condition of their households, and of the fine ladies who are the wire-pullers of courts. He makes a good deal of this, and garnishes the rhetoric of his invective with some wild but racy fables. His rival in higher life, the Club Asmodeus, has not recourse to such crude and glaring designs. Yet the em-

bellishments of his conversation are not always trustworthy. He draws you aside. He is in a position to explain to you exactly how such a series of events arose, and how it will terminate. The newspapers may give a different account, but he knows better. He has met at dinner the second cousin once removed of a cabinet minister. He knows the intrigues and intricacies of the Foreign Office. He is the semi-official depository of a good many more secrets than he can trust to any living human soul. Much of this may be mere idle talk. But in a select society, such as every club in some degree is, there are sure to be gentlemen who have a claim to better knowledge of fact, a clearer political vision, a wider experience than most of their fellows. These views are not noisily delivered by hearth-rug orators, standing with their backs to the fire, wildly waving a newspaper, and speaking after the manner of Thackeray's Mr. Jenkins, at the top of their voice; they are mentioned to one acquaintance, then to another, and so the circle widens, and the facts and speculations are filtered through many minds.

What is to be said as regards education, interest, and occupation, as, to employ the cant term of the day, "factors" in public opinion? In other words, what are the relations to public opinion, in which class opinion stands? Take the question that is now agitating—by the time that these lines are before the public, it may be the question that was agitating, and that is now settled—the whole of England, the question of peace or war. There is a national sentiment, presently to be noticed, on the subject, as well as a variety of subordinate sentiments, regulated by interest or occupation. It may be assumed, that so far as the welfare and honour of England are concerned, the opinion of one class is the opinion of all. But there are considerations of a narrower and more personal character, which cannot be dismissed. It is natural that the representatives of commerce should deprecate war from the bottom of their hearts. With those who may be called speculative traders, it is a different matter; and in a time of war, which is a time of uncertainty, speculation makes fortunes as well as loses them. The idea of war is also acceptable to the agricultural classes, the agricultural labourer excepted, and to the farmer; for war means an increase in the price of grain of every kind. But, after all, the class mainly interested in war is the class

of those who have in their own persons to do the fighting—the army and the navy.

We are a trading people, but we are also a military people; and the spirit of militarism has increased greatly in recent years. The English army has not, as other armies have, opinions of its own on political matters, separate from and independent of those held by the bulk of the nation. Captain Sword is a gallant officer, but he has much the same views on political and civil matters generally as his civilian brethren. He never has any notion of assisting in the establishment of a military imperialism. He is, like Captain Pen, an Englishman, and as such has the honour of England at heart; but by no possibility, near or remote, could the question arise between the army insisting on doing one thing, and the unarmed citizens imploring it to do the other. But the very fact that Captain Sword is so intimately identified with the national life and the national sentiment, suggests another circumstance not perhaps quite so favourable to peace. The army is a profession in which, as it is now constituted, there are few middle-class households that have not a direct interest. It is not merely a profession; it is a great school of conduct and manners—probably the best school in the world. If a lad is sharp and well-behaved, there is a reasonable expectation that he may become a self-supporting institution in the army, quite as soon as, and for less outlay than, the boy who goes from a public school to a university, and, when the university career is over, still has to be started in life. These facts have been recognised by parents, and some of the consequences of the abolition of purchase may be found in the enormously increased numbers of candidates for direct commissions. Now, while war means the possible desolation of households, and while every bullet may have its billet, war means also certain promotion and increase of emolument. It is natural and it is right that a soldier, who is paid to fight his country's battles, should view with satisfaction that war is in prospect. The same news may send a bitter pang through many a mother's, wife's, and maiden's heart, yet these are anxious, after all, that their sons, husbands, and lovers should have a chance of winning their laurels; and the cry of anguish which naturally rises to a woman's lips is apt to be drowned in the great outburst of a people's enthusiasm.

With a nation, in whose life the profession of arms fills the large place that it has come to fill in England, there must always be definite and growing causes which make for war. Captain Sword, of Her Majesty's Reserve Forces, has something to say on the subject as much as Captain Sword, of Her Majesty's Regular Army. The extension of the volunteer movement in England has supplied a number of fresh channels for the circulation of the military spirit in Great Britain. We have now, exclusive of the Militia, very nearly two hundred thousand citizen soldiers pronounced by the War Office authorities as "effectives." The number of officers and sergeants in possession of certificates of proficiency, shows an increase of two hundred and fifty-eight and five hundred and twenty-three respectively, over last year. Honestly, would it not be rather a poor compliment to the genuine significance of this movement, if it had not been attended with some development of the war spirit? When the contagion of that spirit has once seized upon public opinion, it penetrates the entire body with marvellous rapidity. It is, in brief, impossible that in a society composed as English society now is, there should be anything in the direction of a desire for peace at any price worthy of the name of public opinion. It is equally certain that public opinion would not be more favourable to a precipitate plunge into a reckless war.

There are more manifestations of public opinion than those of the platform and the press, the tavern or the club, the drawing-room, the counting-house, and the mess-room, which should not be ignored. The theatres and music-halls, not only of London but of England, have been the scenes of certain demonstrations of feeling, which have attracted considerable notice. It is not surprising if these have been one-sided. No enthusiasm has been possible in favour of the victory of Plevna, even among those who have loathed the race which defended Plevna so long. It is not desirable here to discuss the purely political significance of these so-called demonstrations, if, indeed, they have any. The brave man fighting with adversity has ever been a spectacle that has won the admiration of the gods, whether of the pagan Pantheon or of the British theatre. It is the display of virtue of the most rudimentary kind that has always drawn down the thundering plaudits of the gallery. That these

audits should have been redoubled when he inspiring accessories of gas-light, specular effects, and music, have been orthocoming, is not to be wondered at. Only it is well to remember that directly any event is removed from the world of real prosaic fact, and reproduced in the world of scenic illusion, a liberal discount must be taken off the cheers which greet it, and a distinction must be drawn between public conviction and melodramatic effect.

THE UNIVERSAL PROVIDER.

LET us take a walk, not down Fleet Street—for my address is to madam, not it—but down Westbourne Grove, that lonely Street of the far West, which a few years have changed from a hopeless, woe-egone thoroughfare, to one of the busiest centres of retail trade. I mind me of the time, when Westbourne Grove and its neighbourhood were cited as instances of the folly of persons in overbuilding themselves—as it was funnily called—and Bayswater generally was known as Bayswater the dusty. In those days, old gentlemen were heard to speak of junketings at the Flora Tea Gardens, and of duels on Wormwood Scrubs; and Bayswater was voted by the authorities a stupid blunder. Its growth, rapid as it has been of late, was low enough at first. In fact, Westbourne Grove has only within the last dozen years become a desirable promenade.

The first thing to strike us in Westbourne Grove, is the abode of the Universal Provider, a title which bears an odd similarity to that of the People's Caterer. The Universal Provider, however, is another manner of man from the People's Caterer. Instead of aggressively-pointed moustaches, he wears abundant whiskers; and, unlike the Napoleonic caterer, is a Yorkshireman. It is barely fifteen years since Mr. Whiteley, who now seems to own half the shops in Westbourne Grove, pitched his tent in that locality at Number Thirty-one, with a race of assistants. By selling artificial flowers and similar goods at a low price, he quickly secured a large number of customers, who, by degrees, pushed him into extending his business, until he now occupies an entire row of houses on one side of Westbourne Grove, and several numbers on the other. The domain of the Provider is the object of our stroll. Let us walk in, and see what he will do for us.

As I step into Number Forty-three, Westbourne Grove, I find that the Provider is prepared to take me in hand early in life. No sooner am I, madam, in the nurse's arms, than I am enswathed in the goods supplied by the universal one. I find myself in a trimmed French cambric ditto—whatever that is—and encompassed by flannel bands, swathes, püches, and other mysterious garments fitting to my infant nature. I am profusely dredged with powder from the perfumery department of the Provider, and I am washed—oh, agony!—with soap from the same shelves. By-and-by, frequent visits are made to the Universal Provider on my account. From the jewellery department comes a coral with golden bells, pleasing to the ear, and sweet to whet my baby teeth upon. From Number Forty-three, again, comes curious raiment. My dumpling cheeks, quickly marbled by the wild north-easter, are protected by a silken hood, richly embroidered; my dumpy limbs by a muslin robe, trimmed regardless of expense, and by an embroidered cloak of price. When I lay me down to rest, or rather am put to bed, everybody having had enough of me for that day, I stretch my fat little arms, and kick my little legs, in a bassinet, also from the stores of the Universal Provider. When the solemn period of short-coating arrives, that great man is again called in to provide me with everything, from a nainsook frock to a silk-velvet pelisse, and my mamma is assisted in her choice of my costume, by cunningly-dressed dolls made in my image. At this period I am still shod by the Provider, who also supplies me with a hat, which gives me, in my fond mother's eyes at least, a dashing and cavalier air. As I grow in stature, I still receive from the same address costumes of serge and silk, as well as gorgeous-printed flannel dressing-gowns, and costumes for the delightful days on the sands. In this, however, and several subsequent years of my existence, I love the Provider best in that blissful period which comes between Christmas and Twelfth Night. What a bower of bliss to me is Whiteley's then, with its great bazaar devoted not to great, ugly, useful things, but to delicious mice, which run along the ground; to men, who turn head over heels downstairs; to frogs which leap, and may-bugs to put down girls' backs; to cocked-hats, holding not brains, but sugar-plums; and to wild animals with viscera equally good to eat! What store of tin trumpets, and squeaking

pigs, and barking dogs, and bellowing bulls are set forth! What wonderful rocking-horses! just like life, as the nurse says, with but slight regard for truth, I fear, for I have never seen, to my knowledge, a real live horse suffering from an eruption of scarlet wafers. What a child's Elysium is this fairy spot, with its bright holly sparkling in the light, and its Gollconda, its Potosi of toys! As I grow bigger, my toys take a different shape. Crossbows and guns, peg-tops and humming ditto, assert their claims, and, finally, I am made happy by the possession of a full-sized cricket-bat. I grow bigger, but not out of the knowledge of the Provider, who keeps his keen Yorkshire eye upon me. Am I beyond the natty knickerbockers and jerkins of small boyhood? The Universal Provider is ready and willing to equip me with jackets of the correct cut for a public school, with a tall hat, and with boating and cricketing suits, like the oysters in a New York cellar, "in every style." My first watch and chain come from his establishment, as well as my first "pink;" the dawn, so to speak, of a cross-country career. The cash system of the Provider prevents my becoming very great friends with him during my college days, when terms are of less importance than unlimited credit; but when these "green and salad days" are over, and I am possessed of a yearly income, I again turn my steps to Westbourne Grove, or, to speak more correctly, am turned thither by my fond mother and prudent sisters. They make of Whiteley's a daily haunt, and are never weary of singing its praises. As somebody belonging to us, or known to us, is always getting married, or coming of age, or having an ordinary birthday, my people are perpetually buying presents, of the useful and practical kind preferred for family commemorations. They find great store at the Provider's of clocks, articles de Paris, bronzes, and ormolu generally, and excellent jewellery, made by the best manufacturers. It is not, however, until I enter the holy state of matrimony, that I quite realise the value of Whiteley's and ready money. Then, indeed, I find the comfort of getting things "in the lump," without the aid of a host of furnishers and artificers. The Provider is ready to equip me with everything, like the agent of the famous Manchester commission house, who would take an order for anything, from a church-steeple to a hay-seed. If I want a house built, he will build it

for me in any style I prefer—Queen Anne, Renaissance, or Thirteenth Century. He will also furnish it from top to bottom; with carpets, or rushes, as may be preferred; with furniture of any kind, make, or shape; with curtains, mirrors, a pianoforte for my wife, and a violoncello for myself; with crockery and china, all duly embellished with arms, crest, or humbler monogram; with kitchen utensils and drawing-room knickknacks; with oilcloth, mats, and rugs; with combs and brushes, eau-de-cologne, and tooth-powder; and with stationery of every conceivable kind. One day before my wedding I look in at Whiteley's, intending on that occasion, all else having been organised, to limit my purchases to a plain, but substantial, circlet of gold. By great good luck, I happen to see the Universal Provider himself, who is not at all too grand and remote to have a chat with me. He kindly introduces me into his private room, and shows me mysteries as yet unknown. As my wedding-tour will be lengthy, I bewail the trouble of passports and the difficulty of procuring eligible berths on ocean steamers; and it also occurs to me, as a prudent man, that on getting married I should insure my life. Nothing is easier. I am introduced to six offices, one for shipping, one for banking, one for fire and life assurance, one for the counting-house superintendent, one for Mr. Whiteley's private secretary, and one general order and receiving office. I find that I can not only insure my house and my life, but secure my berth on any vessel going anywhere. The Universal Provider will book my luggage, procure me passports and letters of credit, and, in short, take me and mine off my hands completely. He will also supply me with every known kind of trunk and travelling-box, from the lofty Saratoga to the natty bullock trunk, from the vast portmanteau to the convenient Gladstone. He will open a banking account with me, and procure me anything purchasable for ready money. "I hardly wished for all these departments," he tells me, "but they have been thrust upon me one after the other. I was asked to supply horses, as I supplied carriages, and now I am asked for horses day by day. One day a customer thought he would try a flight beyond me. He asked if I would sell him an elephant for his children to ride on in his park in the Midlands. It did not seem more unnatural to me that a man should want an

elephant than a road locomotive, but I thought for a while whether I could fill the order. In thirty seconds I recollected that elephants were an article of commerce, and I offered to supply him one, but declined to give him an estimate on the spot. Next day I sent him word that he could have a fine young elephant for four hundred pounds, and requested his directions as to the delivery of the animal. He came and apologised for the trouble he had given me, and declared the whole affair a joke, just to see if I could be shut up by any order."

After marriage, the Provider takes me more seriously in hand. The ladies of my family can be attired for all occasions and in every fashion, from the riding-habit to the evening cuirass. Those buying evening costumes are provided with a gas-lighted room, that they may see how the colours suit their complexions by night; and there is an immense establishment for the mysterious operations of cutting and fitting. There are ribbons too, and muslins and laces of every price, from the machine-made bobbin-net to the choicest products of Brussels. All is not vanity, however, in the lair of the Provider. Not the least curious part of it is that devoted to what the Americans call "notions"—to wit, pins, needles, tapes, thread, and sewing-cottons. The Provider buys pins by the ton, and retails them in boxes of one ounce, two ounces, a pound, and so forth. To assist the purchasers of these articles in their laudable efforts to make their own dresses, there is a special department for sewing-machines. The literary department is a curiosity. Books, magazines, and music are sold at the discount from selling price of three-pence in a shilling; and as food is provided for the mind, so is refreshment provided for the body. At the restaurant I can offer my Belinda, exhausted by the mental and physical effort of trying on multitudinous dresses of quaint and marvellous design, substantial nutriment to support her until the solemn sacrifice of dinner is announced. The scheme of refreshment is not, I am glad to say, confined to such airy trifles as sandwiches, jellies, and the like, which purveyors less enlightened appear to think fitted to the feminine organisation. That beautiful structure is, so far as my experience is concerned, far more adapted to the reception of roast mutton than of blancmange; and the Provider, like a wise

Yorkshireman, has supplied the article most in demand. His real value is perhaps most distinctly felt, when there is a mutiny at home and friends are coming to dinner. Then he appears in all his majesty. The cook may have struck and James followed suit, but domestic rebellion shakes me not a whit. It is a base thought that any live Briton should succumb to his domestics, but my friends must be fed and waited upon. So I hie me to the Provider. There is no difficulty at all. At fixed prices duly set forth, he will supply me from a list of twenty clear and as many thick soups, joints, poultry, and game, croquettes, rissoles, and patties, vol-au-vent from the noble financière to the humble chicken, entrées of all sorts and sizes, ices, creams, cakes, jellies, and fruit. All these good things will he deliver punctually, with proper service thereto, and also provide seats, flowers, bouquets, and decorations, with plate and linen if my own stock fall short. It is also said, but not openly, that if pressed very hard he will supply two or three guests to fill up gaps suddenly caused by accident—the said guests to order being quite irreproachable persons, elegantly dressed in the latest fashion, and furnished with conversation to order, be the same political, æsthetic, military, naval, or merely social. The "quatorzième" of French legend is realised at Whiteley's, and can be had with the clear turtle on the shortest reasonable notice. But this is one of the secrets of the Provider's lair.

Having lodged his clients and dressed them from top to toe, the Provider will, if they choose, supply them not only with choice banquets, but with the beef and mutton, the tea and coffee, the poultry and game, of everyday life. He offers these on a scale arranged according to market price. He sells butchers' meat, as it is called, to the extent of about two tons daily, poultry and pork, potatoes, greens, and grocery in proportion. The business done in this department is enormous, and it is a gay sight at Christmas-time to see the regiments of turkeys and geese melt away before the heavy fire of purchasers. This comparatively new enterprise has entailed the purchase of a farm, and a farther extension in the same line of enterprise.

As the Provider has become one of the largest employers of labour in this country, he has not been unmindful of the duties of his position. He has now in his employ nearly three thousand persons, male

and female, and all are admirably cared for. A large proportion of these are resident hands, and for their accommodation Mr. Whiteley has leased several houses in Westbourne Grove Terrace; the female establishment occupying one side of the street, the male the other. The commissariat for this immense staff is a department in itself, and, perhaps, no employés are better fed than those of the great Provider. In joints alone they consume more than half a ton per diem, and the weekly bills of the Provider reach the following astounding figures: seven thousand pounds of fresh meat, forty sacks of potatoes, four thousand two hundred loaves of bread, eighteen hundred quarts of milk, three hundred pounds of butter, three hundred pounds of cheese, a thousand gallons of beer, three hundred pounds of tea, five hundred of loaf and two hundred of moist sugar, two sacks of flour, six hundred eggs, seven hundred pounds of ham and bacon, one hundred and fifty pounds of currants, and an equal weight of rice, tapioca, and sago. About fifteen hundred persons sit down to the general meals of the day, and at tea that number is increased to eighteen hundred. Their chief is not content with supplying them with work and animal food, but has thoughtfully given them the means of innocent amusement. They have already in existence two cricket clubs, two rowing clubs, two football clubs, a dramatic club, and the Mississippi Minstrel Troupe. The Provider's young people have also an athletic club and a brass band; and with smoking and reading rooms for the men, reading and music rooms for the women, and an annual ball, are made very much at home. The Universal Provider takes good care of everybody, and, it is recorded, once covered himself with glory by making a match. An unbelieving customer was going to India, and, having purchased a liberal outfit, turned round like the man who ordered the elephant, and said, "Now, Mr. Whiteley, you have furnished me with everything but one—a wife." The Provider was equal to the occasion, presented the young gentleman to one of the prettiest of the young ladies in his employment, and created a love-match on the spot. The young gentleman did not go alone to India.

The universal one being thus equal to any transaction, it is not to be wondered at that he takes care of me, when growing infirmities press heavily upon me. As

gout and dyspepsia assert their power, I again seek the Universal Provider, and buy of him pills and potions duly patented; and consult the hairdresser kept at his establishment, as to the expediency of applying to my whitening locks one of those articles stated to be "not a dye." In time this shallow semblance of youth becomes useless, and the wig-maker must be called into operation. I again take my way to Westbourne Grove, and after investing in silks and furs for my feminine belongings, bespeak a substantial head-covering for myself. Time passes till I feel the want of luncheon. I am past the solid refection of roast mutton and boned turkey now, and am fain to put up with a plate of turtle, and thin at that. But my wig is well made, and I feel that Time is set for awhile at defiance.

The Universal Provider having thus watched and tended me through life, in sickness and in health! having poured out champagne for me in the hours of joy, and beef-tea in the hours of woe; having supplied me with a clever hack to canter on in the Row, and a bath-chair for the faithful Barkins to drag me about in; with luxurious cushions for my smoking-room, and a water-bed for my sick chamber; with go-carts for my children, and a neat brougham for my wife, is also prepared, this last time, not to sell but to lend me—or rather my executors, administrators, and assigns—another vehicle for a ceremony indispensable in some form, but looked upon with various eyes by the persons aforesaid, according to the disposition of my several messages and tenements. The Universal Provider relieves my executors, administrators, and assigns of much anxious care, for he charges himself with the final disposal of myself; and the price being settled, he is no niggard of ostrich plumes and other trappings; he supplies the plumpest and sleekest of horses, and equally sleek men, adorned with no more carmine on their principal feature than is incidental to their profession. My casket, as my American cousins love to call it, is of the best and most thoroughly seasoned material, the handles are heavy, the plate is massive, and the full quantity of nails is bestowed around it. Moreover, the Provider secures me an eligible spot for my resting-place, where my manes will not be offended by the contact of plebeian clay. He will see me laid there in due state and solemnity, and having me safe underground, will keep me there by

placing over me a monument of marble or granite, ponderous and superb. He will guarantee absolutely the quality of this, the last of my requirements. He will warrant it best Sicilian, or best Peterhead; the sculpture and engraving to be the best procurable; and the Latin inscription to be good sound classical stuff, without blunders or solecisms, having honestly given this job to a Master of Arts and Fellow of Brazenface to execute. He will, in fact, warrant the entire monument with one trifling exception—he draws the line at the veracity of the epitaph.

ECHO.

PEALING from sun-flushed crag at fall of day,
Whispering at noon about the pathless wood,
Mourning in yon black hollow, and away,
Flying athwart the broad breast of the flood,
No foot can follow thee, no tongue can speak
Of the wild sorrow trembling in thy cry;
But Pity fain would range the world and seek,
Somewhere, the passion of thy love-bright eye,
Echo! and kiss the tear from thy pale cheek,
And bid thee die.

Alas, immortal sorrow! Love may fail
From the gray dust that shapes the heart of man;
The magic lights of evening flush and pale
O'er the deep grave, and all the stars are wan
With one night's tears. But clear, and sad, and wild,
At earliest dawn, and e'er the sun has clomb
Yon bank of ruddy cloud that lies high piled
Along the sea, e'er light breaks on the foam,
I hear thee cry "Narcissus!" Hush, poor child,
He cannot come!

So many voices cry about the world
For their dead youth—dead in its own despite;
That knew not of the dreadful die it hurled,
Staking one hour of noon against long night!
But surely, somewhere, in the deepest deep,
Beneath the golden water where he died,
Thy loved one, Echo, lies in tranced sleep;
And, sometime, he will wake to claim and keep
Thee for his bride.

A FLIRT'S FAILURES.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"Do you know her story?" Jack Parlbly said, nodding his head in the direction of a graceful-looking woman who was riding slowly past us at the moment. "She's had her chances, if you like," he went on, without waiting for my answer; "had them, and missed them, and made an awful muddle of her own life, and of the lives of a good many fellows, who were foolish enough to be fond of her."

"Were you one of the fellows, Jack dear?" I asked demurely, for Jack and I were recently engaged; and, after the manner of recently-engaged people, we were both in the habit of avowing that our hearts had never spoken on behalf of any

one else, previous to the discovery that we were born for one another.

He laughed, in some confusion, I thought, and did not speak for a few moments. Then he proposed that we should stroll on, or rather he suggested that, "as Kate Coningsby will have turned by this time, let us meet her, and you can have a good look at her, Helen."

"Tell me about Kate Coningsby, Jack," I said coaxingly; "is she married or single, happy or unhappy? I've never heard you speak of her before."

"I'll tell you all I know," he said, rather sadly; and then we paused, for the subject of our conversation was cantering up close to us. At the same instant, she caught sight of Jack, and reining her horse in close to the railings, she held her hand out to him cordially, with the words:

"Mr. Parlbly! I'm delighted to see you again after these long years."

"The years have been very kind to you," he said admiringly, and I didn't wonder at his saying it, for she was smiling and flushed now; and even I, who had not caused the smile and flush, saw that her face was a charming one.

"Perhaps the years have been kinder than I deserve," she said; "but tell me about yourself. Are you——"

"Not married yet, but going to be in a week or two," Jack interrupted hurriedly; and then he introduced me, and she bent a kind, sweet, earnest gaze upon me, and told me "I was going to marry one of the best men in the world."

She did not remain with us for more than a minute after this, and during that minute a greater number of expressions chased each other over her face than I ever saw on a woman's face before. Gaiety and sadness, delight at something ridiculous, depression about something of which I had no knowledge, interest in Jack and me, indifference about everything, impatience at being detained by us—these and a dozen other feelings were legibly written in her speaking brown eyes, and on her nervously flexible mouth, before she went away from us.

"What a winning woman!" I exclaimed rapturously, for I was proud of not seeming to be jealous.

"Winning! Aye, that she is; as great at winning, as she is at losing," Jack said meditatively. "If you like, I'll tell you her story one day—all I know of it myself, and all I've heard from other people; she

has been a famous flirt, and an almost equally famous failure."

"Flirts deserve to fail," I said. "A woman who flirts must be heartless and unscrupulous, and—and—everything that's bad."

"Kate Coningsby is neither heartless nor unscrupulous, nor anything that's bad," Jack said warmly. And I deemed it wise not to question him further, just then, about this pretty interesting woman, in whose face so many stories of bygone storms were written.

But one day shortly after this he referred to her himself, and told me her story, which I shall repeat, nothing extenuating and setting down naught in malice, in his own words, as nearly as I can recollect them.

"About fifteen or sixteen years ago, Kate Coningsby was as light-hearted, loving, happy, and frank a creature as could be found within the borders of the county in which she had been brought up. Her father was an inspecting commander in the coastguard service, and her home was in a remote country village on the seaboard. The only neighbours the Coningsbys had, who could be considered as at all belonging to their own grade, were the families of the rector and of the one farmer of the parish. Their visiting was, as you may suppose, strictly limited by circumstances, and Kate grew up without any girl companions of her own class, and with an intense love for every kind of country sport or pastime. Her two brothers were her only friends and comrades. With them she would go out ratting and rabbiting, or pulling about the narrow, muddy creek in their little flat-bottomed duck-boat. While the boys were at home, Kate asked for nothing better than their companionship and confidence. And they gave both to her largely, for she was as plucky as the pluckiest boy, and absolutely innocent of every kind of feminine meanness or caprice. But when it came about that the boys went out into the world, and she had no longer their holidays to look forward to, then the dreariness and loneliness of the solitary life told on the girl's excitable nature, and caused her to pant for change, change of any sort, as a relief to the monotony of her life. She was just about sixteen when she got the change she sighed for. She was asked to be a guest in the house of a brother-officer of her father's, who was stationed in a small seaport town about seven miles from her village home. And

there she went, and there she began to try her wings. In other words, a young soldier officer, who happened to be staying with another family in the neighbourhood, got hold of her one night at a dance, and gave her a few lessons in the fine art of flirtation. She proved herself an apt pupil, and used her just-developed talents to such good purpose, that when he found other fellows were beginning to admire her, he forgot that he had only intended amusing himself with this bird of freedom. Accordingly, at the end of a fortnight, he proposed to her, and she went home engaged.

"He was a good-looking, well-set-up fellow, I've heard; and he was a man of good family, and had a 'pretty name,' as Kate argued in extenuation of her own folly in fancying herself in love with him. But he was a roué, and a heartless rascal all round. In the country an engagement compromises a girl considerably, and in Kate's case she compromised herself even unnecessarily. Her father objected to and would not countenance the engagement, and the spoilt child defied him, and fancied herself a heroine of romance for a few weeks. During these weeks she met her lover rashly whenever he asked her to do it; and paraded her love for him, and a dog he had given her, all over the place. At the end of those weeks, to the delight of her family and the girl's own intense mortification, he jilted her for a stranger; and in her eagerness to show people that she was not wearing the willow, she went in for what looked like desperate love-making with the younger brother of an earl who came as a farming pupil for a year with Mr. Warden, one of the Coningsbys' two neighbours.

"He was a young, passionate, honourable fellow, and he offered himself and his prospects openly enough on the shrine of the young goddess who had caught his boyish fancy. But the burnt child dreaded the fire. The fellow who had jilted her had done her even a greater injury than this—he had taught her to distrust all men. She liked this young Gerald Hazelton, was pleased and proud of being the object of his ardent pursuit, and showed all the pride and pleasure she felt without any attempt at concealment. But she had no faith in his protestations, no belief in his love, any more than her own having any lasting power, and no scruples about making herself agreeable to every other man who came across her path.

"It seems that Hazelton grew enraged at last, and used strong language in re-monstrating with her—language such as only a jealous undisciplined boy could permit himself to use. He allowed her to see his weakness, in fact; and she, being armed with indifference, fancied herself the stronger of the two, and told him, with something very like childish insolence, that 'as it was never well the gray mare should be the better horse,' they had better make an end of their compact. He took her at her word—a little to the young coquette's surprise. And so a second time before she was seventeen Kate Coningsby was the heroine of a broken engagement. She got a good deal of blame from some people, and a good deal of pity from others, and she accepted both blame and pity in a graciously gay way that made the majority sorry that they had proffered either to her. If she shed any tears over the downfall of that basket of eggs no one was a bit the wiser; and it is recorded of her that though she was perfectly satisfied with the way she had played her own part in the genteel comedy, she would never have a word of anything like censure applied to Hazelton. She showed herself to be without fear, and she declared him to be without reproach.

"How it might have been with her if she had been compelled to stay in the neighbourhood I don't know, but just at this juncture her father was appointed to a post in a large naval establishment in a garrison town. It was an awful place for her to be put in, but she went there radiant; and soon reigned as Queen of the whole Brigade. She was just learning her power, and it came into play very prettily, as it seemed at first; for she was not only young, but brighter, and fairer and truer, we all fancied, than any of the other girls of the place. We admired her for the unconventional freedom of a manner that was always well-bred, and for the fearlessness that led her to let a fellow see that she liked him and enjoyed winning his liking in return, without any thought of marriage or humbug in the business. In fact, Kate Coningsby made herself our friend and comrade.

"There were four of us assistant-surgeons on the staff of the establishment at the time, all young, and all Irishmen into the bargain. I don't think that it had ever occurred to Kate—who is an Irishwoman—to pride herself very much upon her nationality until she fell in with us. But

liking us, and discovering with her sex's unfailing instinct that we liked her equally well in return, she let the compatriotship pave the way to one of those delusive intimacies that begin in friendship safely enough, but that slide off into love before you know where you are.

"She was so jolly and frank with us all, never playing one off against the other, or attempting to make the one that might be present with her believe that she preferred him to any one of the three who were absent, that the Irish team became a proverb for its loyalty to her, and for the admirable way in which the four were 'One for all—all for one.' I believe that we should have borne individual disappointment in the matter blithely enough, and rejoiced in the victor's success, if she had married any one of the Irish team. But before we had time to put it to the touch a Captain Lennox came to stay with his uncle, the governor of the place, and from the time his figure appeared on the canvas, we saw that the bonnie Kate might be comrade and friend still, but never more than that to any one of us.

"He was a good-looking, tawny-moustached, well-set-up fellow this Lennox, a good type of the aristocratic Englishman; and Kate didn't see in him at the time what the rest of us saw very clearly—that he was rather inclined to fancy his position in the place, and give himself overbearing airs to the other men. The fact of it was, that the curse of 'the quarter-deck system' in the service pervaded the whole social atmosphere of the establishment to a pernicious extent. And though Kate hadn't a bit of it about her, and by virtue of her popularity was quite beyond its influence, still she was blind to the fault she despised when it developed in Lennox, and she let him monopolise her, and grew into a kind of fellowship with him that separated her from us, her older friends, in a great measure, and for the first time caused us to call our favourite a flirt.

"But there was no flirtation in the matter in reality. It came upon both the man and the girl that they were very much in earnest as soon as his regiment got the route for India. She would have gone with him on his pay—for he had nothing else, poor fellow—gladly enough, and he would have taken her as gladly; and if they had followed their own impulses Kate would have been a happier woman this day, and Lennox might have been alive. But his friends pointed out the

folly of it, and her friends pointed out the folly of it, and the end of it was that he went away without her.

"She wouldn't show a sign of the pain she felt to anyone of her rivals in the place, who were watching for the evidence of weakness. But she told me just enough to convince me that her heart had gone with Lennox. They had their parting on a little tree-shaded bridge that crosses a stream that runs through one of the sweetest little valleys in Kent, and he promised to come back and claim her in a couple of years, and she promised to wait for him; but there was no acknowledged bond between them, and it was decreed that they were not to correspond. 'You see,' she said to me, 'I've none of the honour, and glory, and importance of an engagement to sustain me, and I shan't even have a letter all the while to remind me if I begin to waver; but if I know myself at all, I can wait twenty years. And whatever I may seem in reality, I shall hold myself as much bound to Lennox as if I were married to him.' And I believed her then, and I believe her now, for all that has come to pass since then."

Jack paused for a moment, and I could see that his memory was travelling back very tenderly to the day when Kate Coningsby made him her confidant. "Go on with the Lennox episode—for it was only an episode, I feel sure," I said gently. "It ended in some other woman coming between them, probably. I should never feel satisfied of the fidelity of any man who left me with such a feeble bond between us. It ended in her being thrown over again, I suppose? Poor Kate!"

"It ended in worse than that," Jack said sadly. And then he went on to tell me what follows.

CHAPTER II.

"THERE was very little smooth sailing for poor Kate after Lennox left," Jack went on; "the women were always at her mother, telling her what 'a pity it was that Kate should be wasting her time in thinking about a man who had never proposed properly to her father for her, and who would be sure to forget her soon;' and some of the younger men from the garrison flattered the girl herself into making an exhibition of indifference, which she did not feel, towards her absent lover. But she was a high-couraged young creature in those days, and she trod the thorny

path without ever so much as showing that she felt the prickles. So she rode daily with her cavalcade of ill-mounted admirers, and danced with them two or three times a week at the military balls and assemblies, and laughed my advice to scorn, when I used to tell her that Lennox would hear of it, and not like it.

"You know how much I love him, Jack," she would say to me, "but if I abjured all the pomps and vanities, and turned myself into a cricket on the hearth during his absence, I shouldn't be the girl Lennox fell in love with by the time he came back. Don't you be frightened; he trusts me as entirely as I trust him, and if I heard that he rode every morning, and danced every night, with the prettiest woman in the Presidency, I should only be glad that he had such good luck."

"It was while things were in this state that Captain Coningsby, her father, died; and you know, or you don't know yet, Helen, how everything that has been real and substantial to the 'wife and family' of an officer, becomes unsubstantial and not to be grasped when they are transformed into his widow and orphans. The change is from lively to severe with a vengeance in all cases, but never, perhaps, more thoroughly so than in the case of Kate Coningsby.

"She bore it all like a brick, we all felt that she did, for there seemed to us at the time something heroic in the way in which the poor child stood erect still, under the blow of leaving the handsome home, and parting with the pretty pony. We had seen other families turn out from the place under even sadder circumstances, but we all cursed the parsimony of a service which awarded such a niggardly pension to the mother of Kate Coningsby. But at that time she had the art of bearing every reverse beautifully, and she would have walked into a workhouse gracefully, I believe.

"A month or two after this, I was appointed to a ship that was commissioned for three years to the Mediterranean, and the last I saw of Kate, till the other day, was her settling down in a little house in a London suburb with her mother, and beginning to work as an artist for her living. All that I tell you from this point is what I have been told by other people, but I know that it's all true.

"She made headway rapidly as an artist, selling her pictures at good prices as fast as she could paint them. Her style isn't careful or finished at all, but it's always

clever and striking. You can't tell exactly what it is that pleases you in her dashing sketches of modern life; it's as undefinable as the delicate aroma of good wine. It's there, and that's about all you can say about it, unless you're an art-critic, which I'm not. She was working, you see, with the firm though unavowed purpose of making such a name as would ensure her an income sufficient to marry Lennox upon; every plan she made tended to that end, and though her intercourse with all the fellows who had been about her before he came was just as frank and friendly as of old, there wasn't a touch of flirtation in it, that everyone of them would swear.

"The Coningsbys had moved to quite another part of London from where Lennox's relations lived, and so she heard nothing at all about him, either directly or indirectly, but she never lost her faith in his intention to come back for her at the end of two or three years. She knew he could find her easily enough when he did come back, and so she worked on in full reliance, never doubting him any more than she deemed it possible he should doubt her.

"She had left a girl-friend behind her, who knew of the understanding that existed between Lennox and Kate, and laughed at it in a cynical way—not ill-naturedly at all, but because she had a fixed idea that Kate had a heart for every man who was present, and not so much as an affectionate memory of the absent one. This girl had said this so often openly to Kate and other people, that she got the idea firmly fixed in her own mind, and in the mind of one or two others; and she carried her conviction so far, as to earnestly urge a friend of her own to try his fate with Kate, whom he very much admired. This man was in every respect unsuited to her. He was a scholar—a savant, in fact—and his reputation for learning was a grand one. But he was a foreigner, and full of prejudices against the habits and people to which and whom Kate had been accustomed all her life. He fell in love with her, in fact, for her vivacity, and her power, and love of pleasing, and then he tried to knock it all out of her, because it fought with his recollections of the demeanour of the daughters of his own land. But Kate bore a good deal from him, in friendship, at first, on account of that love she always has for talent, and her womanly weakness for success. So somehow it came about that their

names were coupled together, not maliciously at all, but as a matter of course; and as they were in the same set, and his devotion to her was a palpable thing, it got taken for granted that they were engaged, and some people pitied the grave man of learning a good deal, for having suffered his choice to fall on so notorious a flirt as Kate Coningsby.

"That she was flattered by her conquest over a mind that was infinitely more powerful than her own is a pitiable truth, and she made what even I must admit to be a culpable pretence of rejoicing in the fact of having him in her thrall. She told him about Lennox, and gloried openly enough in her love for him, and his love for her; so that the other man went into the snare with his eyes open, even those who blame her most must confess.

"The awful crash came soon. As I've said, she had never heard anything about Lennox all this while. One day she went to see the young lady who had been the medium of bringing about the latest folly with the foreigner, and after a few remarks on indifferent subjects this girl said to Kate:

"Have you heard—but of course you have—that Captain Lennox has destroyed himself?"

"It is useless trying to describe what Kate did, or thought, or felt, when this blow was dealt at her. Though the announcement was made to her in such an apparently heartless and horribly commonplace way, she knew that it was true, and that it was not meant unkindly. Her friend believed that Kate would have no special feeling in the matter, and acted according to her belief. And no one ever knew what Kate's feelings were, for she never spoke of them. A long agonising illness followed; and when she came out of it her youth, and brightness, and courage were gone. But she declared that the illness was a fever, and that she had caught it from someone else, and no one could gainsay her.

"Her courage was gone, and now she needed it more than ever, for cruel reports were not scarce about the affair, and people who knew nothing at all of the matter conjectured freely about it. It got bruited abroad that poor Lennox had heard all manner of rumours about the girl he meant to have made his wife, and that he cut his throat rather than come home to find himself cheated. Kate went through tortures

of humiliation and grief, but she hadn't the sharpest pang of all, 'remorse,' to endure, for she had nothing to be remorseful about. But the whisperings stung her to death nearly, and she grew nervously sensitive about being treated as one on whose hands there was a stain of blood.

"The truth came out at last, and cleared her; but it couldn't do away with the pain, and shame, and sorrow which had been her portion. Something had gone wrong in the regiment about money matters, and Lennox, who was as honourable and proud a fellow as ever breathed, couldn't stand the shadow of a suspicion that had been cast upon him. It was money, not a woman, that drove him to that doom; but if he had known how that poor girl was made to bite the dust in consequence of his rash act, he would have lived and faced everything, I believe, rather than have left her such a ghastly legacy.

"It's no use pretending that she didn't deteriorate from that time—she did, sadly enough. With her heart bleeding still for the man she had really loved, she pledged her hand to the brilliant scholar who deserved something infinitely higher than Kate had come to be now. But she was so sore and wounded, so tempest-tossed and shattered, that she could not resist the opportunity of anchoring in any harbour that offered. But it was a wretched day for her when Göllinger declared his love for her; and on my soul I believe it was a far more wretched day for him.

"He was a man with chivalrous ideas about man's honour and woman's purity, and that very manner of Kate's which had captivated him became a scourge to his back as soon as he regarded her as his own property. According to his idea the fit and proper wife for an honest man was the girl who had never thought of love, much less learnt its meaning, until the honest man bade her belong to him. It was a grievous thing in his eyes that Kate should have loved and been beloved before she ever saw him. It was an even more grievous thing that she would not ignore having done so.

"He was a good man and he was a great man; he had made himself familiar with all languages and studied all creeds—but he knew nothing of women. Kate could not, or at least she did not, resist the fascination of Göllinger's name and fame. For the man himself she had no

love, and the bondage grew intolerable to her. Yet she shrank from the thought of giving him up; or of his giving her up, with a shrinking that only a woman whose love-ventures had all failed as hers had can at all understand. She grew afraid of him, for under the guise of a suave and gentle manner he had an intolerant spirit and a difficult temper. He wanted the girl he had chosen for her imperfections apparently, to cast them like an old skin, and develop new and unnatural perfections, that belong to quite another order of womankind, under his auspices. She could far better have stood a downright good rowing from a fellow who would have called a spade a spade, as an Irishman would have done, than she could stand the transcendental twaddle he talked to her. He made out to the girl, you see, that, though he knew better, the rest of the world would deem her purity sullied if she so much as got 'spoken about.' And it's always been Kate's fate to be spoken about. She goaded him into jealousy by showing delight in other people's society when she felt it. And he hadn't the manliness to call it 'jealousy,' but just worried her by declaring that it was all for her sake, and without any consideration for himself, that he spoke.

"He was not a good-looking fellow, nor was he sufficiently plain for his ugliness to be interesting. Therefore, when he jeered at the womanly weakness which made her see more merits than were there in handsome men, and giped at every man as being brainless who happened to have personal beauty—when he did these things in dulcet tones, Kate saw the littleness of it all, and wasn't the more closely bound to him for the sight.

"The yoke was very heavy to her for several reasons. If she had been romantically in love with him, as she had been with Lennox, she could have borne all the uncertainty and waiting without a word or sign of weariness. But she got to despise herself after a time for her cowardice in holding on to an engagement that galled her, merely because she had made it in a moment of folly. She'd have gone on working like a nigger, and enduring like a woman, if he had clinched the matter and married her then. But he was a cautious customer, and his prudence was so much stronger than his passion, that he spoke of his marriage 'in a few years' time' as an adventurous undertaking which love of her would probably tempt him to embark

in. But he held her in such a mental and moral grip the while, that though she panted to fly free from her fetters, she was always held back from doing so by some consideration that might seem impotent to others, but that was as strong as death to her.

"Naturally, though there was an idea floating about that she was engaged to Göllinger, other men didn't hold aloof from her, for her brains gave them a sense of comradeship with her, and her fascinations have always had the power of turning a real or fancied lover into a fast friend. You see she had no real anchorage-ground in this bondage she was in to Göllinger, and so she drifted about, now striking on sunken rocks, and now running foul of other barks, never being completely wrecked, but always coming out of these collisions a trifle damaged. At last, in playing with fire, she got burnt in a way she will never get over; but I think she quite forgave the thoughtlessness of the man who did her the injury on account of its being the means of freeing her from Göllinger. To cut the story short, she fell in love a second time with a rising literary star, whose genius being of a brilliant and versatile rather than of a profound order, was much more sympathetic with her than Göllinger had ever been. And taking this man's ardent seeming for reality, she gave herself up to the luxury of following the dictates of her heart concerning him, and broke her engagement in a way that brought universal censure and indignation from even her staunchest friends upon herself, only to find that the man whose words had won her without ever pledging himself, was going to be married to another girl."

"And now," I asked, as Jack paused, "surely the story doesn't end in this way? She looks rather less like a blighted woman than anyone I ever saw."

"Who can tell the end?" Jack laughed. "It's hardly the moral I should wish you to draw from the story of her many follies and miseries, but I must be a veracious chronicler. After all, she is married, and is a very happy wife, and, as she told me yesterday, 'the proudest mother in the land.' But she has the grace to feel that her course has not been a perfectly exemplary one, and to hope that her daughters will not take pattern by it. There's this to be said, however: a woman with flirting blood in her veins will exercise her gifts

in that line at some period or other of her life, and perhaps it's just as well that, like Kate Coningsby, she should get it all over before marriage."

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. H. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VII. ALCHEMY.

PROSPER'S exclamation did not disturb the patient, because it was unheard; not even Celia's entrance interrupted the young surgeon's hand or eye. He continued his inspection as steadily as if there had been no intrusion. Celia instinctively put out her arm as a bar against Prosper's entrance farther into the room. Anyone but a Frenchman would have taken the hint, and gone; but the politeness of the great nation is proverbial. And the truest politeness unquestionably consists in never feeling oneself in the way. It had already required the very sublimity of politeness to insist on seeing Celia home from Park Lane. Any man can be polite enough to see a girl home who accepts his protection; but it is only a Prosper who has such a fund of chivalry as to put up serenely with avoidance and snubbing rather than fail in one duty of a gentleman.

But, after his first excited exclamation, the picture of still life froze even his mercury, and he waited behind Celia to see what was next to happen. Comrie was the first to move. He removed his speculum, rubbed it, absently, on his sleeve, and then first seemed to be aware that there were others in the room. He bowed to Celia; or rather nodded, for his place of birth had given him nothing in common with his compatriot Sir Pertinax, and his place of training little in common with Prosper—saving always his want of being able to feel himself in the way when he had an object to serve. John March had certainly been quite as much his victim that evening as Celia had been Prosper's.

Celia's look of hope, too intense to dare to be itself, sent the blood from his heart to his face; a girl's possible emotions had not entered—out of a dream—into his single-hearted investigation of John March's ears. The room seemed to him to be suddenly divided into two hostile camps—science and ugliness on his side, grace and beauty on hers; Prosper being

only in the dark background. He groped about in his mind, not for scientific assurance to give himself, but for unscientific hope to give to her. There was a look in her face that he knew he should kill by saying what alone he had a right to say; and he, who was willing to give surgical pain enough to satisfy the theories of the great Maurel himself, shrank from hurting that look as much as if it had been a healthy dog or child. He groped farther and farther into every corner of his mental resources that he might find hope where none was; and meanwhile, with that supreme disregard for hours which distinguishes Saragossa Row, sat down by the fireplace and thought so hard for Celia's sake as to forget she was there, or how her eyes were trying to follow his thoughts into the recesses of his brain.

A moment when all were intent upon their own affairs was obviously the very time for Prosper to interest them in his own.

"Signor Stefano—Monsieur March—ten thousand pardons," he said, addressing the released patient with dignified patronage; "mademoiselle your charming daughter tells me you are a musician. Of distinction? Ah, that goes without to say. When one is musician one looks musician; it is in all the air—what you call the eyes, monsieur, and the nose. Ah, it is a bad, bad land for the music, this England," he said, looking round the sorry, cheerless room and thence to Celia in her point-lace, and thence to John March again. "It will give a woman what she will, who devours twelve great green oysters all at once, and it will leave a musician—of distinction—to starve. Eh bien. What would you? It is the costume of the land. I congratulate myself ten thousand times of to make acquaintance with mademoiselle, your so charming daughter. She sings like an angel—ah, 'Dolce amor mio!'—But what would you? An angel shall come down from the cloud, and no one shall listen if she have not Prosper. I am Prosper, monsieur."

John March was looking at him intently, and listening with all his eyes—the highest compliment that a listener can receive. Prosper waited to observe the effect of the last announcement, and was amply satisfied.

"Yes; I am Prosper. It was not for nothing that mademoiselle has had the pleasure of meeting me chez Milady Quorne. She is good; she reminds me a

little of Clari. It is me which made Clari; it is me which can make mademoiselle. It is nature what gives the voice; it is art what gives the train; but it is Prosper what gives the pay. Aha, monsieur? We shall be better friends, you and I. It is the music of England who makes the people in a rage no v—in a fury. It is the Comus who draws. The time for England is come; I am a Man of the Time. If it was the music of the Turks—prestissimo, signore!—there would be a grand Turkish opera, with Turkish singers—Ali, Abdallah, Fatima—on the stage. There shall be no Lucia; no Almaviva; it shall be John, and Dick, and William, and Joe. I know your names—ha? You are pianist—violinist—drummer? No? Composer? Yes? All the better. All the world can play and drum, but not all the world can compose. I shall call in the morning, in good time. What hour suits you? Ten? Eleven? Twelve? One?—No? Two?—Yes? Then it shall be two. Au revoir, monsieur. Felicissima notte, mademoiselle."

And so, at last, he took his leave, having had no more idea that he was haranguing a deaf man, who could not hear a single word, than that he himself was dumb. There was angry gleam in the maestro's eyes.

"Celia," he said, "we leave this house to-morrow. I choose to be where I can be alone when I will."

Comrie started from his reverie.

"Good-night," he said abruptly, and was leaving the room when Celia suddenly put her hand upon his arm, and looked up at his far-off face so wistfully that, just to have given another answer than he must, he would have let his father's creditors go unpaid for ten years more to come.

"Can he be cured?" cried out Celia—"Can you cure him?"

"Maurel could not cure him," he blurted out, instead of the gentle way of breaking the bad news for which he was seeking.

"You—mean—"

An impulse of pity broke through his shyness; he took both her gloved hands in one of his own, and covered them with the other. They were cold as ice, the excitement of the evening had driven back all the blood to her heart, and anxiety held it there—the citadel needed all the forces it could muster. Except as a part of diagnosis, he had never held a girl's hands together like this before; and even now professional instinct made him look

for the fever in her eyes that should harmonise with the icy hands.

"Go to bed, lassie," he said, "and sleep off the late hours. They'll be bad for you. As to the case—I never meant you to hope; and that's why I—but as it's done, it can't be undone. Nature's a strange woman, and most often she'll get people's ears and suchlike into sorapes just to show how cleverly she can get them out again—but no; there's nothing to be done here. It would just be cruel to give hope where there's none. He'll be deaf to the end."

"Celia!" said her father grimly.

Surely the Master seemed being blotted out of the world. He had been feeling it himself until his lonely reverie had been interrupted by the intrusion of Comrie. And his feeling was well founded, beyond all question. "Finis" had blotted him out of his life's work, and his life's work out of the world. Lady Quorne's invitation had practically released Celia from her slavery and his tyranny. The suddenly remembered mantilla had turned what might have been into a lost reality—what had been, into a dream and the ghost of a dream. Even his loneliness was not his own. The Scotch doctor, the French impresario, all the world as two strangers seemed to one solitary man, came and went, Heaven knew why, as if the little bare room was an open tavern—except that it contained nothing to buy but a bundle of music-paper, out of which the life and soul were dying out, slowly and surely, day by day. And now Celia, in the very dress of Noëmi, was standing before him, with her hands as passively in those of a strange young man as if he were blotted out of sight as well as out of hearing. It was time for him to vindicate, not his will, but his very existence, in common with tables and chairs.

"I thank you," he said, with saturnine politeness to Comrie. "I presume it is to your interest in Miss March, my daughter, that I owe the interest you have been pleased to take in my ears. You need not tell me I am past cure—I know that as well as you—and—well, that matters little. There is only one thing I ever wanted to hear," he said, with a backward glance towards the score, "and that will never be heard. One wants no ears to sit by oneself and wait for the end. As you may perceive, I am not in need of any company but my own. It vexes me to the heart that I am unable to offer you at present a suitable fee for your pro-

fessional attendance; but I am not in the habit of forgetting my debts, and I do not choose to be obliged to any man. I will take care that you shall not have to look back on more wasted time and labour than you need. And now, perhaps, you will add to your kindness by leaving me for a little while alone. It is not much to ask of any man—in one's own room. You will find the passage dark; I will light you to the stairs."

"Indeed"—Comrie was beginning; but he suddenly remembered that it was of no more use to speak to John March than to the door. To have left hope behind him he would have given up ten—no, twenty years of fees. He felt a new and strange kind of tender pity for the girl who had to pass her days in looking after, and in the sole companionship of, this deaf and irritable old man. If he had only known the strong will that was seething with barren rage against impotence of sense, he would have pitied her ten times more—almost as much as he would have pitied the man. A deaf musician—even Comrie, to whom music was a dead thing—was almost beginning to comprehend what such words mean.

No, not even Celia could understand it all. Even to her it seemed as if the man who that evening had been living through the bitterest tragedy that this world of tragedies has surely ever known, was rejecting out of savage ill-temper the one only friend whom chance had thrown in their way.

"My father has too much to bear," she said to Comrie. "You had better go—you had better not come again," she went on, with a sigh more bitter even than that with which she had made her broken vow never to see Walter Gordon again. "I—we—are grateful to you indeed—what can I say?" she ended, with the bitterest sigh of all.

"I know—I know," he said, with his heart in his throat. "You are a good lassie—and I know; I know."

What did he know? He did not ask or answer the question as he went down the dark staircase one step at a time instead of his usual three; but, if he had, he could have answered nothing, but "Nothing."

"Well—Celia?"

Think of what it would mean, to anybody but a skilled letter-writer, or a practised journalist, to be called upon, at a moment's notice, to give a detailed account

of a private concert at a strange house, which had lasted for hours. The mere writing it out would require thought and time. Celia, writer of neither letters nor of articles, had to explain, moreover, what she had sung, and why; how it was that Prosper had seen her home; what had happened between her and Walter Gordon; what, if anything, was to come of her reintroduction to Lady Quorae. She could only rest her pencil on her paper in sheer despair.

Her father waited for some moments in dead silence—and then, with tenfold force, his whole doom fell over him. Montaigne tells a story of how some conquered and captive king bore, with dry eyes and serene brows, his own defeat and dishonour, the loss of his kingdom, the sight of his sons led before him into slavery, of his queen and of his daughters dragged before his eyes into shame—all, till the long procession was closed by the sight of some mean slave driven by accustomed blows from the service of one tyrant, whose wages had been stripes, into that of another who gave stripes for wages. At that sight the royal composure broke down—he who had borne all the rest, without a sign of pain for his conquerors to scoff at, broke down and wept aloud at the sight of the slave, on whom he had never set eyes until now. It was a straw—but it had turned the balance; only a drop, but it made the cup overflow. John March had lived through his tragedy—it was not much that it happens to take a long time to tell a long story. But it signified so much—the way in which both bodily disease and mental isolation condemned him to double loneliness—the solitude of silence without sympathy. Had he been on a desert island he could not have been so much alone—for even on a desert island is the company of winds and waves, whose voice is heard. Pictures are not a musician's comrades, if they are any man's.

The world had rolled round him, and was still rolling round; he had never taken part therein, and it was too late for a deaf man to begin. The opening of his heart before Comrie's visit had been bitter suffering, and yet not without a touch of sweetness—for opening must mean relief, always. There was the dream of what might have been idle—enough, but, in dreams, the idler the sweeter. But now he felt a dread so intense and so conscious, as to be horrible—a dread without one faintest touch of sweetness to take away

from its absolute horror. He literally felt the membrane of his heart petrifying, like that of his ears. You do not comprehend the sensation? So much the better for you. People know what despair means, or at least they fancy they do; anyway, they can define it after a fashion. But this was the step beyond despair. Despair is an emotion—this was the dread that emotion will be felt no more; the dread of a dead soul in a living man. What on earth was left for him to feel? Bodily hunger, perhaps—nothing more.

Still Celia touched the paper with the point of her pencil, pendering how to compress a thousand words into one, when, looking up for inspiration, her eyes were caught by a look on her father's face that made her blind to all else, so strange was it and so ghastly. The strong, harsh lines that she knew so well seemed to have taken new forms in the gray colour—the always dull eyes had turned into spots of pain. What was happening?

Celia sprang to her father's side and seized his hands. She was more terrified than even her timid self had ever been—but for him, and no longer of him. He seemed rigid and unconscious. What was to be done? Had the surgeon's verdict been too great for him to bear? Had he broken down under the strain of self-suppression?

Comrie!

It was an inspiration. Celia left her father in his chair, sprang down the dark stairs. She did not know the surgeon's room, but divine instinct, always unerring when given free head, led her there. She knocked in an agony.

"Who's there? What is it?" said the surgeon in a voice muffled by bedclothes.

"Me—Celia March. Come, for God's sake! my father is——" Dying was on her lips, and must have reached the surgeon as surely as if it had left them.

"One moment," said the surgeon. "Run up again; I'll follow you."

Celia ran up fast; but, though Comrie must have managed to find time to dress, he was hardly six steps behind her.

It may be that John March had swooned; and none can call it well that he had not swooned for ever, and gone where, if there be music, there are no deaf ears. But even now, Nature had done her work with her inveterate imperfection. John March was standing upright before his desk, pale as ashes, trembling in every limb, but des-

perately alive. He was holding the back of his chair, as if to steady himself, but there was no weakness in the grasp.

"Here again?" he said to Comrie.

"Thank God!" breathed Celia. She wrote hurriedly: "I—brought—him—because—you—were—ill."

"I am not ill. Bring me my score. I mean," he said, as if consciously grasping truant wits and forcing them back to their duty, "I mean, leave me alone."

Celia looked her question of Comrie, "Is it wise?"

"Wait till he goes to bed, and don't speak to him. It's been a faint; but if you want me, I'll not be in bed, and I'll run up at the first word. Don't be down-hearted, lassie. You were right to fetch me, but I'll not be in the way, till you want me again."

"This is beyond bearing!" said John March, so soon as the door was closed again. "I can't even close my eyes but I am waked up by all the world. I do not choose to be made a sight of, and to be made a subject for every medical student to try his hand upon. I will be left one thing to have my way in. Lock the door. No—I shall sit up; but I will be alone."

He sat down by the fireplace. Was he going to sit there all night? thought poor Celia. Was he really going insane? It was not for her to comprehend, even had she known, the sense of impotence that makes children of the greatest men—and make them feeble just in proportion as they are by nature strong. But she could not disobey the doctor. She was wearied out with all the things of that night; her veins were burning and her whole heart was tired. But she took out her poor little account-book once more, and, dressed in lace that a queen would have found dear, tried to bring all her wit to bear upon the fact that the six shillings of a week ago had dwindled down to one; while how much they were now in debt to Mrs. Swann, who could tell?

One shilling—and she heard the wolf at the door. And she had just come from among lords and ladies in Park Lane, dressed in lace that—

At least she could put off that piece of irony, and attend to such accounts as hers in the more fitting dress of Cinderella before the advent of the fairy godmother. Her father was still gazing at the bars of

the grate, not even smoking. Tobacco consoles, but the smoker who is beyond comfort instinctively lays it by. As she took off the lace, something white, she saw, was fastened to it which had not been there when she put it on.

Surely all the godmothers in Fairyland were abroad that night, or never. They had sent her the lace, the gloves, the cab, just when they were wanted. And now the howl of the wolf at the door grew fainter, as she unpinned, from a fold of the mantilla, an envelope for Miss March, containing a banknote for five pounds.

Five pounds is little enough; but it is great enough to make all the difference between rich and poor. But how had it come there? Not by accident, for there was her name. She examined the hand; it was unknown. And it was so cunningly fastened to the magic lace that she might have worn it unknowingly all the evening, for aught she could tell. She examined the envelope more closely, and read under the cover:

"A loan. When you can, pay it back to whom you will."

Which meant, When you are rich, repay the lender by giving it to the poor. Who was this unknown wolf-chaser? Prosper? But in that case he would have signed his name with a flourish—a trumpet flourish—at the end. Her heart beat. Who could it be but Walter Gordon?

The thought reconciled her to the gift. For no Lindenheimer scruples to take help aus Lindenheim. Fellowship in art may have few merits, but it has one—one may take without loss of pride, and give without fear of being refused. And surely no fingers but the cleverest in the world could have contrived this delicate piece ofleger-demain.

There was no use in wishing that it had not been. Pride is of course a virtue, although we pretend to call it a sin. But, after all, a girl who prefers her own pride to her father's life would be very unlike Celia. She would be infinitely more heroic; but then Celia never had the making of a heroine. And it was so natural to be helped by Walter, that—well the sweetness of that thought perfumed even such a thing as a note for five pounds. It may be better to give, but only a special grace enables one to receive. "Yes," she said to herself as she kissed the note, "I will pay back the loan."

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXVIII. "WHAT MATTER IF SHE DOES ?"

ABOUT noon on the day after the occurrences related in the last chapter, Lady George owned to herself that she was a most unfortunate young woman. Her husband had gone out, and she had not as yet told him anything of what that odious Augusta Mildmay had said to her. She had made various little attempts, but had not known how to go on with them. She had begun by giving him her history of the baroness, and he had scolded her for giving the woman a sovereign, and for taking the woman about London in her carriage. It is very difficult to ask in a fitting way for the sympathies and co-operation of one who is scolding you. And Mary in this matter wanted almost more than sympathy and co-operation. Nothing short of the fullest manifestation of affectionate confidence would suffice to comfort her; and, desiring this, she had been afraid to mention Captain De Baron's name. She thought of the waltzing, thought of Susanna, and was cowardly. So the time slipped away from her, and, when he left her on the following morning, her story had not been told. He was no sooner gone than she felt that if it were to be told at all it should have been told at once.

Was it possible that that venomous girl should really go to her husband with such a complaint? She knew well enough, or at any rate thought that she knew, that there had never been an engagement between the girl and Jack De Baron. She

had heard it all over and over again from Adelaide Houghton, and had even herself been present at some joke on the subject between Adelaide and Jack. There was an idea that Jack was being pursued, and Mrs. Houghton had not scrupled to speak of it before him. Mary had not admired her friend's taste, and had on such occasions thought well of Jack because he had simply disowned any consciousness of such a state of things. But all this had made Mary sure that there was not, and that there never had been, any engagement; and yet the wretched woman, in her futile and frantic endeavours to force the man to marry her, was not ashamed to make so gross an attack as this!

If it hadn't been for Lady Susanna and those wretched fortune-telling cards, and that one last waltz, there would be nothing in it; but, as it was, there might be so much! She had begun to fear that her husband's mind was suspicious—that he was prone to believe that things were going badly. Before her marriage, when she had in truth known Lord George not at all, her father had given her some counsels in his light airy way, which, however, had sunk deep into her mind, and which she had endeavoured to follow to the letter. He had said not a word to her as to her conduct to other men. It would not be natural that a father should do so. But he had told her how to behave to her husband. Men, he had assured her, were to be won by such comforts as he described. A wife should provide that a man's dinner was such as he liked to eat, his bed such as he liked to lie on, his clothes arranged as he liked to wear them, and the household hours fixed to suit his convenience. She should learn and indulge his habits, should

suit herself to him in external things of life, and could thus win from him a liking and a reverence which would wear better than the feeling generally called love, and would at last give the woman her proper influence. The dean had meant to teach his child how she was to rule her husband, but of course had been too wise to speak of dominion. Mary, declaring to herself that the feeling generally called love should exist as well as the liking and the reverence, had laboured hard to win it all from her husband in accordance with her father's teaching; but it had seemed to her that her labour was wasted. Lord George did not in the least care what he eat. He evidently had no opinion at all about the bed; and as to his clothes, seemed to receive no accession of comfort by having one wife and her maid, instead of three sisters and their maid and old Mrs. Toff to look after them. He had no habits which she could indulge. She had looked about for the weak point in his armour, but had not found it. It seemed to her that she had no influence over him whatever. She was of course aware that they lived upon her fortune; but she was aware also that he knew that it was so, and that the consciousness made him unhappy. She could not, therefore, even endeavour to minister to his comfort by surrounding him with pretty things. All expenditure was grievous to him. The only matter in which she had failed to give way to any expressed wish had been in that important matter of their town residence; and, as to that, she had in fact had no power of yielding. It had been of such moment as to have been settled for her by previous contract. But, she had often thought, whether in her endeavour to force herself to be in love with him, she would not persistently demand that Munster Court should be abandoned, and that all the pleasures of her own life should be sacrificed.

Now, for a day or two, she heartily wished that she had done so. She liked her house; she liked her brougham; she liked the gaieties of her life; and in a certain way she liked Jack De Baron; but they were all to her as nothing when compared to her duty, and her sense of the obligations which she owed to her husband. Playful and childish as she was, all this was very serious to her; perhaps the more serious because she was playful and childish. She had not experience enough to know how small some things are, and how few

are the evils which cannot be surmounted. It seemed to her that if Miss Mildmay were at this moment to bring the horrid charge against her, it might too probably lead to the crash of ruin and the horrors of despair. And yet, through it all, she had a proud feeling of her own innocence, and a consciousness that she would speak out very loudly should her husband hint to her that he believed the accusation.

Her father would now be in London in a day or two, and on this occasion would again be staying in Munster Court. At last she made up her mind that she would tell everything to him. It was not, perhaps, the wisest resolution to which she could have come. A married woman should not usually teach herself to lean on her parents instead of her husband, and certainly not on her father. It is in this way that divided households are made. But she had no other real friend of whom she could ask a question. She liked Mrs. Houghton, but, as to such a matter as this, distrusted her altogether. She liked Miss Houghton, her friend's aunt, but did not know her well enough for such service as this. She had neither brother nor sister of her own, and her husband's brother and sisters were certainly out of the question. Old Mrs. Montacute Jones had taken a great fancy to her, and she almost thought that she could have asked Mrs. Jones for advice; but she had no connection with Mrs. Jones, and did not dare to do it. Therefore she resolved to tell everything to her father.

On the evening before her father came to town there was another ball at Mrs. Montacute Jones's. This old lady, who had no one belonging to her but an invisible old husband, was the gayest of the gay among the gay people of London. On this occasion Mary was to have gone with Lady Brabazon, who was related to the Germains, and Lord George had arranged an escape for himself. They were to dine out together, and when she went to her ball he would go to bed. But in the course of the afternoon she told him that she was writing to Lady Brabazon to decline. "Why won't you go?" said he.

"I don't care about it."

"If you mean that you won't go without me, of course I will go."

"It isn't that exactly. Of course it is nicer if you go; though I wouldn't take you if you don't like it. But——"

"But what, dear?"

"I think I'd rather not to-night. I don't

know that I am quite strong enough." Then he didn't say another word to press her—only begging that she would not go to the dinner either if she were not well. But she was quite well, and she did go to the dinner.

Again she had meant to tell him why she would not go to Mrs. Jones's ball, but had been unable. Jack De Baron would be there, and would want to know why she would not waltz. And Adelaide Houghton would tease her about it, very likely before him. She had always waltzed with him, and could not now refuse without some reason. So she gave up her ball, sending word to say that she was not very well. "I shouldn't at all wonder if he has kept her at home because he's afraid of you," said Mrs. Houghton to her cousin.

Late in the following afternoon, before her husband had come home from his club, she told her father the whole story of her interview with Miss Mildmay. "What a tigress," he said, when he had heard it. "I have heard of women like that before, but I have never believed in them."

"You don't think she will tell him?"

"What matter if she does? What astonishes me most is that a woman should be so unwomanly as to fight for a man in such a way as that. It is the sort of thing that men used to do. 'You must give up your claim to that lady, or else you must fight me.' Now she comes forward and says that she will fight you."

"But, papa, I have no claim."

"Nor probably has she."

"No; I'm sure she has not. But what does that matter? The horrid thing is that she should say all this to me. I told her that she couldn't know that I was married."

"She merely wanted to make herself disagreeable. If one comes across disagreeable people one has to bear with it. I suppose she was jealous. She had seen you dancing or perhaps talking with the man."

"Oh yes."

"And in her anger she wanted to fly at someone."

"It is not her I care about, papa."

"What then?"

"If she were to tell George."

"What if she did? You do not mean to say that he would believe her? You do not think that he is jealous?"

She began to perceive that she could not get any available counsel from her father unless she could tell him everything.

She must explain to him what evil Lady Susanna had already done; how her sister-in-law had acted as duenna, and had dared to express a suspicion about this very man. And she must tell him that Lord George had desired her not to waltz, and had done so, as she believed, because he had seen her waltzing with Jack De Baron. But all this seemed to her to be impossible. There was nothing which she would not be glad that he knew, if only he could be made to know it all truly. But she did not think that she could tell him what had really happened; and were she to do so, there would be horrid doubts on his mind. "You do not mean to say that he is given to that sort of thing?" asked the dean again, with a look of anger.

"Oh no—at least I hope not. Susanna did try to make mischief."

"The d— she did," said the dean. Mary almost jumped in her chair, she was so much startled by such a word from her father's mouth. "If he's fool enough to listen to that old cat, he'll make himself a miserable and a contemptible man. Did she say anything to him about this very man?"

"She said something very unpleasant to me, and of course I told George."

"Well?"

"He was all that was kind. He declared that he had no objection to make to Captain De Baron at all. I am sure there was no reason why he should."

"Tush!" exclaimed the dean, as though any assurance or even any notice of the matter in that direction was quite unnecessary. "And there was an end of that?"

"I think he is a little inclined to be—to be——"

"To be what? You had better tell it all out, Mary."

"Perhaps what you would call strict. He told me not to waltz any more the other day."

"He's a fool," said the dean angrily.

"Oh no, papa; don't say that! Of course he has a right to think as he likes; and of course I am bound to do as he says."

"He has no experience, no knowledge of the world. Perhaps one of the last things which a man learns is to understand innocence when he sees it." The word "innocence" was so pleasant to her that she put out her hand and touched his knee. "Take no notice of what that angry woman said to you. Above all, do not

drop your acquaintance with this gentleman. You should be too proud to be influenced in any way by such scandal."

"But if she were to speak to George?"

"She will hardly dare. But if she does, that is no affair of yours. You can have nothing to do with it till he shall speak to you."

"You would not tell him?"

"No; I should not even think about it. She is below your notice. If it should be the case that she dares to speak to him, and that he should be weak enough to be moved by what such a creature can say to him, you will, I am sure, have dignity enough to hold your own with him. Tell him that you think too much of his honour as well as of your own to make it necessary for him to trouble himself. But he will know that himself, and if he does speak to you, he will speak only in pity for her." All this he said slowly and seriously, looking as she had sometimes seen him look when preaching in the cathedral. And she believed him now as she always believed him then, and was in a great measure comforted.

But she could not but be surprised that her father should so absolutely refuse to entertain the idea that any intimacy between herself and Captain De Baron should be injurious. It gratified her that it should be so, but nevertheless she was surprised. She had endeavoured to examine the question by her own lights, but had failed in answering it. She knew well enough that she liked the man. She had discovered in him the realisation of those early dreams. His society was in every respect pleasant to her. He was full of playfulness, and yet always gentle. He was not very clever, but clever enough. She had made the mistake in life—or rather, others had made it for her—of taking herself too soon from her playthings, and devoting herself to the stern reality of a husband. She understood something of this, and liked to think that she might amuse herself innocently with such a one as Jack De Baron. She was sure that she did not love him, that there was no danger of her loving him; and she was quite confident also that he did not love her. But yet—yet there had been a doubt on her mind. Innocent as it all was, there might be cause of offence to her husband. It was this thought that had made her sometimes long to be taken away from London, and be immured amidst the dulness of Cross Hall. But of

such dangers and of such fears her father saw nothing. Her father simply bade her to maintain her own dignity and have her own way. Perhaps her father was right.

On the next day the dean and his son-in-law went, according to appointment, to Mr. Battle. Mr. Battle received them with his usual bland courtesy, and listened attentively to whatever the two gentlemen had to say. Lawyers who know their business always allow their clients to run out their stories, even when knowing that the words so spoken are wasted words. It is the quickest way of arriving at their desired result. Lord George had a good deal to say, because his mind was full of the conviction that he would not for worlds put an obstacle in the way of his brother's heir, if he could be made sure that the child was the heir. He wished for such certainly, and cursed the heavy chance that had laid so grievous a duty on his shoulders.

When he had done, Mr. Battle began. "I think, Lord George, that I have learned most of the particulars."

Lord George started back in his chair. "What particulars?" said the dean.

"The marchioness's late husband—for she doubtless is his lordship's wife—was a lunatic."

"A lunatic!" said Lord George.

"We do not quite know when he died, but we believe it was about a month or two before the date at which his lordship wrote home to say that he was about to be married."

"Then that child cannot be Lord Popenjoy," said the dean, with exultation.

"That's going a little too fast, Mr. Dean. There may have been a divorce."

"There is no such thing in Roman Catholic countries," said the dean. "Certainly not in Italy."

"I do not quite know," said the lawyer. "Of course we are as yet very much in the dark. I should not wonder if we found that there had been two marriages. All this is what we have got to find out. The lady certainly lived in great intimacy with your brother before her first husband died."

"How do you know anything about it?" asked Lord George.

"I happened to have heard the name of the Marchese Luigi, and I knew where to apply for information."

"We did not mean that any inquiry should be made so suddenly," said Lord George angrily.

"It was for the best," said the dean.

"Certainly for the best," said the unruffled lawyer. "I would now recommend that I may be commissioned to send out my own confidential clerk to learn all the circumstances of the case; and that I should inform Mr. Stokes that I am going to do so, on your instructions, Lord George." Lord George shivered. "I think we should even offer to give his lordship time to send an agent with my clerk if he pleases to do so, or to send one separately at the same time, or to take any other step that he may please. It is clearly your duty, my lord, to have the enquiry made."

"Your manifest duty," said the dean, unable to restrain his triumph.

Lord George pleaded for delay, and before he left the lawyer's chambers almost quarrelled with his father-in-law; but before he did leave them he had given the necessary instructions.

CHAPTER XXIX. MR. HOUGHTON WANTS A GLASS OF SHERRY.

LORD GEORGE, when he got out of the lawyer's office with his father-in-law, expressed himself as being very angry at what had been done. While discussing the matter within, in the presence of Mr. Battle, he had been unable to withstand the united energies of the dean and the lawyer; but, nevertheless, even while he had yielded, he had felt that he was being driven.

"I don't think he was at all justified in making any enquiry," he said, as soon as he found himself in the square.

"My dear George," replied the dean, "the quicker this can be done the better."

"An agent should only act in accordance with his instructions."

"Without disputing that, my dear fellow, I cannot but say that I am glad to have learned so much."

"And I am very sorry."

"We both mean the same thing, George."

"I don't think we do," said Lord George, who was determined to be angry.

"You are sorry that it should be so, and so am I." The triumph which had sat in the dean's eye when he heard the news in the lawyer's chambers almost belied this latter assertion. "But I certainly am glad to be on the track as soon as possible, if there is a track which it is our duty to follow."

"I didn't like that man at all," said Lord George.

"I neither like him nor dislike him; but I believe him to be honest, and I know him to be clever. He will find out the truth for us."

"And when it turns out that Brotherton was legally married to the woman, what will the world think of me then?"

"The world will think that you have done your duty. There can be no question about it, George. Whether it be agreeable or disagreeable, it must be done. Could you have brought yourself to have thrown the burden of doing this upon your own child, perhaps some five-and-twenty years hence, when it may be done so much easier now by yourself?"

"I have no child," said Lord George.

"But you will have." The dean, as he said this, could not keep himself from looking too closely into his son-in-law's face. He was most anxious for the birth of that grandson who was to be made a marquis by his own energies.

"God knows. Who can say?"

"At any rate there is that child at Manor Cross. If he be not the legitimate heir, is it not better for him that the matter should be settled now than when he may have lived twenty years in expectation of the title and property?" The dean said much more than this, urging the propriety of what had been done, but he did not succeed in quieting Lord George's mind.

That same day the dean told the whole story to his daughter, perhaps, in his eagerness, adding something to what he had heard from the lawyer. "Divorces in Roman Catholic countries," he said, "are quite impossible. I believe they are never granted, except for State purposes. There may be some new civil law, but I don't think it; and then, if the man was an acknowledged lunatic, it must have been impossible."

"But how could the marquis be so foolish, papa?"

"Ah, that is what we do not understand. But it will come out. You may be sure it will all come out. Why did he come home to England and bring them with him? And why just at this time? Why did he not communicate his first marriage; and if not that, why the second? He probably did not intend at first to put his child forward as Lord Popenjoy, but has become subsequently bold. The woman, perhaps, has gradually learned the facts, and insisted on making the claim for her child. She may gradually have become stronger than

he. He may have thought that by coming here and declaring the boy to be his heir, he would put down suspicion by the very boldness of his assertion. Who can say? But these are the facts, and they are sufficient to justify us in demanding that everything shall be brought to light." Then, for the first time, he asked her what immediate hope there was that Lord George might have an heir. She tried to laugh, then blushed; then wept a tear or two, and muttered something which he failed to hear. "There is time enough for all that, Mary," he said, with his pleasantest smile, and then left her.

Lord George did not return home till late in the afternoon. He went first to Mrs. Houghton's house, and told her nearly everything. But he told it in such a way, as to make her understand that his strongest feeling at the present moment was one of anger against the dean.

"Of course, George," she said, for she always called him George now, "the dean will try to have it all his own way."

"I am almost sorry that I ever mentioned my brother's name to him."

"She, I suppose, is ambitious," said Mrs. Houghton. "She" was intended to signify Mary.

"No. To do Mary justice, it is not her fault. I don't think she cares for it."

"I daresay she would like to be a marchioness as well as anyone else. I know I should."

"You might have been," he said, looking tenderly into her face.

"I wonder how I should have borne all this. You say that she is indifferent. I should have been so anxious on your behalf, to see you installed in your rights!"

"I have no rights. There is my brother."

"Yes; but as the heir. She has none of the feeling about you that I have, George." Then she put out her hand to him, which he took and held. "I begin to think that I was wrong. I begin to know that I was wrong. We could have lived at any rate."

"It is too late," he said, still holding her hand.

"Yes, it is too late. I wonder whether you will ever understand the sort of struggle which I had to go through, and the feeling of duty which overcame me at last. Where should we have lived?"

"At Cross Hall, I suppose."

"And if there had been children, how should we have brought them up?" She did not blush as she asked the question,

but he did. "And yet I wish that I had been braver. I think I should have suited you better than she."

"She is as good as gold," he said, moved by a certain loyalty which, though it was not sufficient absolutely to protect her from wrong, was too strong to endure to hear her reproached.

"Do not tell me of her goodness," said Mrs. Houghton, jumping up from her seat. "I do not want to hear of her goodness. Tell me of my goodness. Does she love you as I do? Does she make you the hero of her thoughts? She has no idea of any hero. She would think more of Jack De Baron whirling round the room with her than of your position in the world, or of his, or even of her own." He winced visibly when he heard Jack De Baron's name. "You need not be afraid," she continued, "for though she is, as you say, as good as gold, she knows nothing about love. She took you when you came, because it suited the ambition of the dean, as she would have taken anything else that he provided for her."

"I believe she loves me," he said, having in his heart of hearts, at the moment, much more solicitude in regard to his absent wife than to the woman who was close to his feet, and was flattering him to the top of his bent.

"And her love, such as it is, is sufficient for you?"

"She is my wife."

"Yes; because I allowed it; because I thought it wrong to subject your future life to the poverty which I should have brought with me. Do you think there was no sacrifice then?"

"But, Adelaide; it is so."

"Yes, it is so. But what does it all mean? The time is gone by when men, or women either, were too qualmish and too queasy to admit the truth even to themselves. Of course you are married, and so am I; but marriage does not alter the heart. I did not cease to love you because I would not marry you. You could not cease to love me merely because I refused you. When I acknowledged to myself that Mr. Houghton's income was necessary to me, I did not become enamoured of him. Nor, I suppose, did you when you found the same as to Miss Lovelace's money."

Upon this he also jumped up from his seat, and stood before her. "I will not have even you say that I married my wife for her money."

"How was it then, George? I am not blaming you for doing what I did as well as you."

"I should blame myself. I should feel myself to be degraded."

"Why so? It seems to me that I am bolder than you. I can look the cruelties of the world in the face, and declare openly how I will meet them. I did marry Mr. Houghton for his money, and of course he knew it. Is it to be supposed that he or any human being could have thought that I married him for love? I make his house comfortable for him as far as I can, and am civil to his friends, and look my best at his table. I hope he is satisfied with his bargain; but I cannot do more. I cannot wear him in my heart. Nor, George, do I believe that you in your heart can ever wear Mary Lovelace!" But he did, only that he thought that he had space there for two, and that in giving habitation to this second love he was adding at any rate to the excitements of his life. "Tell me, George," said the woman, laying her hand upon his breast, "is it she or I that have a home there?"

"I will not say that I do not love my wife," he said.

"No; you are afraid. The formalities of the world are so much more to you than to me! Sit down, George. Oh, George!" Then she was on her knees at his feet, hiding her face upon her hands, while his arms were almost necessarily thrown over her and embracing her. The lady was convulsed with sobs, and he was thinking how it would be with him and her, should the door be opened and some pair of eyes see them as they were. But her ears were sharp in spite of her sobs. There was the fall of a foot on the stairs which she heard long before it reached him, and, in a moment, she was in her chair. He looked at her, and there was no trace of a tear. "It's Houghton," she said, putting her finger up to her mouth with almost a comic gesture. There was a smile in her eyes, and a little mockery of fear in the trembling of her hand and the motion of her lips. To him it seemed to be tragic enough. He had to assume to this gentleman whom he had been injuring a cordial friendly manner, and thus to lie to him. He had to make pretences, and at a moment's notice to feign himself something very different from what he was. Had the man come a little more quickly, had the husband caught him with the wife at his knees,

nothing could have saved him and his own wife from utter misery. So he felt it to be, and the feeling almost overwhelmed him. His heart palpitated with emotion as the wronged husband's hand was on the door. She, the while, was as thoroughly composed as a stage heroine. But she had flattered him and pretended to love him, and it did not occur to him that he ought to be angry with her. "Who would ever think of seeing you at this time of day!" said Mrs. Houghton.

"Well, no; I'm going back to the club in a few minutes. I had to come up to Piccadilly to have my hair cut!"

"Your hair out!"

"Honour bright! Nothing upsets me so much as having my hair out. I'm going to ring for a glass of sherry. By the bye, Lord George, a good many of them are talking at the club about young Popenjoy."

"What are they saying?" Lord George felt that he must open his mouth but did not wish to talk to this man, and especially did not wish to talk about his own affairs.

"Of course I know nothing about it but surely the way Brotherton has come back is very odd. I used to be very fond of your brother, you know. There was nobody her father used to swear by so much as him. But, by George, I don't know what to make of it now. Nobody has seen the marchioness!"

"I have not seen her," said Lord George "but she is there all the same for that."

"Nobody doubts that she's there. She's there, safe enough. And the boy is there too. We're all quite sure of that. But you know the Marquis of Brotherton is somebody."

"I hope so," said Lord George.

"And when he brings his wife home people will expect—will expect to know something about it—eh?" All this was said with an intention of taking Lord George's part in a question which was already becoming one of interest to the public. It was hinted here and there that there was "a screw loose" about this young Popenjoy, who had just been brought from Italy, and that Lord George would have to look to it. Of course they who were connected with Brothershire were more prone to talk of it than others, and Mr. Houghton, who had heard and said a good deal about it, thought that he was only being civil to Lord George in seeming to take part against the marquis.

But Lord George felt it to be matter of offence that any outsider should venture to talk about his family. "If people would only confine themselves to subjects with which they are acquainted, it would be very much better," he said; and then almost immediately took his leave.

"That's all regular nonsense, you know," Mr. Houghton said as soon as he was alone with his wife. "Of course people are talking about it. Your father says that Brotherton must be mad."

"That's no reason why you should come and tell Lord George what people say. You never have any tact."

"Of course I'm wrong; I always am," said the husband, swallowing his glass of sherry, and then taking his departure.

Lord George was now in a very uneasy state of mind. He intended to be cautious—had intended even to be virtuous and self-denying—and yet, in spite of his intentions, he had fallen into such a condition of things with Mr. Houghton's wife, that, were the truth to be known, he would be open to most injurious proceedings. To him the love affair with another man's wife was more embarrassing even than pleasant. Its charm did not suffice to lighten for him the burden of the wickedness. He had certain inklings of complaint in his own mind against his own wife, but he felt that his own hands should be perfectly clean before he could deal with those inklings magisterially and maritally. How would he look were she to turn upon him and ask him as to his conduct with Adelaide Houghton? And then into what a sea of trouble had he not already fallen in this matter of his brother's marriage? His first immediate duty was that of writing to his elder sister, and he expressed himself to her in strong language. After telling her all that he had heard from the lawyer, he spoke of himself and of the dean. "It will make me very unhappy," he wrote. "Do you remember what Hamlet says:

"O, cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!

I feel like that altogether. I want to get nothing by it. No man ever less begrudged to his elder brother than I do all that belongs to him. Though he has himself treated me badly, I would support him in anything for the sake of the family. At this moment I most heartily wish that the child may be Lord Popenjoy. The matter will destroy all my happiness perhaps for the next ten years—perhaps for ever. And

I cannot but think that the dean has interfered in the most unjustifiable manner. He drives me on, so that I almost feel that I shall be forced to quarrel with him. With him it is manifestly personal ambition, and not duty." There was much more of it in the same strain, but at the same time an acknowledgment that he had now instructed the dean's lawyer to make the enquiry.

Lady Sarah's answer was perhaps more judicious; and as it was shorter it shall be given entire:

"Cross Hall, May 10, 187—.

"MY DEAR GEORGE,—Of course it is a sad thing to us all that this terrible enquiry should be forced upon us; and more grievous to you than to us, as you must take the active part in it. But this is a manifest duty, and duties are seldom altogether pleasant. All that you say as to yourself—which I know to be absolutely true—must at any rate make your conscience clear in the matter. It is not for your sake nor for our sake that this is to be done, but for the sake of the family at large, and to prevent the necessity of future lawsuits, which would be ruinous to the property. If the child be legitimate, let that, in God's name, be proclaimed so loud that no one shall hereafter be able to cast a doubt upon the fact. To us it must be matter of deepest sorrow that our brother's child and the future head of our family should have been born under circumstances which, at the best, must still be disgraceful. But, although that is so, it will be equally our duty to acknowledge his rights to the full, if they be his rights. Though the son of the widow of a lunatic foreigner, still if the law says that he is Brotherton's heir, it is for us to render the difficulties in his way as light as possible. But that we may do so, we must know what he is.

"Of course you find the dean to be pushing and perhaps a little vulgar. No doubt with him the chief feeling is one of personal ambition; but in his way he is wise, and I do not know that in this matter he has done anything which had better have been left undone. He believes that the child is not legitimate; and so in my heart do I.

"You must remember that my dear mother is altogether on Brotherton's side. The feeling that there should be an heir is so much to her, and the certainty that the boy is at any rate her grandson, that she cannot endure that a doubt should be

expressed. Of course this does not tend to make our life pleasant down here. Poor dear mamma! Of course we do all we can to comfort her.—Your affectionate sister,
SARAH GERMAIN."

WITH THE GLOVES ON.

"FRIEND, I am averse to fighting, but if thou wouldst hit that little man in the blue coat, thou must shoot higher." This remark of a certain Quaker at a certain siege, has always seemed to me to contain more sound advice and worldly wisdom than most sentences that have been handed orally down. That war is utterly monstrous and abominable we are all of us agreed, but, notwithstanding, we are always wishing to hit a hypothetical little man in a blue coat, and are for ever shooting higher. That war is brutal, idiotic, and illogical, is generally admitted; but from the day of the first fraternal strife, down to the time when it seemed advisable to the Czar of All the Russias to forcibly show his brother, the Sultan, the beauties of Christianity, the hitting of the little man in a blue coat has been mankind's chief object. As with the wholes, so with the parts. When M. Hippolyte, of the Soir, is offended with M. Paul, of the Jour, they go out with their friends, and good-humour and peace are not restored until certain flesh wounds have been obtained at the points of needle-like foils. Max believes himself to have been insulted by Carl over last night's beer, and they hie them to a spot conveniently near their university, and war is proclaimed, until Carl's nose is amputated, or Max's ear deprived of its lobe. Mrs. Moriarty is annoyed at the insinuations on her ancestry, made by Mrs. O'Phelim of the other side of the court; and straightway proceeds with a cobble-stone in the foot of her worsted stocking, or failing that grand implement of guerilla warfare, with a shovel, to give her abusive neighbour a piece of her mind. And when Masters Brown and Jones can no longer pass one another without indulging in acrimonious chaff, they at once set to disfiguring each other with their fists. In every case, from the sovereign ruler of millions down to an Irish charwoman, from a Silesian baron to a shock-headed school-boy, the little man in the blue coat has to be attacked, destroyed, and annihilated.

There are one or two points in which this great country has long prided itself, but in which our overweening faith has

been of late somewhat shaken. Turn back some quarter of a century, and one of our favourite stalking-horses was our commercial honesty. Recent disclosures, relative to that part of London which used to lie east of Temple Bar, have, so to speak, "scratched" that horse from the race of national boasting; and "the sterling integrity of the British merchant" is now a phrase only met with in very old-fashioned circles, or used by the editors of very provincial papers, desirous of attracting Mr. Carnifex, the local butcher, or Mr. Sutor, the village bootmaker, from advertising in the opposition journal. Our manliness, hardihood, and pluck have long been great subjects for our self-praise, and one would think, judging from the panegyrics which greet the fact of some dozen notoriety-seeking youths swimming in the Serpentine on Christmas morning, that they were the lineal descendants of the three hundred of Thermopylæ. But certain Americans have swum long swims, and have walked long walks; Creedmoor has shown us that we are not the only rifle-shots in the world; and Australia has proved that as good cricket can be played at the Antipodes, as at Lord's or the Oval. What would turf men of fifty years back have said, on being told that their children would see the great races of the year won by French horses, American and Austrian steeds running as first favourites at Newmarket and Doncaster, and one of our richest handicaps falling three times in five years to our Gallic neighbours? We had, perhaps, better not go into this question, as former turfites had a way of expressing their opinions, less according to the manner of to-day's society, than to the creed of St. Athanasius. We have but one thing left to boast of—our English love for fair-play; and alas, that is going! That a Spaniard will stab you in the dark; that a Frenchman will shoot at you round a corner; that an Italian, German, Greek, or Russian will draw a knife; and that an American will out with a revolver at a second's notice, have been no less articles of national faith, than that an Anglo-Saxon will despise all aid in a row, save that his own honest fists provide him with. But if you enter into conversation with Constable X., or have the pleasure of being on intimate terms with a police-court magistrate, or one of Her Majesty's judges, ask any of those officials if they know of a single case in which the fair-playing Anglo-Saxon did not employ any weapon he could get hold

of. Such good use have they learnt to make of their clogs in Lancashire, that a new name has had to be invented for the game, namely, "purring;" and a very pleasant pastime it is for the "purrers;" but for the person who is on the ground, and is being kicked, danced, and trampled upon by half-a-dozen comrades in hobnail boots, the sport is monotonous, and after a time, unexciting. And you have only to study the police reports, or spend a morning with Mr. Flowers in Bow Street, to learn that no Englishman, Scotchman, or Irishman has the self-denial to refuse an alliance, at once offensive and defensive, with a knife, poker, pewter-pot, or anything, in fact, that may come handy.

The reasons for this change are variously stated; but there is a strong and growing opinion amongst certain classes, that this abandonment of the good old custom of settling family matters by the aid of the simple fists is in great regard due to the abandonment of the prize-ring. Now, the prize-ring is as dead as John Doe and Richard Roe, as Exeter Change, as St. Giles's Rookery, as Julius Cæsar; and one would as soon have these worthies revived as see the prize-ring flourishing again. It lived long and died hard; but die it did, and with little hope of resurrection. Badger-baiting, cock-fighting, and ratting have all fallen from their pride of place, and attempts at one or the other are met with fine and imprisonment. These pleasing sports have left no successor, unless it be "the tournament of doves;" to the prize-fight, however, has succeeded a bastard inheritor, and it may be asked whether fighting, as now legally practised, is so very great an improvement on that ring which we all recognise as brutal and revolting.

The prize-fight of former days was, if not the sport of kings, at least the amusement of many of the royal blood—of those nearest the throne. Very great people, indeed, of the peerage were not ashamed of watching the Whitechapel Slasher maul Black Tom, and cabinet ministers affected little incognito at the scene. Moreover, when the gentlemen of Cheshire had discovered a stalwart agricultural labourer, who seemed handy with his fists, or the gentlemen of Sussex had unearthed a yokel with a country-fair reputation of being a smart bruiser, then clannishness came into play, and the county magnates, from the highest to the lowest, put down their money strongly on their ap-

pointed champion. The men were kept in fresh air, and possibly received more than merely physical lessons by their absence from reeking pethouses and squalid ledgings, by their restraint from alcohol and worse. They fought under the sky, on green sward, and by daylight. How is it done now?

Let us turn into this well-known tavern to-night at about ten o'clock. There is nothing special on, not one of those advertised glove-fights, of which we have heard considerably too much of late. Let us pass through the swing-doors. Yes, you are quite right, my friend, to button up your coat; you would have done better had you left your watch at home—and here we are at the bar. You see the character of the house at once by the pictorial decorations. Picture, highly coloured, of Deerfoot running the maximum of miles, in the minimum of minutes; picture of various gentlemen—clothed in caps and handkerchiefs—ostensibly, to judge from their cast of features and enormous hurry, escaping from prison: in reality finishing in the celebrated Sheffield Handicap, run on Easter Monday, 1857; portrait of the late Mr. Thomas Sayers at Farnborough, 1860; portraits of Lord Clifden, Doncaster, and Blair Athol; pictures of other men winning other races; portraits of other celebrated fighters; portraits of more Derby horses; a few stuffed birds; and a glass-case containing the wiry figure of Tommy, "a little dawg," rather superior in the rat-pit to Dick Whittington's feline treasure—and the ornaments are exhausted. When you have become accustomed to the glare of the gas, the oaths, and the shrieking, the fumes of the gin and tobacco, and have left off wondering what are the chances that any of the fists that are being playfully struck out will reach your head, you will, if of an observant character, look round at your companions. What do you suppose would be the result, barring personal violence, of offering the company the good old advice to follow their noses? The burly young fellow sitting on the foot of the narrow staircase would infallibly turn sharply to the right; and as certainly would the middle-aged man who, inspired by Geneva, is carolling a music-hall ditty, execute the military manoeuvre known as "left wheel;" others would go through the floor, and that very dilapidated youth would ascend, which, in truth, he has been doing—although we don't mention it among friends—for the last three months,

on "the endless wheel" at the Middlesex House of Correction. These warriors are all very affable, and, being told by your conductor that you are his personal friend, have no hesitation in shaking your hand, or prompting you to hospitality. Suppose we go up the rickety stairs, for which privilege we pay a small sum, and enter the arena. It is a room, provided with chairs and benches, about the size of an ordinary middle-class drawing-room, divided into two parts by a couple of taut ropes, which enclose a space of about eight feet square. We, being of aristocratic tastes and purses, dive under these ropes and take our seats with the select.

James the First of England and Sixth of Scotland was not a king for whom either contemporaries or successors have felt the slightest amount of respect; but not his worst enemies, not even Sir Walter Raleigh himself, would have wished him a worse fate than the inhaling of the tobacco-laden air with which this house seems crammed. After an hour of it one could forgive the monarch his Counter-blast to the divine weed. As the ring is now empty, look round a bit. The stout burly farmer on your right, who generously offers you a pull out of an enormous pewter his party keeps passing round, attracts you by his frank and open face. You do not remember having seen him before? Look at his companion, the flashy over-dressed man, who might be the offspring of Jingle and Charley Bates' sister, and imbued with an idea that Fagin was rather an ill-treated old gentleman. Not yet? Look at his other friend—not quite so flash as number one, but evidently cast in the same mould. Now you know. The farmer is the gentleman who will have a little bit of gambling; his second friend is the astute gentleman who turns up the corner of the card; and if you will search the middle man—the "faker," to give him his technical rank—and do not find three cards in his pockets, put me in the ring with my hands tied, and give "the Blocker"—a youth so called by his affectionate friends in tribute to his hard-hitting powers—directions to let into me. The gentlemen on your left, with the very heavy watch-chains and the very large diamonds, should be noblemen; as it is, they are sporting publicans—terrible fellows, who drive blood-mares on Sundays in very high dog-carts, and spend what would be a comfortable income for you or me in obtaining impartial evidence

from the neighbouring police, as to the excellent manner in which their houses are kept. Even the Licensing Act has its faults. As for the great unwashed, the crowd opposite to you, you know them at once. Sallow, stunted, with their leering eyes, straight greasy hair, and battered hats, they are the youths who take care of country farmers' purses when up for the Cattle Show, look after frightened old ladies' reticules in the neighbourhood of the Bank; who, indeed, not to put too fine a point upon it, are thieves. A master of the ceremonies, in answer to much scraping of feet and shrill whistling, announces that two novices will amuse the company, and accordingly two ungainly louts enter the ring in their shirt-sleeves, and, having donned the gloves, shake hands and set to. The combatants are, however, frightened of one another, are awkward and clumsy in their movements, and in a very few minutes—amidst derisive cries of "Go to school," "Why don't you take lessons from your mother?"—clear out, quite unabashed, and calmly contemptuous of their failure. There is another wait, during which, at the request of the farmer, you repay his former hospitality by "standing a pot," and applause shows the announcement that "The one-eyed butcher-boy" is going to appear is highly satisfactory. A gentleman behind you, with a voice deep and thick with London gin and metropolitan fog, says that "the Blocker thinks he'll make summat of the butcher." We are not in luck, however, to-night, for the butcher has been making something of himself, and is considerably more than three parts drunk. Unto him does "the Blocker" administer severe chastisement, which is received with a vacuous grin and a self-satisfied leer that arouse the wrath of the butcher's former friends, and he disappears a disgraced man. The rest of the entertainment is very similar, being only varied by the appearance of a few professionals, who are very idle in the ring, and very busy when coming round with a glove for small coins. The "faker"—or the head of the three-card trick contingent—however, gives a bad half-crown, and takes his public detection as a circumstance of intense humour.

Do you not think you have had quite enough of it—of the heat, of the gas, of the dust, of the smoke, of the smells? Are you particularly attracted by the facts that Bell's Life and Boxiana are kept at the bar? Do you believe that the landlord would repeat on oath his advertisement from the

sporting papers that he keeps "the best wines, spirits, and cigars in London?" No? Then say good-night, and let us go. What a relief even the street air is. Well, we have got rid of legitimate prize-fighting; do you like what has taken its place?

DREAMS.

NOON sunshine warms the canopy of leaves,
Whose shadows flicker on the baby's face,
And one who rocks the cradle fondly weaves
A wreath of fancies full of tender grace.
But who shall guess how fairer, sweeter far
Than our maturer thoughts are infant dreams?
What brightness blesses them of sun and star,
What music thrills of heavenly songs and streams!
What flowers of wonderland and plumaged birds,
What fair wide meadows green and daisy-strown!
What loving language spoken without words,
What blissful prophecies of life unknown!
The wreath of fancy melts, the mother's eyes
Dwell on that face, and picture Paradise.
How pure a spirit holds this little room!
A maiden bower wherein no stranger looks,
The breath of innocence its rare perfume,
Its richest trappings, girlish toys and books.
The reader sleeps—upon her lineless brow
A shadow lingers, left by study there,
But freer thoughts arise in dreaming now,
And wander onward, onward—where, ah, where?
Back to the late-left beauty of the bowers
Of childish play-time? Onward to the day
When womanhood with larger plans and powers
Shall take the school-girl's place? Ah, who shall
say?
God, make Thou happy, keep Thou pure and good
The mystic dreams of artless maidenhood!
But there are dreams wherein deep woe takes part,
Dream dreams that fright us for some dear one's
sake,
Visions of peril, falling on the heart
With horror, whence we tremblingly awake.
The wife is fearful for the husband's life,
She sees the storm, the wild waves' angry gleam,
She sees him stand amid the tempest's strife,
He falls—he sinks—ah, heaven, it was a dream!
The mother's heart is broken in her sleep,
A fancied peril doth her child befall,
In dreams she kisses weary eyes that weep;
In dreams she answers to an anguished call.
They are not few, the terrors and the amarts
That fill the dreams of anxious, loving hearts.
And there are dreams wherein our loved and lost
Come back unto their olden place again;
Dreams sent from God to soothe the sorrow-crossed
And riven heart, so weary of its pain.
We hold their hands in ours, we walk with them
Through nooks and corners of the dear old house,
But catch no sparkle of the diadem
Which God hath bound upon their sainted brows.
The homely garments which they used to wear,
(Long laid aside) do meet our sight once more,
No flutter of the angel-robe is there,
Nor faintest murmur of the far-off shore.
Too soon the dawning through the casement gleams,
But God be praised for these blessed dreams!

ROYAL ACADEMY DIPLOMA
PICTURES.

It was a happy idea of the old trade guilds in Germany and some other places to insist that the apprentice, before being admitted to the privileges of masterhood,

should not only undergo due probation, serving his master faithfully for an allotted term of years and then trudging through his wander-year as manfully as he might, but, these tasks being fulfilled, should undertake another, to wit, the production of his masterpiece; not, be it well understood, the chef-d'œuvre of a lifetime, the outcome of such genius as was in the man refined and sublimated by experience, but merely the proof that he knew his trade—were the same the making of kettles or of chairs, of clocks or of cunning goldsmith's work. This "meisterstück" was the passport, as it were, into the guild of craftsmen, the proof of proficiency, the sign that the hand of the maker was no longer that of a mere 'prentice, but able to hold its own as a producer of sound, merchantable goods. It was needful that the young man should put his heart into his work, for the jealous elders would not admit him into their narrow circle unless he proved himself worthy; and many were the cunning locks and well-tempered sword-blades, the skilfully-carved coffers and wonderful timepieces, fashioned by the aspiring youth of Nuremberg and Würzburg, Regensburg and Augsburg, while man yet wore doublet and trunk-hose, sword and dagger, and gentle or simple, knight or burgess, carried his life in his hand. Regarded in its inner spirit, the idea of the masterpiece is that of a pass examination. As no man might or may now be let loose on the world to physic soul, body, or estate without some kind of certificate of competency, so did the craftsmen of the Middle Ages hold that no man should make or sell boots, hats, or tables, until he had shown himself competent to acquit himself well of the duties of his craft. Probably as this principle is still maintained in what are called the professions, it was not a bad system for trades, and Mr. Ruskin would discourse eloquently upon this subject, treating the same through its length and breadth in his own luminous way; but for my part I prefer leaving these large questions to philosophers, contenting myself with citing a queer instance of the entire perversion of the mediæval plan.

In the early days of the Royal Academy—what time its exhibitions were held at the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce—it was not the invariable system to exact a diploma picture, as it is called, from each royal academician on his election. As the society grew strong the practice became more general, and

now is a law. On being elected a royal academician, the fortunate artist is bound to paint a picture and present it to the body of which he has become a member. The painting offered in this way is not a masterpiece—a test of the artist's strength—by which the council may judge of the skill of their future brother, but far otherwise. An artist at the age when his election to the honours of the Royal Academy becomes possible, is generally in a position to be indifferent to the criticism of his elders, who would never dream of asking a masterpiece from him. He stands on his artistic reputation, already well established by pictures variously regarded by English and foreign eyes, and somewhat on his social qualities, for angular, unclubable men have but scant chances of admission to the ranks of that forty whom poor Haydon denounced as the Forty Thieves. In painting a diploma picture, the newly-made royal academician is not put upon his mettle. He feels that he is making a concession—is, in fact, giving away a picture which might be sold for much money, susceptible of conversion to pleasant uses. It would be too much to say that the newly-made royal academician feels as if he were throwing a bone, as it were, to the society of which he has become a member; but there is an undoubted temptation to him to send in a picture he cannot sell. It is true that, according to comparatively recent regulations, his picture must be accepted by the council and exhibited as his diploma picture; but there is, in these conditions, little inducement to him to put forth all his strength. For the sake of his own reputation he will send something respectable, something that will pass muster; but he does not care to produce a brilliant work, for he gets nothing for it in the shape of hard cash. It may be and is argued by painters of the elder school, that the privilege of writing R.A. after one's name is actually worth in solid money several hundred pounds per annum—including, as it does, the privilege of having eight pictures "hung upon the line"—and that the sacrifice of one good picture is but a small toll to pay for this right. All this may be true, but, on the other side, the painter who is worthy of being elected a royal academician knows that a fairly representative picture by him is worth from eight to eighteen hundred pounds, and he consequently looks at the amount of the investment, and not at the prospec-

tive return. Having already arrived at the zenith of his reputation, he doubts whether the price of his pictures will be enhanced by the addition of the mystic letters to his name, and he fulfils his obligation in a half-hearted manner accordingly.

It is only fair to royal academicians, past and present, to add that much of their indifference to the quality of their diploma pictures has arisen from the idea, that whatever they painted would be consigned to obscurity. Few human beings could bring themselves to produce pictures which should never be seen, books which should never be read, or jokes which should never be uttered. To do good in secret may be excellent, but to paint pictures doomed to a vault is too much to expect of average human or royal academic nature.

A wholesome corrective to this manner of viewing things has been provided by the recent action of the Royal Academy in exhibiting to the public, free of charge, its collection of diploma pictures. In this resolve it is possible to read a mixture of irony and candour. Works done only to acquit an obligation, and with no idea that they would ever be submitted to the public gaze, are now dragged to light, and placed side by side with many remarkable specimens of the English art pictorial. It is an instructive study to look at the works of the old masters in the Royal Academy galleries, and then to glance over the pictures which some of the academicians and their successors thought good enough to paint for their diploma.

Sir Joshua Reynolds is represented by a portrait of Sir William Chambers, the eminent architect, in a crimson coat; a thoroughly characteristic work of the painter, showing some signs of age, but still in very good preservation. It is clear that Sir Joshua, who rarely got more than fifty guineas for a portrait, did not care about a picture more or less, and painted this one thoroughly well. At the end of the room is a fine Constable—a study of trees and the look-pond of a canal. Overhead drifts a sullen rain-cloud, with the threatening aspect which provoked Fuseli's remark that he should "take his umbrella, as he was going to see Mr. Constable's pictures." Fuseli's own diploma picture is one of these conceptions which he is supposed to have evolved under the influence of pork-chops, very much underdone, and taken late at night. Gazing upon Thor battering the Serpent of Midgard with the calm eye of a modern looker-on

at art, I am thankful that the celebrated Fuseli suppressed himself, as it were, in this picture. Happily it is small in size. The subject is hardly of enthralling interest, and the treatment—well—the less said about it, the better. If there must be nightmares, I prefer them of a moderate size—nightmares that will gallop away out of my mind, rather than terrible monstrosities like that upon the staircase of the diploma gallery, which has burnt its hideousness into me for ever. Perhaps the most uncomfortable picture in the collection is a vast canvas filled mainly with feathers. As I recover my breath, I perceive that those Breddingnagian feathers do not belong to the roc, and that the male human person mixed up with them is not Sindbad the Sailor, but that the picture is a cheerful representation of the Rape of Ganymede, by Hilton. The huge fowl has gotten his talons well dug into the ribs of poor Ganymede, who will not apparently be a very sprightly cup-bearer, unless an immense quantity of ichor, or nectar, or whatever it is, be poured into his wounds. Another strange picture is Dawe's *Demoniac*, grinning hideously from gloomy canvas. Greatly saddened by these awesome works of art, I turn to Etty for consolation; but, instead of one of his brilliant bits of colouring, find myself opposite a very brown nymph sprawling on the ground, and discovered in that indelicate attitude by a couple of browner satyrs.

Northcote's contribution is the fullest expression of the anachronic school. In his day very little was known about arms and clothes, and the artist dressed his characters much as he pleased. The pictures in the Boydell gallery are now ridiculous on account of this peculiarity. Hubert de Burgh is dressed like Richard the Third, and both of them in a burlesque of the costume of the end of the sixteenth century. Northcote was absolutely reckless. He put the same armour on Wat Tyler as on the murderer of the young princes in the Tower—a suit made up, as Mr. Redgrave points out, of a headpiece of the time of the Commonwealth, and plate-armour of James and Charles. Jael and Sisera is an astounding work. Sisera, the captain of the hosts of Jabin, King of Hazor, is stretched on a feather-bed in front of the picture, clad in the well-known suit of armour of the time of the Commonwealth, and might well be taken for Cromwell, stolen in upon by

some Royalist damsel with nail and hammer, except that her dress is that of a servant-maid of the painter's own time. It is said that when this picture was sent home to the Academy, Northcote was looking at it in the library, and, turning round, saw young Westall smiling. "Well, young man," said Northcote, "what do 'ee smile at?" Westall, who was searching for such information in costume as the library afforded—and at that time it was not much—was sufficiently enlightened to see the gross anachronism, and owned that he smiled because Sisera was painted in armour of the time of Charles the First. "Humph," said Northcote, a little disconcerted, "and what does he look like, sir?" "Like a soldier," said Westall. "Well, that is true," said the elder painter, "and that is what I meant him for."

The last-named nightmares hardly crush me so much as my disappointment with Etty. I know that the adorners of ugly women with curly hair, and no shape in particular, write and speak foul scorn of William Etty and his works, and bewail the so-called voluptuous tendency of his figures, while extolling the ill-drawn, vapid, osteological specimens of the Christian school. It may be good art, and the expression of a proper frame of mind, to paint wry-necked saints and scraggy Madonnas, endowed with limbs of preternatural length and angularity; but it is not attractive to the ordinary eye. It must be conceded that Etty, in his later and more highly-coloured works, committed the error of following nature too closely. His models were women whose figures had been deformed by stays, and he reproduced his models on canvas. Hence his spider-waisted nymphs and goddesses. He painted what he saw, and although his outline is meretricious, it must be granted that his flesh-tints have rarely been surpassed. In his diploma picture, it is easy to see that Etty had not acquired his true manner when he was made a royal academicians. Yet he had reached the mature age of forty-one when that honour was bestowed upon him, and painted a kind of brown imitation of Titian as his diploma picture. The real Etty was yet to be born.

Hoppner, who is represented by an admirable portrait of himself, had the advantage of painting his diploma picture when he had learnt all that could be learnt from Sir Joshua. Hoppner, though he died

young, had the knack of outliving his rivals. At the time when he entered the Royal Academy, Gainsborough and Reynolds were dead, Romney's great vogue was on the wane, and Lawrence was as yet only a rising man, whom he was to leave by his own death without a rival. Hoppner's face, clever and satirical in expression, as his own pencil tells us, must have been a study, when a City gentleman and lady, with five sons and seven daughters, all well-fed and comely, arrived at his house in Charles Street. "Well, Mr. Painter," began the father, "here we are, a baker's dozen; how much will you demand for painting the whole lot of us, prompt payment?" "Why," replied the astonished painter, "why, that will depend upon the dimensions, style, composition, and——" "Oh, that is all settled," quoth the stock-broker; "we are all to be touched off in one piece as large as life, all seated upon our lawn at Clapham, and all singing God Save the King."

Turning aside from Northcote, Opie, Hoppner, and many others, who can only be classed as imitators of Reynolds, I look in vain for the work of his great rival, who painted Tory ladies as Sir Joshua painted Whig ladies. "The man in Cavendish Square," in good sooth, declined the honour of membership of the Royal Academy. Romney and his friend Hayley had a mutual admiration society of their own, after the manner of poets and painters past and present; and Romney, who had left his wife and family to fare scantily in Lancashire, was assceted by his jealousy of Reynolds, and his wild adoration for his model—described in art catalogues as Emma Hart, or Lyon, afterwards Lady Hamilton—whom he painted in every kind of character. The "fair Emma," who had been a barmaid in Westminster, completely enslaved Romney, two of whose pictures of her appear in the present exhibition of old masters, and produce the same effect as the Omphale exhibited two years ago, in shaking all theories concerning the virtue of blue blood. Here is the picture of a woman, whose very name is uncertain, who rose from the bar of a public-house to be the wife of an ambassador, placed among the portraits of the best-bred people in England, and looking, not only the most beautiful, but the most thoroughbred of them all. Romney's obstinacy concerning the Royal Academy deprives the diploma gallery of a picture of Lady Hamilton, either as Cassandra, Ariadne,

Omphale, a Bacchante, or in some other appropriate character—a subject of great regret, as a little beauty would relieve the collection very much.

Of Gainsborough, there is one of those landscapes—never painted from nature herself, but compiled as it were from studies, and bits of stone and wood, which, nevertheless, induced Sir Joshua to propose at a Royal Academy dinner, "The health of Mr. Gainsborough, the greatest landscape painter of the day," to which Wilson, in his blunt, grumbling way, retorted: "Ay, and the greatest portrait-painter, too." The large brown picture, which so inadequately represents the genius of Gainsborough, was presented to the Academy in 1799 by his daughter, Miss Gainsborough, and has a thoroughly artificial look. In all the landscapes of the elder English school, and even in many of Turner's, lurks that strange variety of the upas, known as the "painter's tree." It is of no particular species, but its brown foliage is nicely rounded, and its trunk stretches upward in a friendly way, so as to cover one side of the picture. At one time it was asked, whether it was possible to paint a landscape without a big tree in one corner, and a little one in the other. The little tree died out after a time, probably of atrophy, brought on by a sense of its own insignificance, but the big one may be detected under various disguises, even unto this day. Turner's diploma picture is hardly more inspiring than the Gainsborough landscape. Dollbaddarn Castle, North Wales, may be pronounced a specimen of the painter's "early middle" manner. All the light has died out, and the effect is gloomy in the extreme. Like many of Turner's pictures, this has suffered from the carelessness with which he used vehicles for colours. Nothing came amiss to him, and the palette-knife was used with the greatest recklessness. With awe and misgiving I record my indifference to Dollbaddarn Castle, and my opinion that, if sold at Christie's, without the name of Turner attached to it, it would fetch but a minute sum in the current coin of this realm.

Quite as great a sinner, in the way of omission, as Turner, was Sir Thomas Lawrence; albeit the latter has the excuse that he was admitted to the full honours of the Royal Academy when he was barely of age to wear them. Viewed as the work of a young man of twenty-three, the "gipsy

girl," with a plaster of rouge on her cheeks, might be regarded as a promising bit of work, but as the record of Lawrence, it is simply absurd. I am aware that Lawrence cared nothing for the Royal Academy, and that he was painter to the king before he received his early academic laurels; but the head of a gipsy girl, carelessly painted, is a poor example of the artist who produced in later years the magnificent pendant to Rubens's *Chapeau de Paille*, now in the possession of Sir Robert Peel. De Louthembourg, sometime scene-painter to Garrick, is represented by a landscape, conscientiously executed; but Creswick's picture is a poor affair, very slight in execution and evidently knocked off in a hurry. One of the best pictures here is Mulready's *Village Buffoon*; and Wilkie's *Boys digging out a Rat*, if small, is yet full of character.

In approaching the delicate ground trodden by living painters, I am at once perplexed and amazed. Not one has thought it worth while to give the Academy a genuine gem, but yet they have as a rule not behaved with absolute shabbiness. Possibly they had a foreshadowing that this work might one day be given to the public, and were anxious, as persons of a sporting turn of mind would say, to "save their distance." Sir John Gilbert has contributed a spirited little picture, entitled, *A Convocation of Clergy*; and Mr. Leighton a very brown, not to say mulatto, *St. Jerome*, very bony but excellently drawn. This remarkable but ugly picture was apparently painted during a devotional fit of Mr. Leighton's, for any more unpicturesque creature than a desert hermit can hardly be imagined. There is the lion of course, evidently a lion of pacific tendencies, only awaiting a Van Amburgh to lead him on to glory.

Mr. Watts's picture is entitled, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear*; and enjoys the distinction of being the biggest picture, in square feet, of the diploma exhibition. It is so big that a place has had to be found for it in the room at the end, where it stares Mr. Leslie's meek *Lass of Richmond Hill* out of countenance. Mr. Poynter contributes a little picture, entitled, *The Fortune-teller*; near which hangs *The Schoolmaster's Daughter*, by Mr. Sant—a girl bringing refreshment to a schoolboy working at his imposition. Close at hand is an extraordinary production by Mr. Poole, which might be entitled a *Fantasia in yellow*. It is called

Remorse, but it is not clear what the people steeped in yellow fog have done to deserve their fate. The chief merit of *Remorse* is, that it revives the memory of a witticism of Mr. Charles Landseer's, that a picture might have a worse fault than yellow ochre—it might be mediocre. Conspicuous for beauty of colour is Mr. Calderon's *Onward* but Whither, albeit the intention of the picture is not very evident. So far as the meaning of the painter is made manifest, a stately middle-aged gentleman is eloping with a girl young enough to be his daughter, who carries the family pearls in a neat casket. Opposite to this richly-tinted but bewildering picture, hangs Mr. Pettie's *Jacobites*—a meritorious picture from many points of view, and fairly representative of the artist. *The Door of a Café at Cairo* is a fair specimen of Lewis; and also noteworthy is Landseer's contribution, *The Faithful Hound*—a dog who has sought his master among the slain on the battle-field, and finding him stark and stiff, lifts up his voice in a canine coronach. *Ere Care Begins* is a pretty and characteristic work of Mr. Faed; but neither the contribution of Mr. Wells, *Letters and News at the Loch Side*, nor that of Mr. Ansdell, *The Chase*, is likely to increase the reputation of those eminent artists. In strong contrast to these is Mr. Cooke's *Dutch Pincks running to Anchor off Yarmouth*—a fine picture, in the artist's best manner. Mr. Millais's *Souvenir of Velasquez* is—shall I write the word?—a vulgarised version of the wonderful portrait of the Spanish Infanta in the Louvre, of which Mr. James Whistler said, "This is the last word of portrait-painting." It is like jumping out of a stifling hot-house into the fresh sea-breeze, to turn from Mr. Millais's garish picture to Stanfield's delightful *On the Scheldt*.

Painters are not the only artists represented at the diploma gallery. Sculptors have deposited specimens of their skill; but, perhaps, it is better not to dwell on these manifestations of such art as exists upon our shores, nor do the specimens of engraving call for any detailed notice. A study of the diploma gallery only teaches us how careful a man should be of any work he puts his name to, and of the curious revenges that time brings about. It is not impossible that a foreign art-critic might arrive at the conclusion, that in throwing open an exhibition of diploma pictures to the public, the Council of the

Royal Academy have been actuated by a spirit of irony—a desire to show how badly the best artists could work, when they worked for honour, instead of profit.

ABOUT WITNESSES.

WE wonder some industrious collector of Ana has never given us a book about witnesses. The strange statements, extraordinary admissions, prompt retorts, funny mistakes, crooked answers, and odd distortions of the Queen's English, heard in the courts, would make a plethoric volume of amusing reading.

The subjects of legal vivisection do not find the process so agreeable to themselves, as it is entertaining to uninterested listeners. Mrs. Elizabeth Martha Selina Georgina Augusta Euham Burrows might not be pained at proclaiming that such was her christian-name, although she did not generally write it in full; but the old fellow who had "married three wives lawful, and buried them lawful," would probably have preferred keeping to himself that a buxom laundress declined to make him a happy man for the fourth time in his life, because he was not prepared to take her to church in a basket-carriage drawn by six donkeys. It was not pleasant for a young husband to let all the world know how, shocked at his wife's avowal of atheism, he sent a parson to talk to her, and going to see how he was getting on, found the lady chasing the clergyman round the room, intent upon flooring him with a pillow; and a certain false milkman doubtless considered he had been sufficiently punished by the jilted lady following hard upon him, as he went his daily round for thirty-five years, without the fact being published far and wide, when the revengeful dame departed life without the doctor's aid.

The immaculate elector who was sure he had not breakfasted at a candidate's cost, because he had never breakfasted in his life, always taking his morning meal in the middle of the day; and his neighbour, equally certain on the same score, because he had, twenty years before, made a resolution never to eat or drink at anyone's charge but his own, had as little chance of being believed, as the Scotsman assuring a parliamentary committee, that his countrymen were "unco' modest;" or the Irishman, who swore the last time he saw his sister was eight months ago, when she

called at his house and he was not at home. More careful of his words was the constable, who deposed that a certain individual was neither drunk nor sober, but "mixed"—a medium state unrecognised by the London barmaid, who laid it down that a man was sober so long as he did not stagger and use bad language; thereby displaying as much consideration for human infirmity as the witness, who, called upon to explain what he meant by saying the plaintiff's character was slightly matrimonial, answered: "She has been married seven times." Euphemisms are wasted upon lawyers, since they will insist upon having their equivalents. Said one man of another: "He resorted to an ingenious use of circumstantial evidence." "And pray, sir, what are we to understand by that?" enquired the counsel. "That he lied," was the reply of the witness; whose original statement was worthy of the doctor, who testified that the victim of an assault had sustained a contusion of the integuments under the orbit, with extravasation of blood and ecchymosis of the surrounding tissue, which was in a tumefied state, with abrasion of the cuticle; meaning simply that the sufferer had a black eye.

The witness-box is prolific in malapropisms. The man, whose friend could not appear in court by reason of his being just then superannuated with drink; the Irishwoman, whose husband had often struck her with impunity, although he usually employed his fist; the believer in the martyr to Jesuitical machinations, who recognised the baronet by the gait of his head; the gentleman, who found a lady in the arms of Mopus; the impecunious wight, whose money had become non est inventum, and the Chicago dame, who indignantly wanted to know who was telling the story, when the judge suggested that, when she spoke of the existence of a family fuel, she must mean a family feud—might one and all claim kindred with Sheridan's deranger of epithets. Nor could Dogberry himself have shown to greater advantage than Officer Lewiston, when, mounting the stand in a New York police-court, he related how Tom Nelson punched him twice on the head, scratched his face, and bucked him in the stomach, without aggravating him to use his club, because it went against his feelings to mistreat a human being; winding up what he called his "conciseful" narration with: "I am willing to let upon him, your

honour, but not altogether. The law must be dedicated; give him justice tampered with mercy."

The London policeman, who found arrears of fat upon the blouses of two men suspected of patronising a butcher without paying him, would have smiled in scornful superiority to hear the Glasgow constable deposing, that a riotous Irishman "came off the Bristol boat wi' the rest o' the cattle, and was making a crowd on the quay, offering to fight him or any ither mon." "Was he inebriated?" asked the bailie. "No; he wasna in Edinburgh, for he came by the Belfast boat." "Well, did he stand on his defence when you told him to move on?" "No, your honour; he stood on the quay." Were members of the force always so exact, the magistrate who asked a street Arab, before putting him on his oath, what was done to people who swore falsely, would not have had his ears shocked with the reply: "They makes policemen out of 'em."

In a trial at Winchester, a witness, failing to make his version of a conversation intelligible by reason of his fondness for "says I" and "says he," was taken in hand by Baron Martin, with the following result: "My man, tell us now exactly what passed." "Yes, my lord. I said I would not have the pig." "And what was his answer?" "He said he had been keeping it for me, and that he—" "No, no; he could not have said that, he spoke in the first person." "No, my lord; I was the first person that spoke." "I mean, don't bring in the third person; repeat his exact words." "There was no third person, my lord; only him and me." "My good fellow, he did not say he had been keeping the pig; he said, 'I have been keeping it.'" "I assure you, my lord, there was no mention of your lordship at all. We are on different stories. There was no third person there, and if anything had been said about your lordship, I must have heard it." The baron gave in.

Lord Mansfield once came off second best in endeavouring to make a witness use intelligible language. The man had deposed that he had not suffered any loss at the defendant's hands, because he was up to him. "What do you mean by being up to him?" asked his lordship. "Mean, my lord? why, that I was down upon him." "Down upon him?" repeated the judge interrogatively. "Yes, my lord; deep as he thought himself, I stagg'd him." "Really," said Lord Mansfield, "I do not

understand this sort of language." "Not understand it!" exclaimed the unabashed adept in slang; "not understand it! lord, what a flat you must be!" A New York magistrate was equally incapable of comprehending how a police-officer could be guilty of skylarking with a girl when on duty, until the "roundsman" explained that "skylarking" meant "pulling and hauling, laughing and talking." More humorous in his way of putting things, was the gentleman who said a Stock Exchange bear was a person who sold what he had not got; a bull, a man who bought what he could not pay for, and that "financing" was "a man who doesn't want shares buying them from one who has none to sell." A Jew, speaking of a young man as his son-in-law, was accused of misleading the court, since the young man was really his son. Moses, however, persisted that the name he put to the relationship was the right one, and addressing the bench said: "I was in Amsterdam two years and three-quarters; when I come home I finds this lad. Now the law obliges me to maintain him, and consequently, he is my son-in-law." "Well," said Lord Mansfield, "that is the best definition of a son-in-law I ever yet heard." It may be doubted if that legal luminary would have acquiesced as readily in a witness, whose name was not to be found on the Law List, calling himself a solicitor, on the ground that he had been soliciting advertisements for a newspaper for eight years; or held a bill-poster, who could not read, justified in describing himself as a professional man connected with the press. Assuredly, he would not agree with the street-nigger, who admitted his calling was a low one, but still thought it so much better than that followed by his father that he felt inclined to be proud of it. "And pray, sir," enquired the learned gentleman cross-examining him, "what was your father's calling?" "Well," demurely replied the sham dorkie, "he was a lawyer."

A Californian declining to swear to the size of a stick used by one of the parties in "a heated discussion," the judge insisted upon knowing if it were as thick as his wrist? "I should say," said the badgered man, "that it was as thick as your head;" and the court's curiosity was satisfied. A less excusable want of recollection was displayed by a Benedick, who only thought he had been married three years, while he had not the faintest notion

when or where he made his wife's acquaintance. A woman never pretends to ignorance on such matters, oblivious as she may be regarding the number of birthdays she has seen. Forgetting that a woman should be, at least, as old as she looks, a lady told a Paris magistrate she was twenty-five. As she stepped out of the box, a young man stepped in, who owned to twenty-seven. "Are you related to the previous witness?" he was asked. "Yes," said he, "I am her son." "Ah," murmured the magistrate, "your mother must have married very young." Mlle. Mars parried the obnoxious query with a vague "H'm, h'm," causing the judge to observe: "I beg your pardon, madame, what did you say?" "I have answered the question put to me," said the actress, and the court gallantly took the hint. The enquiry so cleverly disposed of by the famous stage queen, was met by an Aberdonian spinster with a protest against an unmarried woman being expected to enlighten the public on such a subject. Finding that of no avail, she admitted she was fifty, and, after a little pressure, owned to sixty. Counsel then presumed to enquire if she had any hopes of getting a husband, and was rebuffed for the impertinence with: "Weel, sir, I winna tell a lee. I hinna lost hope yet, but I wudna marry you, for I am sick o' your pallaver." She could be frank enough if she chose, like the gentleman who proclaimed: "Every man has his pawnbroker, and I have mine"—a somewhat bold assertion, but one that would not have been gainsaid by the bluff Yorkshire "uncle," who, pressed by a parliamentary committee-man to give his opinion as to the advisability of imposing a penny stamp upon certain documents, replied: "If ever you come to my place to pop anything—" "My good man," interrupted the horrified M.P., "don't think that I could ever do such a thing!" "Who can tell what bad luck's in store for him?" retorted the pawnbroker. "But, my good man," exclaimed the member, "it is quite impossible;" only to bring the response: "Impossible! not at all, not at all; and if ever you want to pop anything and come to my shop, I'll treat you like a man ought to be treated. No penny stamps. I'll clap a handsome sixpenny bit of government paper on the transaction, in a way that would be proper on an agreement between two gentlemen."

Perhaps the most extraordinary evidence ever tendered in support of an alibi

was advanced in behalf of a man tried at Sydney, when two witnesses swore that, at the time the robbery with which he was charged was committed, the prisoner was in his hut with them, listening to the recital of the Old English Baron, which occupied two hours and a half. Lane, the novel reciter, corroborated their statements, averring he could repeat several other stories of equal length, word for word. "Now, sir," said the attorney-general, "do you wish to persuade us that, without a book, you could occupy two hours and a half in reciting the Old English Baron?" "I could, and I will, if you please," replied Lane. "Well, we will have a page or two then," said the attorney-general. The witness at once began: "In the time of King Henry, when the good Duke Humphrey returned from the Holy Land," and so went on until the attorney-general cried enough. The prisoner's counsel, however, insisted upon Lane going on to the end, to prove the tale would occupy the time his witnesses had sworn it did, unless the other side conceded that important point. This, after some demur, the attorney-general agreed to do, providing the witness repeated the last page of the book as he had repeated the first. Lane did as was bidden, and the prisoner was acquitted.

An American delinquent was not so lucky in his alibi. That worthy swore that the prisoner had been ploughing for him all day long on the 29th of November, and chopping wood for him all the following day. So far, all was well. Then the counsel for the prosecution rose, and put the question: "What did Ellis do on the thirty-first?" "That was Sunday," replied the unsuspecting witness, "and we went squirrel-hunting." "Well, what did he do on the thirty-second?" "Threshed the wheat." "On the thirty-third?" "It was raining, and he stayed in-doors, and shaved out some are-handles." "What did he do on the thirty-fourth?" "Chopped wood." "Yes, and on the thirty-fifth?" "What Ellis did on the thirty-fifth was never known; for here the wife of the witness whisked him off the stand with: "You old fool, don't you know there are only thirty days in November?" The calendar-ignoring farmer overdid the business, like the Scotchwoman who identified a chicken by its likeness to its mother, and the positive daniel who recognised certain turkeys by their countenances, walk, and manner of roosting.

An Irishman, examined before a Fishery Commission, seemed so inclined to avow anything, that one of the commissioners asked if there were any whales on the west coast? "Is it whales?" said Pat. "Sure we may see 'm by the dozen, spouting about like wather-engines all over the place." "Are there many dog-fish?" was the next question. "Dogs, begorra! ye'd say so 'ad ye passed the night here. Sure we can't sleep for the barkin' o' thim." "Do flying-fish abound here?" queried another gentleman. "Flying-fish, is it?" quoth the voracious fellow. "If we didn't put up the shutters every night, there wouldn't be a whole pane o' glass in the house for the craters batin' against thim!" When he came up for his expenses, Pat tried to coax something extra out of the commissioners, on the plea that he had sworn to everything their honours "axed" him. Irish witnesses are not usually so tractable, no small amount of skill and patience being required to extract a definite answer to the simplest of questions. Nothing pleases your fun-loving Irishman better than to bother a lawyer, and the Irish courts have known many a dialogue like this: "You are a Roman Catholic?" "Am I?" "Are you not?" "You say I am." "Come, sir; what's your religion?" "The true religion." "What religion's that?" "My religion." "And what is your religion?" "My mother's religion." "What was your mother's religion?" "She tuk whisky in her tay." "You bless yourself, don't you?" "When I'm done with you I will." "What place of worship do you go to?" "The most convaynient." "Of what persuasion are you?" "My persuasion is that you won't find out." "What is your belief?" "That you are puzzled." "Do you confess?" "Not to you." "Who would you write to if you were likely to die?" "The doctor." "I insist upon your answering me, sir. Are you a Roman Catholic?" "I am." "And why didn't you say so at once?" "You never axed me. You said I was a great many things, but you never axed me; you were drivin' crass words and crooked questions at me, and I thought it was manners to cut my behaviour on your own pattern."

An examiner's perseverance is not always successful in eliciting the desired answer. "Was there anything in the glass?" asked a counsel of a somewhat reluctant witness. "Well, there was something in it," he replied. "Ah, I thought we should get at it in time," observed the triumphant ques-

tioner. "Now, my good fellow, tell us what that something was." The good fellow took time to think over it; at last he drawled out: "It were a spoon." Equally unsatisfactory, from a legal point of view, was the following short dialogue: "You have property, you say; did you make it yourself?" "Partly." "Are you married?" "Yes." "Did your wife bring you anything?" "Yes." "What?" "Three children." The witness had the best of that bout. And the lady was too much for the lawyer when they tried conclusions in this fashion: "On which side of the street do you live, ma'am?" "On either side." "How can that possibly be, ma'am?" "Why, if you go one way it is on the right side, if you go the other it is on the left." The information imparted was as little to the purpose as the answer to the question, "When you called upon Mr. Roberts what did he say?" propounded to a voter before an election committee. Ere the man could open his mouth to reply, the question was objected to. For half an hour counsel argued the matter, then the room was cleared that the committee might consider the subject. After the lapse of another half-hour the doors were opened, and the chairman announced that the question might be put. All ears were strained to catch the impending disclosure. But the mountain did not bring forth even a mouse. "What did Mr. Roberts say?" asked the counsel, and the witness replied: "He wasn't at home, sir, so I didn't see him."

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VIII. NECROMANCY.

NOTHING has been said yet of Celia's actual début at Lady Quorne's. And for the best reason in the world—namely, that which prevented Israel in Egypt from making bricks without straw. The bricks resulted; and so, likewise, resulted certain consequences and new combinations of pieces from Celia's début. But, of the main, central fact, that Celia March had stood up in a roomful of strangers and had sung Brunacci's *Dolce Amor Mio*, nothing can be said, because there is nothing to say.

She had been too excited at heart to feel any especially new flutter when Lady

Quorne, sweetly and graciously, talked to her for a few moments about herself, then, without giving her a minute more than was due to any single guest, turned the talk on songs in general, then upon Celia's répertoire in particular, and finally chose *Dolce Amor* for hearing out of some half-dozen others. Lady Quorne had consciously and diligently cultivated the art of patronage, and was so anxious to feel at home with artists of all denominations as to make the shyest feel as much at home with her as Lord Quorne was with his cucumbers. And then a blaze of unaccustomed lights, and the full play of unfamiliar eyes and voices, are by no means the worst sort of sea for a timid débutante to set sail in. It is a wonderful help to the shy to feel that if they fail their utmost, even to the point of utter breaking-down, not a soul present will heed or remember. As to Walter—from that day at Waaren, she had never thought of him but as holding her hand, so that she might put her feet upon the loosest-looking stepping-stones without fear. It is true he had never as yet done one single real thing to help her; but he always gave her the impression that he could and would if there were need. So she sang; and with as much credit to herself as anyone can fairly expect whose name has never been in the newspapers, so that people may know what, and how much, to think or say of them. One does not go through even the form of applause in drawing-rooms.

"Thank you," Lady Quorne had said; "I hope we shall hear you again very soon indeed." "She really has merit," she said to Walter, "that protégée of yours and Reginald Gaveston's. There is something about her—in her style, I think—that reminds me of Clari. Only she hasn't the superb voice, poor child. Ah, we may talk of art as much as we like, but voice is the great thing after all."

And perhaps the criticism of Lady Quorne was as just as any could have been. It was absolutely true about the voice. Celia's was sweet and clear enough—Walter was wondering how it was that he had ever thought it anything less than the sweetest and clearest in all the world. But it had no pretensions to that profuse glory of tone and volume that gave people wings and carried them away. Celia must please, might charm; but Clari electrified. In only one point was Lady Quorne wrong

in her comparison. It was not that Celia reminded of Clari, but Clari of Celia—to any who had minds to judge with, instead of a mass of newspaper paragraphs in place of brains. Thanks to the terrible training of Deepweald, confirmed by the sound traditions of Lindenheim, while Celia's voice might be but of silver her song was all of pure gold—every touch, tone, note as absolutely true, every phrase as delicately just, as if she had been a perfect instrument played on by the very muse of melody. It was the great prima donna who only now and then rivalled the débutante by some golden memory of her days of slavery—when she, too, had her *John March* in Andrew Gordon, and her *Deepweald* in Tuscany. Celia was divine art, Clari divine nature; and it must take a cleverer critic than Lady Quorne to decide which is the more divine.

Which Walter Gordon thought the diviner now, goes without saying. He did not contradict the Countess of Quorne to her face, nor even waste argument upon so manifest a matter. He took care that *Mademoiselle Art*, who in this respect singularly resembles *Madame Nature*, had something to eat and drink, talked to her on the neutral ground of Lindenheim—only a little less volubly than when they were there—avoided cross-questioning her more carefully than if he had known her less, and laid an elaborate plan for seeing her home. But there had proved a limit even to his ubiquity; he had too many acquaintances to allow of his confining himself to one special corner all the time, and when the time drew near to end the evening and he looked for her, she was gone, and had not left so much as her slipper behind her.

With all the stupidity of a lover—for even that symptom had come upon him—he asked himself over and over again, as he punished himself for missing her by walking home in the early morning rain, in what way he could possibly have offended her. He had not carried away with him a single relic from the evening—not so much as the single petal of a single flower, to serve for the slipper of glass; indeed, for that matter, her fairy godmother had forgotten the crowning gift of flowers among the gloves and laces. For of course every man who is really in love assumes that, when a girl runs away from him, it is because she dislikes him. Those who are not in love are of a different opinion; but who should know a game so well as

the players? "Well," he thought with a sigh that took the shape of a ring of blue smoke in the air, "she has reason. I never answered her last letter that I got at Rome from Lindenheim. I never thought of her till I met her by chance at Deepweald. I have let her drift down, and down, and down to Comrie's Row—and with that deaf tiger! Good Heaven! what has she not gone through, while I have been eating, and drinking, and flirting! I have been a selfish scoundrel. I have been a false lover. I have been a brute. I have been a fool. No wonder she thinks what I deserve of me. Perhaps, though—any way, I can but try. From this moment—from the instant I throw away the end of this cigar, I will be everything I ought to be. I will. I've never tried to will anything yet—I must have an overwhelming supply of will in store somewhere—the accumulations of years. I'll go straight to the Row to-morrow, and ask her to be my wife, then and there. She'll see that I'm in earnest then. And if she won't—I'll make her." And, so saying in thought, he made a tremendous effort of will and threw away the end of his cigar.

It did not occur to him to question how it happened, that a girl from Saragossa Row should have come in lace that had made a connoisseur stare, and in gloves that could not have fitted her better if he himself had bought them. But then, after all, he was but a man. If daily papers spring up like mushrooms in the morning, as most people believe; if prime donne come into existence full-blown, full-grown, and without a history; surely such things as gloves and laces may do the same. Tobacco is a vegetable, he knew; and, for any experience he had to the contrary, it grew in the form of regalias.

But he was, in spite of himself, honestly in earnest about Celia. It was the first time in his life that he found himself in love without intending it, which is in itself a strong and healthy sign. But why in the world does the simple statement, without going round and round to get to it, that a young man found himself in love with a girl, wear such a strangely old-fashioned air? The psychology and the physiology of love—if I may still, for want of a better, use so simple a word—have been so minutely examined, that such phrases as "To fall in love," or "To be in love," without elaborate studies to differentiate the process in the particular case

from the process in all other cases, sounds like saying that Julius Cæsar became emperor, without telling how or why, just as if it were as simple and everyday an occurrence to become emperor, as to wear a pair of gloves at an evening party. No; it does not do to say that John fell in love with Joan; though it would have been ample enough in the days of long ago, when people were content with facts, and, instead of imitating the dissecting-room, had never thought of applying the scalpel to healthy minds in healthy bodies. Why and how did John fall in love with Joan? And within what limits and conditions? Why did he not love Mary? and what was the difference between John's passion for Joan and George's for Anne? And why was there this difference, and how far? And would he have loved Anne if there had been neither Joan nor Mary? And why? And, if not, why not; or how otherwise? as they ask in Chancery.

And, as duly as the interrogatories of modern romance have been asked, so duly shall they be answered; and in French to boot, to be in the fashion.

Je t'aime.

There is the whole science—psychology, physiology, metaphysics, alpha, omega, and all the rest of it, of the whole matter—voilà le chameau; now, always, and for ever. And I will defy Schopenhauer himself to dig deeper or to say more, so long as he deals with a subject who has the brain in the skull, and the heart healthy and on the left side.

Walter Gordon was on the very point of starting for Saragossa Row, when the servant announced, "A gentleman."

"Did you say I was in?"

"Of course, sir."

He swore, as audibly as one can to oneself, at the ill-luck that had prevented his starting just two minutes earlier. But there was no help for it; if he was in, he was in, and the gentleman might result in the portrait of one; or he might be that duke or dealer whom the painter is always expecting, and who has even been known to come. However, five minutes would suffice for any gentleman.

He entered; and it was strange that Walter did not swear audibly enough for John March himself to hear. It was Prosper. Happily, Walter had his hat and gloves on; and he took care to keep them there.

"Aha! you have been waiting me?"

You have look through your drawers? You have found a song—one? Two? Three songs? An opera? Ah! you paint? Very good; I will see the opera."

"I would show you the opera with pleasure, but——"

"Ah! I was sure it was a whole opera. I knew a man like Andrew Gordon could not die and leave nothing in the drawer. You have been quick to find; but that does not import to me, not at all."

"But I was going to——"

"To fetch him? Ah, I see you go out of the door—never mind. I will go with."

"To say—there is no opera; not even a song. And, as I have an appointment, you'll excuse me, I'm sure."

"Not a song?"

"Not a note even." Walter was getting vexed, and forgetting to answer with his usual good temper. "If Andrew Gordon is to write anything new, it must be in his grave, with a dead hand. You had better do as I told you—call him up out of the grave. You must excuse me now. Good-day."

Prosper frowned slightly, and regarded him as if he were a new order of being. A nephew who could not supply when an uncle was in demand, was no doubt strange to a speculator in musical wares. What is the worth of fame, except for the sake of posterity?

"Very well," he said at last. "Then I shall call him up out of the grave."

Walter felt startled for a moment, in his turn. Whether Prosper meant anything or nothing, he spoke with all the solemn gloom of a necromancer, who has really learned the art of calling the dead to life again.

The impresario had lived too much behind the scenes not to know when he had made a hit.

"Out of the grave, monsieur," he went on, feeling his rôle. "Yes—I am wizard, I. I say Clari shall be—she is; I say Clari shall not be—she is no more. I say Italian opera shall die—it dies. I say Andrew Gordon shall live; he lives, monsieur! Yes; I shall call the composer of Comus from his grave."

"Ah, what a splendid season we might have! While you are about it, call up Mozart—let him write an opera. And give the parts to Farinelli—Pasta——"

"Bah! to Bagatelle—to Rocco. It is Comus who is in vogue. I will not give

one halfpenny for your music of a periwig. Au revoir, monsieur."

There is no such thing as thinking of one thing at a time. An upper and an under current of thought incessantly flow together, the upper making the noise, the lower out of the light of reason and apart from immediate needs and actions. Walter Gordon was carried impatiently by the upper current, that ran through brain and heart, to Celia and Saragossa Row, and tossed aside Prosper as a queer kind of rascal no weightier than a casual straw. But it is just the straws that sink deepest into the under-stream, the Avernus of thought, and show its course like the wind's. Reason feeds little enough the pompous boast of a charlatan, that he will bring back a dead man to life. But at any rate such boasts are so far impressive, that they are not everyday things; and they lose nothing by being delivered in a solemn voice, in an outlandish accent, and with an air of conviction. The unknown fate of his unknown uncle had always, as he had told Celia at Waaren, exercised a special fascination over him. It had even affected the rallying course of his life, by giving him hereditary reason for his taste for free Bohemian air. The composer of Comus had always been the hero of his imagination from the time when he first heard the story of how, in the very hour of a sudden and startling triumph, Andrew Gordon had fled from its scene to Italy, had disappeared there, and had never been heard of again. He had died, of course. Living men from Manchester, or elsewhere, do not let their fortunes slip from their fingers. But there was just enough element of doubt to give his unquestioned and unquestionable death the romantic character which belongs to the deaths of Don Sebastian, of Arthur, and of Barbarossa, of whom tradition has always said, as Prosper of Andrew Gordon, that, when their time is come, they also shall come again.

By vallum kept, and fossa,
And subterranean spells,
Deep slumbers Barbarossa
Mid phantom sentinels.

From right to left the raven
Wheels round the secret mound,
Where, in a dream-light haven,
He slumbers underground.

From left to right the ravens
Some day shall turn and wheel,
And traitors turn to cravens
Before old Red-beard's steel.

Not Dolee Amor Mio, but this fragment

of a German Volkslied, was singing through him, as Celia's lover drove into the lamentably unromantic and unaromatic street, called Saragoessa Row.

He knew that evil days had fallen on the star of Lindenheim. But nobody knows the very eyes of Poverty, except her children; and he had never dreamed of picturing the newest lady of his heart in such a bower as Mrs. Snow's bakery proved to be. He had never met with her save amid picturesque surroundings—the courtyard of the Gewandhaus, the Rosenthal, the quaint homeliness of The Golden Lion, the stateliness of Hinchford, the cathedral close of Deepweald. To save her from this was the duty, not only of a lover, but of a knight and a gentleman. Love, pity, and romance, all at once, walked into the baker's shop, and asked if Miss March was at home.

Mrs. Snow said yes with a benign and meaning smile. Naturally, Miss March had not gone to Park Lane for nothing; and, if not for the sake of one sort of spoons, then for another.

Walter's eyes were quick enough; he liked neither the benignity of the smile, nor its meaning. "Is Mr. March in?"

"Oh yes, sir. But you needn't mind him. He was took faint last night, and he's as deaf as a stone wall at the best of times—and deafer, if it's true stone walls have ears. Leastways, he never hears when he don't want to hear, which is bad for people that asks for money—but you don't look much like a dun. If you want to see the young lady, he'll be deaf enough though, I'll be bound, just the same as if you were. Third-floor front—you can't mistake, if you follow the stairs." "Twas no business of mine," she explained afterwards to her friend. "If people can't pay their own weekly bills their own selves, it's only right they should get hold of them that can. So long as she don't fleece the doctor, it's naught to me."

"She mustn't remain here a day!" thought Walter, as he went upstairs—he had not made matters worse by trying to explain. He felt his heart beat at the door of the third-floor front. He tapped, and opened it. Nobody was there.

It was a relief, however, since Celia was absent, not to find her father in place of her; and he could wait till she came in. It certainly was a room that made his heart sick to think of in connection with

Celia. It was past pathos even. Poverty, in relation to her, if it meant anything, meant the graceful poverty that expresses itself vaguely by means of flowers and canary-birds. This room spoke rather of the master-spirit of the father than of the daughter. There was, it is true, the lace mantilla thrown over the chair, the relics of Celia's preparations for last night—symptoms of untidiness that touched him, for he knew of old that a place for everything and everything in its place was not one of her ways. There was an empty envelope, too, directed to "Miss March" in what he saw at once was a feigned hand. But, since he was no connoisseur at lace, the signs of the woman's presence were, for once, humble and few, creeping into corners and out of the way. There was no flower, no bird.

The obtrusive signs were the man's. The blackened meerschaum with its long wooden stem seemed to rule, and the main piece of furniture was an esoritoire that appeared to have grown grey and old with labour. Before it stood a comfortless arm-chair. Upon it were an inkstand, with the ink dried up, and some quills with nibs split and splay. In front of these lay some sheets of music in manuscript, fairly copied out and fastened together at the left-hand corner.

Music is public property, whether written or heard, as much as a picture, and Walter was still musician enough to examine a full score intelligently. The front sheet had a title-page: "Cleopatra: Tragedia Lirica in Cinque Atti."

"An ambitious subject," thought Walter, "and new." He turned over the pages idly, then curiously, even though he was waiting for Celia. He was not a man to wait passively for anything in the world.

"But who on earth is to sing this? Malibran herself, if Prosper——"

His fingers had travelled to the last page. And there he read: "Finis. Fecit Andreas Gordon."

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXX. THE DEAN IS VERY BUSY.

A WEEK had passed away and nothing had as yet been heard from the marquis, nor had Mr. Battle's confidential clerk as yet taken his departure for Italy, when Mrs. Montacute Jones called one day in Munster Court. Lady George had not seen her new old friend since the night of the ball to which she had not gone, but had received more than one note respecting her absence on that occasion, and various other little matters. Why did not Lady George come and lunch; and why did not Lady George come and drive? Lady George was a little afraid that there was a conspiracy about her in reference to Captain De Baron, and that Mrs. Montacute Jones was one of the conspirators. If so, Adelaide Houghton was certainly another. It had been very pleasant. When she examined herself about this man, as she endeavoured to do, she declared that it had been as innocent as pleasant. She did not really believe that either Adelaide Houghton or Mrs. Montacute Jones had intended to do mischief. Mischief, such as the alienation of her own affections from her husband, she regarded as quite out of the question. She would not even admit to herself that it was possible that she should fall into such a pit as that. But there were other dangers; and those friends of hers would indeed be dangerous if they brought her into any society that made her husband jealous. Therefore, though she liked Mrs. Montacute Jones very much, she had

avoided the old lady lately, knowing that something would be said about Jack De Baron, and not being quite confident as to her own answers.

And now Mrs. Montacute Jones had come to her. "My dear Lady George," she said, "where on earth have you been? Are you going to cut me? If so, tell me at once."

"Oh, Mrs. Jones," said Lady George, kissing her, "how can you ask such a question?"

"Because you know it requires two to play at that game, and I'm not going to be cut." Mrs. Montacute Jones was a stout-built but very short old lady, with grey hair curled in precise rolls down her face, with streaky cheeks, giving her a look of extreme good health, and very bright grey eyes. She was always admirably dressed, so well dressed that her enemies accused her of spending enormous sums on her toilet. She was very old—some people said eighty, adding probably not more than ten years to her age—very enthusiastic, particularly in reference to her friends; very fond of gaiety, and very charitable. "Why didn't you come to my ball?"

"Lord George doesn't care about balls," said Mary, laughing.

"Come, come! Don't try and humbug me. It had been all arranged that you should come when he went to bed. Hadn't it now?"

"Something had been said about it."

"A good deal had been said about it, and he had agreed. Are you going to tell me that he won't go out with you, and yet dislikes your going out without him? Is he such a Bluebeard as that?"

"He's not a Bluebeard at all, Mrs. Jones."

"I hope not. There has been something about that German baroness; hasn't there?"

"Oh dear no!"

"I heard that there was. She came and took you and the brougham all about London. And there was a row with Lady Selina. I heard of it."

"But that had nothing to do with my going to your party."

"Well, no; why should it? She's a nasty woman, that Baroness Banmann. If we can't get on here in England without German baronesses and American she-doctors, we are in a bad way. You shouldn't have let them drag you into that lot. Women's rights! Women are quite able to hold their own without such trash as that. I'm told she's in debt everywhere, and can't pay a shilling. I hope they'll lock her up."

"She is nothing to me, Mrs. Jones."

"I hope not. What was it then? I know there was something. He doesn't object to Captain De Baron; does he?"

"Object to him! Why should he object to Captain De Baron?"

"I don't know why. Men do take such fancies into their heads. You are not going to give up dancing; are you?"

"Not altogether. I'm not sure that I care for it very much."

"Oh Lady George; where do you expect to go to?" Mary could not keep herself from laughing, though she was at the same time almost inclined to be angry with the old lady's interference. "I should have said that I didn't know a young person in the world fonder of dancing than you are. Perhaps he objects to it."

"He doesn't like my waltzing," said Mary, with a blush. On former occasions she had almost made up her mind to confide her troubles to this old woman, and now the occasion seemed so suitable that she could not keep herself from telling so much as that.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Montacute Jones. "That's it! I knew there was something. My dear, he's a goose, and you ought to tell him so."

"Couldn't you tell him," said Mary, laughing.

"Would do it in half a minute, and think nothing of it!"

"Pray, don't. He wouldn't like it at all."

"My dear, you shouldn't be afraid of him. I'm not going to preach up rebellion against husbands. I'm the last woman in

London to do that. I know the comfort of a quiet house as well as anyone, and that two people can't get along easy together unless there is a good deal of give and take. But it doesn't do to give up everything. What does he say about it?"

"He says he doesn't like it."

"What would he say if you told him you didn't like his going to his club?"

"He wouldn't go."

"Nonsense! It's being a dog in the manger, because he doesn't care for it himself. I should have it out with him, nicely and pleasantly. Just tell him that you're fond of it, and ask him to change his mind. I can't bear anybody interfering to put down the innocent pleasures of young people. A man like that just opens his mouth and speaks a word, and takes away the whole pleasure of a young woman's season! You've got my card for the 10th of June?"

"Oh yes, I've got it."

"And I shall expect you to come. It's only going to be a small affair. Get him to bring you if you can, and you do as I bid you. Just have it out with him, nicely and quietly. Nobody hates a row so much as I do, but people oughtn't to be trampled on."

All this had considerable effect upon Lady George. She quite agreed with Mrs. Jones that people ought not to be trampled on. Her father had never trampled on her. From him there had been very little positive ordering, as to what she might and what she might not do. And yet she had been only a child when living with her father. Now she was a married woman, and the mistress of her own house. She was quite sure that were she to ask her father, the dean would say that such a prohibition as this was absurd. Of course she could not ask her father. She would not appeal from her husband to him. But it was a hardship, and she almost made up her mind that she would request him to revoke the order.

Then she was very much troubled by a long letter from the Baroness Banmann. The baroness was going to bring an action jointly against Lady Selina Protest and Miss Mildmay, whom the reader will know as Aunt Ju; and informed Lady George that she was to be summoned as a witness. This was for a while a grievous affliction to her. "I know nothing about it," she said to her husband, "I only just went

there once because Miss Mildmay asked me."

"It was a very foolish thing for her to do."

"And I was foolish, perhaps; but what can I say about it? I don't know anything."

"You shouldn't have bought those other tickets."

"How could I refuse when the woman asked for such a trifle?"

"Then you took her to Miss Mildmay's."

"She would get into the brougham, and I couldn't get rid of her. Hadn't I better write and tell her that I know nothing about it?" But to this Lord George objected, requesting her altogether to hold her peace on the subject, and never even to speak about it to anyone. He was not good-humoured with her, and this was clearly no occasion for asking him about the waltzing. Indeed, just at present he rarely was in a good humour, being much troubled in his mind on the great Popenjoy question.

At this time the dean was constantly up in town, running backwards and forwards between London and Brotherton, prosecuting his enquiry and spending a good deal of his time at Mr. Battle's offices. In doing all this he by no means acted in perfect concert with Lord George, nor did he often stay or even dine at the house in Munster Court. There had been no quarrel, but he found that Lord George was not cordial with him, and therefore placed himself at the hotel in Suffolk Street. "Why doesn't papa come here as he is in town?" Mary said to her husband.

"I don't know why he comes to town at all," replied her husband.

"I suppose he comes because he has business, or because he likes it. I shouldn't think of asking why he comes; but as he is here, I wish he wouldn't stay at a nasty dull hotel after all that was arranged."

"You may be sure he knows what he likes best," said Lord George, sulkily. That allusion to "arrangement" had not served to put him in a good humour.

Mary had known well why her father was so much in London, and had in truth known also why he did not come to Munster Court. She could perceive that her father and husband were drifting into unfriendly relations, and greatly regretted it. In her heart she took her father's part. She was not keen as he was in this matter of the little Popenjoy, being re-

strained by a feeling that it would not become her to be over anxious for her own elevation or for the fall of others; but she had always sympathised with her father in everything, and therefore she sympathised with him in this. And then there was gradually growing upon her a conviction that her father was the stronger man of the two, the more reasonable, and certainly the kinder. She had thoroughly understood when the house was furnished, very much at the dean's expense, that he was to be a joint occupant in it when it might suit him to be in London. He himself had thought less about this, having rather submitted to the suggestion as an excuse for his own liberality than contemplated any such final arrangement. But Lord George remembered it. The house would certainly be open to him should he choose to come; but Lord George would not press it.

Mr. Stokes had thought it proper to go in person to Manor Cross, in order that he might receive instructions from the marquis. "Upon my word, Mr. Stokes," said the marquis, "only that I would not seem to be uncourteous to you, I should feel disposed to say that this interview can do no good."

"It is a very serious matter, my lord."

"It is a very serious annoyance, certainly, that my own brother and sisters should turn against me, and give me all this trouble because I have chosen to marry a foreigner. It is simply an instance of that pigheaded English blindness which makes us think that everything outside our own country is, or ought to be, given up to the devil. My sisters are very religious, and, I daresay, very good women. But they are quite willing to think that I and my wife ought to be damned because we talk Italian, and that my son ought to be disinherited because he was not baptised in an English church. They have got this stupid story into their heads, and they must do as they please about it. I will have no hand in it. I will take care that there shall be no difficulty in my son's way when I die."

"That will be right, of course, my lord."

"I know where all this comes from. My brother, who is an idiot, has married the daughter of a vulgar clergyman, who thinks in his ignorance that he can make his grandson, if he has one, an English nobleman. He'll spend his money and he'll burn his fingers, and I don't care how

much money he spends or how much he burns his hands. I don't suppose his purse is so very long but that he may come to the bottom of it." This was nearly all that passed between Mr. Stokes and the marquis. Mr. Stokes then went back to town, and gave Mr. Battle to understand that nothing was to be done on their side.

The dean was very anxious that the confidential clerk should be despatched, and at one time almost thought that he would go himself. "Better not, Mr. Dean. Everybody would know," said Mr. Battle.

"And I should intend everybody to know," said the dean. "Do you suppose that I am doing anything that I'm ashamed of?"

"But being a dignitary——" began Mr. Battle.

"What has that to do with it? A dignitary, as you call it, is not to see his child robbed of her rights. I only want to find the truth, and I shall never take shame to myself in looking for that by honest means." But Mr. Battle prevailed, persuading the dean that the confidential clerk, even though he confined himself to honest means, would reach his point more certainly than a dean of the Church of England.

But still there was delay. Mr. Stokes did not take his journey down to Brotherton quite as quickly as he perhaps might have done, and then there was a prolonged correspondence carried on through an English lawyer settled at Leghorn. But at last the man was sent. "I think we know this," said Mr. Battle to the dean on the day before the man started—"there were certainly two marriages. One of them took place as much as five years ago, and the other after his lordship had written to his brother."

"Then the first marriage must have been nothing," said the dean.

"It does not follow. It may have been a legal marriage, although the parties chose to confirm it by a second ceremony."

"But when did the man Luigi die?"

"And where and how? That is what we have got to find out. I shouldn't wonder if we found that he had been for years a lunatic."

Almost all this the dean communicated to Lord George, being determined that his son-in-law should be seen to act in co-operation with him. They met occasionally in Mr. Battle's chambers, and sometimes by appointment in Munster

Court. "It is essentially necessary that you should know what is being done," said the dean to his son-in-law. Lord George fretted and fumed, and expressed an opinion that as the matter had been put into a lawyer's hands it had better be left there. But the dean had very much his own way.

CHAPTER XXXI. THE MARQUIS MIGRATES TO LONDON.

SOON after Mr. Stokes's visit there was a great disturbance at Manor Cross, whether caused or not by that event no one was able to say. The marquis and all the family were about to proceed to London. The news first reached Cross Hall through Mrs. Toff, who still kept up friendly relations with a portion of the English establishment at the great house. There probably was no idea of maintaining a secret on the subject. The marquis and his wife, with Lord Popenjoy and the servants, could not have had themselves carried up to town without the knowledge of all Brotherton, nor was there any adequate reason for supposing that secrecy was desired. Nevertheless Mrs. Toff made a great deal of the matter, and the ladies at Cross Hall were not without a certain perturbed interest as though in a mystery. It was first told to Lady Sarah, for Mrs. Toff was quite aware of the position of things, and knew that the old marchioness herself was not to be regarded as being on their side. "Yes, my lady, it's quite true," said Mrs. Toff. "The horses is ordered for next Friday." This was said on the previous Saturday, so that considerable time was allowed for the elucidation of the mystery. "And the things is already being packed, and her ladyship—that is, if she is her ladyship—is taking every dress and every rag as she brought with her."

"Where are they going to, Toff? Not to the Square?" Now the Marquis of Brotherton had an old family house in Cavendish Square, which, however, had been shut up for the last ten or fifteen years, but was still known as the family house by all the adherents of the family.

"No, my lady. I did hear from one of the servants that they are going to Scumberg's Hotel, in Albemarle Street."

Then Lady Sarah told the news to her mother. The poor old lady felt that she was ill-used. She had been at any rate true to her eldest son, had always taken his part during his absence by scolding

her daughters whenever an allusion was made to the family at Manor Cross, and had almost worshipped him when he would come to her on Sunday. And now he was going off to London without saying a word to her of the journey. "I don't believe that Toff knows anything about it," she said. "Toff is a nasty, meddling creature, and I wish she had not come here at all." The management of the marchioness under these circumstances was very difficult, but Lady Sarah was a woman who allowed no difficulty to crush her. She did not expect the world to be very easy. She went on with her constant needle, trying to comfort her mother as she worked. At this time the marchioness had almost brought herself to quarrel with her younger son, and would say very hard things about him and about the dean. She had more than once said that Mary was a "nasty sly thing," and had expressed herself as greatly aggrieved by that marriage. All this came of course from the marquis, and was known by her daughters to come from the marquis; and yet the marchioness had never as yet been allowed to see either her daughter-in-law or Popenjoy.

On the following day her son came to her when the three sisters were at church in the afternoon. On these occasions he would stay for a quarter of an hour, and would occupy the greater part of the time in abusing the dean and Lord George. But on this day she could not refrain from asking him a question. "Are you going up to London, Brotherton?"

"What makes you ask?"

"Because they tell me so. Sarah says that the servants are talking about it."

"I wish Sarah had something to do better than listening to the servants!"

"But you are going?"

"If you want to know, I believe we shall go up to town for a few days. Popenjoy ought to see a dentist, and I want to do a few things. Why the deuce shouldn't I go up to London as well as anyone else?"

"Of course, if you wish it."

"To tell you the truth, I don't much wish anything, except to get out of this cursed country again."

"Don't say that, Brotherton. You are an Englishman."

"I am ashamed to say I am. I wish with all my heart that I had been born a Chinese or a Red Indian." This he said, not in furtherance of any peculiar cosmo-

politan proclivities, but because the saying of it would vex his mother. "What am I to think of the country, when the moment I get here I am hounded by all my own family, because I choose to live after my own fashion and not after theirs?"

"I haven't hounded you."

"No. You might possibly get more by being on good terms with me than bad. And so might they if they knew it. I'll be even with Master George before I've done with him; and I'll be even with that parson, too, who still smells of the stables. I'll lead him a dance that will about ruin him. And as for his daughter——"

"It wasn't I got up the marriage, Brotherton."

"I don't care who got it up. But I can have enquiries made as well as another person. I am not very fond of spies; but if other people use spies, so can I too. That young woman is no better than she ought to be. The dean, I daresay, knows it; but he shall know that I know it. And Master George shall know what I think about it. As there is to be war, he shall know what it is to have war. She has got a lover of her own already, and everybody who knows them is talking about it."

"Oh, Brotherton!"

"And she is going in for women's rights! George has made a nice thing of it for himself. He has to live on the dean's money, so that he doesn't dare to call his soul his own. And yet he's fool enough to send a lawyer to me to tell me that my wife is——!" He made use of very plain language, so that the poor old woman was horrified and aghast and dumfounded. And as he spoke the words, there was a rage in his eyes worse than anything she had seen before. He was standing with his back to the fire, which was burning though the weather was warm, and the tails of his coat were hanging over his arms as he kept his hands in his pockets. He was generally quiescent in his moods, and apt to express his anger in sarcasm rather than in outspoken language; but now he was so much moved that he was unable not to give vent to his feelings. As the marchioness looked at him, shaking with fear, there came into her distracted mind some vague idea of Cain and Abel, though had she collected her thoughts she would have been far from telling herself that her eldest son was Cain. "He thinks," continued the marquis, "that because I have lived abroad I shan't mind that sort

of thing. I wonder how he'll feel when I tell him the truth about his wife? I mean to do it; and what the dean will think when I use a little plain language about his daughter? I mean to do that too. I shan't mince matters. I suppose you have heard of Captain De Baron, mother?"

Now the marchioness unfortunately had heard of Captain De Baron. Lady Susanna had brought the tidings down to Cross Hall. Had Lady Susanna really believed that her sister-in-law was wickedly entertaining a lover, there would have been some reticence in her mode of alluding to so dreadful a subject. The secret would have been confided to Lady Sarah in awful conclave, and some solemn warning would have been conveyed to Lord George, with a prayer that he would lose no time in withdrawing the unfortunate young woman from evil influences. But Lady Susanna had entertained no such fear. Mary was young, and foolish, and fond of pleasure. Hard as was this woman in her manner, and disagreeable as she made herself, yet she could, after a fashion, sympathise with the young wife. She had spoken of Captain De Baron with disapprobation certainly, but had not spoken of him as a fatal danger. And she had spoken also of the Baroness Banmann, and Mary's folly in going to the Institute. The old marchioness had heard of these things, and now, when she heard further of them from her son, she almost believed all that he told her. "Don't be hard upon poor George," she said.

"I give as I get, mother. I'm not one of those who return good for evil. Had he left me alone, I should have left him alone. As it is, I rather think I shall be hard upon poor George. Do you suppose that all Brotherton hasn't heard already what they are doing—that there is a man or a woman in the county who doesn't know that my own brother is questioning the legitimacy of my own son? And then you ask me not to be hard."

"It isn't my doing, Brotherton."

"But those three girls have their hand in it. That's what they call charity! That's what they go to church for!"

All this made the poor old marchioness very ill. Before her son left her she was almost prostrate; and yet, to the end, he did not spare her. But as he left he said one word which apparently was intended to comfort her. "Perhaps Popenjoy had better be brought here for you to see,

before he is taken up to town." There had been a promise made before that the child should be brought to the hall to bless his grandmother. On this occasion she had been too much horrified and overcome by what had been said to urge her request; but when the proposition was renewed by him of course she assented.

Popenjoy's visit to Cross Hall was arranged with a good deal of state, and was made on the following Tuesday. On the Monday there came a message to say that the child should be brought up at twelve on the following day. The marquis was not coming himself, and the child would of course be inspected by all the ladies. At noon they were assembled in the drawing-room; but they were kept there waiting for half an hour, during which the marchioness repeatedly expressed her conviction that now, at the last moment, she was to be robbed of the one great desire of her heart. "He won't let him come, because he's so angry with George," she said, sobbing.

"He wouldn't have sent a message yesterday, mother," said Lady Amelia, "if he hadn't meant to send him."

"You are all so very unkind to him," ejaculated the marchioness.

But at half-past twelve the cortège appeared. The child was brought up in a perambulator which had at first been pushed by the under-nurse, an Italian, and accompanied by the upper-nurse, who was of course an Italian also. With them had been sent one of the Englishmen to show the way. Perhaps the two women had been somewhat ill-treated, as no true idea of the distance had been conveyed to them; and though they had now been some weeks at Manor Cross, they had never been half so far from the house. Of course the labour of the perambulator had soon fallen to the man; but the two nurses, who had been forced to walk a mile, had thought that they would never come to the end of their journey. When they did arrive they were full of complaints, which, however, no one could understand. But Popenjoy was at last brought into the hall.

"My darling!" said the marchioness, putting out both her arms. But Popenjoy, though a darling, screamed frightfully beneath his heap of clothes.

"You had better let him come into the room, mamma," said Lady Susanna. Then the nurse carried him in, and one or two of his outer garments were taken from him.

"Dear me, -how black he is!" said Lady Susanna.

The marchioness turned upon her daughter in great anger. "The Germaines were always dark," she said. "You're dark yourself—quite as black as he is. My darling!"

She made another attempt to take the boy; but the nurse with voluble eloquence explained something which of course none of them understood. The purport of her speech was an assurance that "Tavo," as she most unceremoniously called the child whom no Germain thought of naming otherwise than as Popenjoy, never would go to any "foreigner." The nurse therefore held him up to be looked at for two minutes while he still screamed, and then put him back into his covering raiments. "He is very black," said Lady Sarah severely.

"So are some people's hearts," said the marchioness, with a vigour for which her daughters had hardly given her credit. This, however, was borne without a murmur by the three sisters.

On the Friday the whole family, including all the Italian servants, migrated to London, and it certainly was the case that the lady took with her all her clothes and everything that she had brought with her. Toff had been quite right there. And when it came to be known by the younger ladies at Cross Hall that Toff had been right, they argued from the fact that their brother had concealed something of the truth, when saying that he intended to go to London only for a few days. There had been three separate carriages, and Toff was almost sure that the Italian lady had carried off more than she had brought with her, so exuberant had been the luggage. It was not long before Toff effected an entrance into the house, and brought away a report that very many things were missing. "The two little gilt cream-jugs is gone," she said to Lady Sarah, "and the minitshur with the pearl sitings out of the yellow drawing-room!" Lady Sarah explained that these things were the property of her brother; he or his wife might of course take them away if so pleased. "She's got 'em unbeknownst to my lord, my lady," said Toff, shaking her head. "I could only just scurry through with half an eye; but when I comes to look there will be more, I warrant you, my lady."

The marquis had expressed so much vehement dislike of everything about his

English home, and it had become so generally understood that his Italian wife hated the place, that everybody agreed that they would not come back. Why should they? What did they get by living there? The lady had not been outside the house a dozen times, and only twice beyond the park gate. The marquis took no share in any county or any country pursuit. He went to no man's house, and received no visitors. He would not see the tenants when they came to him, and had not even returned a visit, except Mr. De Baron's. Why had he come there at all? That was the question which all the Brothershire people asked of each other, and which no one could answer. Mr. Price suggested that it was just devilry—to make everybody unhappy. Mrs. Toff thought that it was the woman's doing—because she wanted to steal silver mugs, miniatures, and such like treasures. Mr. Waddy, the vicar of the parish, said that it was "a trial," having probably some idea in his own mind that the marquis had been sent home by Providence as a sort of precious blister, which would purify all concerned in him by counter irritation. The old marchioness still conceived that it had been brought about that a grandmother might take delight in the presence of her grandchild. Dr. Pountner said that it was impudence. But the dean was of opinion that it had been deliberately planned with the view of passing off a supposititious child upon the property and title. The dean, however, kept his opinion very much to himself.

Of course tidings of the migration were sent to Munster Court. Lady Sarah wrote to her brother, and the dean wrote to his daughter. "What shall you do, George? Shall you go and see him?"

"I don't know what I shall do?"

"Ought I to go?"

"Certainly not. You could only call on her, and she has not even seen my mother and sisters. When I was there he would not introduce me to her, though he sent for the child. I suppose I had better go. I do not want to quarrel with him if I can help it."

"You have offered to do everything together with him, if only he would let you."

"I must say that your father has driven me on in a manner which Brætherton would be sure to resent."

"Papa has done everything from a sense of duty, George."

"Perhaps so. I don't know how that

is. It is very hard sometimes to divide a sense of duty from one's own interest. But it has made me very miserable—very wretched, indeed."

"Oh, George; is it my fault?"

"No; not your fault. If there is one thing worse to me than another, it is the feeling of being divided from my own family. Brotherton has behaved badly to me."

"Very badly."

"And yet I would give anything to be on good terms with him. I think I shall go and call. He is at an hotel in Albermarle Street. I have done nothing to deserve ill of him, if he knew all."

It should, of course, be understood that Lord George did not at all know the state of his brother's mind towards him, except as it had been exhibited at that one interview which had taken place between them at Manor Cross. He was aware that in every conversation which he had had with the lawyers—both with Mr. Battle and Mr. Stokes—he had invariably expressed himself as desirous of establishing the legitimacy of the boy's birth. If Mr. Stokes had repeated to his brother what he had said, and had done him the justice of explaining that in all that he did he was simply desirous of performing his duty to the family, surely his brother would not be angry with him! At any rate, it would not suit him to be afraid of his brother, and he went to the hotel. After being kept waiting in the hall for about ten minutes, the Italian courier came down to him. The marquis at the present moment was not dressed, and Lord George did not like being kept waiting. 'Would Lord George call at three o'clock on the following day? Lord George said that he would, and was again at Scumberg's Hotel at three o'clock on the next afternoon.

HIGH PRESSURE AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

It is four o'clock on a certain dark, damp, foggy February afternoon, and in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall and St. James's Park there is a restlessness which hints that something remarkable is in progress, or that something momentous is shortly expected to occur. It is not a levéeday, and no gorgeous uniforms hurry across the street, or flash past in the blaze of glittering glory in brougham or cab. There is no long queue of carriages in the main thoroughfare. Yet carriages of every sort, from the ponderous family barouche to

the gay and rakish victoria there are, and for the most part they are bound pretty much in the same direction. As you stand at the entrance leading into St. James's Park, a score of these conveyances pass you in the course of two or three minutes. And along the pavement, at intervals, in groups of twos and threes, or singly, Her Majesty's faithful Lords and Commons stroll on foot to the same destination.

We have come to Palace Yard; the twilight deepens, the fog thickens, the roar of traffic along the Westminster Bridge Road is audible; occasionally you catch the sound of the shrill whistle on the Metropolitan Railway and the mysterious rumble of subterranean engines. As for Palace Yard, it grows every minute fuller and fuller of cabs and carriages, and of masses of enthusiastic and excited spectators as well. They form an avenue in front of the entrance into the great hall, and they greet their favourite statesmen with volleys of applause. The rank and file of the representatives of the people pass without recognition, though, in the case of the metropolitan members, some zealous constituent generally raises a cheer as he sees the politician of his choice, which—cheers in a crowd being as infectious as measles in the nursery—is at once taken up and prolonged till some statesman, whose person is as familiar as his career, makes his appearance, and is greeted with salvos of acclamation. There is nothing very noticeable about the great man. He is of the middle height; he stoops a little; he has a lightish beard and whiskers, which are just tinged with grey; he wears spectacles; and he walks with rather a quick step, looking neither to the right nor left. As he passes he bows more than once; and who shall say that the sound of the ringing plaudits does not fall pleasantly on his ears and convey a comfortable hint to his anxious soul! He is, perhaps, not exactly what would be called a heaven-born statesman. He is not an orator like Canning; he does not display the skill of a Palmerston in fathoming the secrets of European diplomacy. But he has the confidence of his countrymen, who know that he will make no great mistake, and that their main interests are safe in his keeping. Presently there is another arrival. He has just left his carriage, and as he proceeds bravely to run the gauntlet of the crowd, the face of a lady, young no longer, but still full of womanly beauty, looks out

from the brougham. His step is light and firm; his face, pale as death, but strong and resolute. He is a man who has never quailed before an angry crowd, who, as a politician, has always had his foot in the stirrup, and, as a speaker, has always carried his lance in rest. But, in truth, he has seldom had occasion to dread the clamouring of an angry mob. He has been the people's hero, and the sounds which have almost always greeted him have been those that testified an unshakeable belief in his genius and his virtues. It is a curious, even a menacing, conflict of noises which awaits him now. There are cheers, and there are groans; there are hisses, and then there are cheers again. He walks very swiftly; no muscle quivers; the only change visible in his countenance is that the pallor of his cheeks grows deadlier, and his figure more erect. By what curious fatality is it that this statesman—who has been before the public for well-nigh half a century, and during most of that time has been among those who share the responsibility for the conduct of the Queen's Government—is followed by the veteran and victorious chief, who has been during nearly the whole of this period his peculiar rival and special foe? By what strange chance does he, this hero of the fiercest parliamentary fights, which, since 1832, the century has seen, on this afternoon, above all others, select as his approach to the illustrious chamber in which he has won himself a place, the great hall, before whose portals are ranged the outside critics of parliamentary statesmanship? If the approving thunder pealed forth from hundreds of lungs is a trustworthy indication of the minds and wishes of men, this is the statesman whom England has made up its mind to trust, and whom it delights to honour. A noticeable old man this, as, unaccompanied by friend or secretary, he picks his way through the ranks of his admirers. His step is very slow, and his gait apparently feeble. He looks, for the most part, straight in front of him, but occasionally turns a kind of abstracted stare to the faces of his admirers. He neither fears nor defies the popular verdict. Be it what it may, he has trust in himself.

Let us follow his footsteps up to the point where the paths separate, one leading to the chamber of the elective, and the other to that of the hereditary legislature. The seats in the spacious passage conducting us to the central hall, whence another channel constitutes the approach

to the lobby of the House of Commons, are occupied, every inch of them, with persons vainly hoping that some chance may offer them a seat in the Strangers' Gallery. We pass into the outer lobby of the House of Commons. Here there is much the same avenue of expectant humanity at the entrance of the corridor along which the visitor is led to the lobby itself, as we have already seen stationed at the doors of the great hall. "The public," as the policemen in charge call them, will press forward, will break the line on the slightest provocation. And what is the public doing? It is anxiously awaiting the announcement that the Member of Parliament, to whom it has sent in its card, will see it presently, or that it will be solicited by that gentleman to enter the inner sanctum, the veritable atrium of the Commons House of Parliament. A trying ordeal this to the patience and charity which is not capable of bearing and hoping all things. But it comes to an end at last. We have been rewarded after much waiting. We have contrived to score a success over those who are lamenting the results of the ballot, and we have established ourselves in a good place, whence we can survey with comprehensive view whatever takes place in the House itself, and all the chief honourable members who are therein.

To right and left the galleries are packed as close as sheep-pens. Honourable members and a few officials of the House cluster round the Speaker's chair. The Peers' Gallery, just above the clock, has neither sitting nor standing space left. As for the Strangers' Gallery, and the gallery reserved for ambassadors and distinguished persons, they are not merely full to overflowing, but the steps leading to them are in the possession of a crowd of candidates for admission, disgusted and disconsolate as the Peris at the Gate of Paradise. Yet the body of the House seems comparatively vacant. None the less, however, there is not a seat available; if you look a little more closely, you will see that, where no honourable member happens to be established, a card is placed in the little brass frame on the back of the bench, and the intimation is thus given to all would-be occupants, that the seat is appropriated for the night. Wait a minute or two, and you shall see every successive foot of those same green leather-covered benches, seized upon by representatives of the people. They stream in, one by one, and two by

twos, while certain cabalistic formulæ are being recited, which indicate the transaction of unopposed business. The process is quite complete, and a dense mass of parliamentary humanity has gathered on the right of the chair of the Serjeant-at-Arms, immediately in front of the portals of the chamber, long before the petitions have been deposited at the table, and the questions have been asked. As for the former—the petitions—they are of a declaratory rather than of a prayerful nature. They simply state, for the most part, the confidence of the signatories in the policy of the Government, and they breathe the spirit of uncompromising hatred and distrust of Russian good faith and moderation. Honourable members one by one march up to the table, signify in a few words, quite inaudible, the purport of the mass of documents before them, and then with a bow deposit the papers in the receptacle duly prepared for them. The questions are of a mixed character, most of them having neither urgency nor interest. But there are some, the replies to which seem as if they must necessarily contain the issues of peace and war, and the silence, when we come to them, is profound. The only sounds audible are the voice of the clerk at the table, who summons the questioner, of the questioner himself, of his ministerial respondent, of the crackling of paper as the gentlemen of the House of Commons turn over the leaves of the orders of the day, and of the dull murmur of suppressed chatter in the distance. This tranquillity is not to last long. An honourable gentleman has announced that he will enquire of her Majesty's Government, whether Russia is to be allowed to convert both European and Asiatic Turkey into a tribute province—or put an interrogatory, which may be thought to ask in effect almost as much. "No, sir," replies the representative of Her Majesty's Government. "We are not prepared to be parties to any such flagrant breach of international law." Whereupon there ensues a mighty tempest of cheers, and we feel at once that the excitement of the evening has begun, and that the pent-up electricity with which the air has been charged, has burst forth.

It is a true omen. There is a pause after the long string of interrogations has been gone through, and then the Speaker puts the issue which is before the House. The original motion is that the House shall resolve itself into committee for a very definite purpose—a purpose that is repre-

sented as being indissolubly bound up with, and indeed absolutely essential to, the well-being of the British Empire. To this motion an amendment has been moved, and though the fate both of the amendment and motion is not matter of uncertainty, the expectation of the House of Commons, corresponding to that of the country, is wound up to fever pitch. What will the chieftains on either side say and do? What new arguments will they be able to advance? What degree of confidence will they respectively conciliate? Will any new laurels be reaped, will any fresh reputations be won? It is known that so many honourable gentlemen in all have made up their minds to speak; that such and such an one is expected to speak to-night; that a division on one or other of the above-named issues is to-night imminent or probable. It may be that the path of the real debating business is blocked by some "personal incident." An honourable gentleman, whose sentences are capitally constructed, and whose voice is clear and bitter, rises to protest that he has been gratuitously vilified by a right honourable gentleman on the Treasury Bench. He is very short, very sharp, very dogmatic and positive—not in the slightest degree querulous in the enunciation of his grievance. The right honourable gentleman incriminated rises to explain what he said, why he said it, and what he meant. Then comes a wrangle of tongues, amid a tumult that is indescribable, first one Member of Parliament, bobbing up his head amid shrieks for silence and order, and then another. Tempers are becoming heated, and patience exhausted. A politician, who has an unpleasantly plain way of putting matters, suggests that the real problem is whether the right honourable gentleman intended to insinuate that the honourable member ought to have his place in an unmentionable category of baseness. This brings things to a head. There are explanations, verbal refinements, compromises—nothing, indeed, is really retracted, and nothing is definitely settled. But the matter is allowed to drop, and in a ruffled and agitated mood the House addresses itself to the business of the night, while the impartial spectator finds himself irresistibly reminded of the difference of opinion between Mr. Blotter and Mr. Pickwick, as recorded in the first chapter of the history of the Pickwick Club.

Perfectly calm in the midst of a discordant hurricane of cheers and hisses, the

statesman who has done, as is said, so much both of good and evil for his country, and who is at the present moment practically taking his trial at the bar of public opinion on a charge of high treason, rises. His voice is low, his manner admirably collected. He has, before commencing his speech, taken care to see that everything he may want in the course of its delivery—books of reference, pens, paper, sundry documents, and a canteen of water—are within easy distance. He has not merely done all this, but he has done it as tranquilly, with as complete an absence of flurry or excitement, as if he had been about to sit down in his own study for a hard morning's work with his pen. His language is of striking moderation, and his propositions are such that no sane man can surely dispute them. Presently something of a change comes over the spirit of his utterances. He has heard some side remark; his senses have been influenced by some ironical cheer or some aggressive "No, no." In a moment the speaker is transformed. He ceases to be the calm, common-sense exponent of commonplace views. His mind appears to revolve with the rapidity of a potter's wheel, and with each revolution some spark, that rapidly spreads to a mighty flame, is struck out. Long before he has done the House is in a state of suppressed uproar, and the orator who follows him seems to go through the empty pretence of putting the buttons on the foils. He has a fine presence and a gallant manner, this right honourable and right slashing parliamentarian. He hits right and left, and every hit tells. The feelings of the House cannot be repressed, and every sentence provokes a volley of plaudits, or of sounds which end in the plaudits of an omnipotent majority. It is long past the dinner hour, yet honourable members forget their hunger in the all-consuming excitement, and only when the splendid exhibition of skill and eloquence is over, do they drag themselves away.

Then, of course, there comes a lull. It is not in human nature to have gone through all that has been gone through in the course of the last four hours without some feeling of exhaustion, and so for the space of eighty minutes the condition of the House is one of emptiness and languor. When the battle is renewed, its salient features are entirely changed. As yet we have had what may be best compared to the magnificent thunder of two rival fortresses. Now there is a brisk interchange

of fire along the whole line of two armies. The political sharpshooters stand forth, and in clever and telling speeches of twenty minutes discharge a raking fire into the ranks of their opponents, and the rest of the evening is occupied with a series of duels, in the order of which the chiefs of the two sets of combatants exercise their authority and give counsel. But let us suppose that even then the mighty hostilities are not concluded—in other words, that the final issue is, without more ado, to be decided. The Speaker has for the last time put the question. The cry, "Division! 'vision! 'vision!" has been rung out by party whips and understrappers. The division bells have been set ringing from one end of the vast building to the other. Scouts have been despatched in swift hansoms to the clubs, to collect laggards and deserters, and diners and smokers at the St. Stephen's Club hard by have been startled by the sudden sound of the electric bell. They have mustered at last, the galleries have been filled, and a closely-packed phalanx has been collected under the Peers' Gallery. The final order is given—eyes to the right, and noses to the left. Slowly and quietly do they file out into the respective lobbies. The doorkeepers come in, see that no honourable member is left behind, peer under the benches, and lock the doors. In the course of two or three minutes, they begin to defile on their return journey through the re-opened portals. At last, in the space perhaps of a quarter of an hour, the House is completely refilled. The four tellers, bowing at every step, march up to the Speaker's table, and the result is known. The Government have a majority of nearly three to one! Who shall worthily describe the sequel? It is an hour past midnight, an hour at which some latitude is to be expected and allowed. The spirit of the school-boy lives in the breast of many a middle-aged and elderly M.P. Leaps are made from the floor to the benches, handkerchiefs are waved, huzzas are heard that mean something more than the accomplishment of a party triumph. No one knows what representative national feeling is, or how truly popular English representative government is, till he has beheld such a division in the House of Commons, as in the course of the past month he might have beheld at Westminster. No one who listened to the quality of some, of many, of the speeches which preceded it, will think that there is any reason to bewail the decline of parliamentary oratory in Great

Britain. It is over now; the speakers disperse; the entire series of episodes belongs to history. But the effect remains, and the lesson taught to Englishmen and to the world will not perish.

ROYAL WINDSOR TAPESTRY.

THE mention of the word "tapestry" is apt to induce thoughts and reflections of various character. By skips and bounds, the mind travels from the web of Penelope to that marvellous record of the Norman Conquest written in the tapestry of Bayeux, to the products of the looms of Flanders and Spain, of ancient and modern France. A history of tapestry would be a history of the northern world, of the regions where draughts and chills deprive existence of half its pleasures. A little consideration will tell us that, long before the invention of oil painting, gloomy Norman castles were not only made comparatively warm—they could never have been very cosy—to the body, but also cheerful to the eye, by the rich and costly hangings which concealed the cold grey walls. As art advanced, the tapestry work advanced to bold representations of the battle and the hunting-field, and less exhilarating delineations of the martyrdoms of saints. At the Renaissance, tapestry became, as everybody knows, the vehicle for the inspirations of the greatest artists, and mythological contended with devotional subjects, on the walls of the richly-ornamented palaces which succeeded the grim fortalices of the Middle Ages. In later days, knights and bowmen, saints and martyrs, huntmen and falconers, faded from the woven walls, their place being taken by the ideal shepherds and shepherdesses of Watteau, Lancret, and Boucher, with their crooks bound with roses and their sheep decked with ribbons; until, had it not been for the manufactories of Gobelins and Aubusson, tapestry would have disappeared altogether as a living expression of art. There is, however, abundant evidence of the various periods of tapestry still extant. When its apparent destructibility is considered, it is wonderful to see how much has survived fire and the slower but certain ravages of damp. The country houses of England alone contain a mine of tapestry, often sadly faded, but full of interest. The long low rooms of Haddon, and the sunny and breezy halls of Hardwick, are rich in tapestry, much of which is still in

good preservation; and immense quantities lie hid away in disused rooms and lumber-closets. It must be confessed that, however rich in colour when of only moderate age, tapestry, when old and faded, hardly conduces to the liveliness of the rooms it adorns. The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian, for instance, a favourite subject, is not a joyful repose for eyes just opening to a wintry dawn; and the tall pale figures in a Judgment of Solomon, or a group of Apollo flaying Marsyas, are not likely to beget pleasant dreams if watched from the recesses of a vast four-poster by the flickering light of a dying fire.

Viewed from an industrial standpoint, tapestry-making is apparently one of the latest-born of the textile arts, or at least the latest imported from the East. Fabrics woven in the ordinary way, and almost every kind of needlework save lace-making, preceded tapestry-work, which is neither real weaving nor true embroidery, but unites both processes in one. Though wrought in a loom and upon a warp stretched out along its frame, it has no long woof thrown across those threads with a shuttle or any like appliance, but its weft is made with many short threads, all variously coloured, and put in with a kind of bobbin. It is not embroidery, although very much like it, for tapestry is not worked upon a web—having both warp and woof—but itself constitutes the fabric. It is not point-lace making, for in this the ground and the flowers are equally made with a needle. It is, in fact, a process distinct from that employed in all other textile fabrics. It is very doubtful whether it is of remote antiquity. Scriptural references would apply equally well to needlework; still, the Eastern origin of tapestry is proved by the fact, that the earliest known specimens recorded in Western Europe are spoken of as Saracen work. From the Infidels the monks learnt the art of weaving tapestry—the work retaining its generic title of *Opus Saracenum*. Save in the monasteries, tapestry-weaving never took any great hold upon the English mind. It is true that recent authorities incline to the view that the Bayeux tapestry was made in London, in the reign of Henry the Second, and presented by that king to the Cathedral of Bayeux, on its rebuilding after being destroyed by fire; but this proves nothing, for the Bayeux fabric is not tapestry at all, but embroidery, worked upon coarse linen with a needle.

That fairly good tapestry was once made in England is proved by the specimen at St. Mary's Hall, Coventry, and a curious reredos for an altar, belonging to the London Vintners' Company. At a later period attempts were made to produce English tapestry—first at Mortlake, and then, many years afterwards, at Soho.

The manufactory at Mortlake was established by Sir Francis Crane in 1619, with the assistance of a grant of two thousand pounds from James the Second. An artist named Francis Cleyne, or Klein, a native of Rostock, in the Duchy of Mecklenburg, was engaged, and in 1625 Charles the First bestowed a grant of a hundred pounds a year upon him, which he enjoyed till the breaking out of the Civil War. The king in the same year commuted a grant, which he had before made to Sir Francis Crane, of one thousand pounds a year into two thousand pounds a year for ten years, for maintaining and upholding the works at Mortlake; and in the same document ordered the payment of six thousand pounds, due to the establishment, for three suits of gold tapestries. Charles gave a further proof of his interest in the undertaking, by allowing five of Raffaele's immortal cartoons to be worked from at Mortlake. A specimen of Mortlake tapestry is to be seen at Hampton Court, and the Duke of Buccleuch has one or more examples. Furthermore, the king proceeded to purchase the whole establishment from Sir Richard, the brother and successor of Sir Francis Crane. During the war, the place, like all royal property, was seized; but the works were carried on through the rebellion, and probably went to ruin under Charles the Second, because that joyous monarch never had a halfpenny to call his own. At Northumberland House, there was a room all hung with large pieces of tapestry, made at Soho, in the year 1758. The designs were by Francesco Zuccherelli, and consisted of landscapes composed of hills, crowned here and there with the standing ruins of temples, or strewed with broken columns, among which groups of country folks are wandering and amusing themselves. Notwithstanding this praiseworthy piece of work, the Soho venture proved a failure, as Mortlake had done before it. Hardly any hesitation need be felt in asserting that nearly all the tapestry in England was imported from abroad, and mostly from Arras and other Flemish towns. Arras became the centre

of tapestry-making at a comparatively early date, and had already stamped the work with its own name by the time of Richard the Second. In the will of John of Gaunt it is thus mentioned: "The piece of arras which the Duke of Burgoyne gave me when I was at Calais; and also two of the best pieces of arras, one of which was given me by my lord and nephew the king, and the other by my dear brother the Duke of Gloucester (whom God pardon), when I lately returned from Spain." At that time the manufacture of tapestry was very successfully practised in Flanders at other places beside Arras. It was carried on at Brussels, Antwerp, Oudenarde, Lisle, Tournay, Bruges, Valenciennes, and Ypres. According to Jubinal, the fabric of Arras was chiefly of wool, hemp and cotton being only occasionally used, and hangings of silk and gold thread being made at Venice and Florence. Tapestry of Arras, representing the battles of Alexander the Great, were by a odd freak of taste sent by the King of France in 1396 to the Sultan Bajazet, as part of the ransom of some captives taken at the battle of Nicopolis. In a grant of the castle of Warwick, made by Richard the Second in 1398 to Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, special mention is made of a suit of "arras hangings," on which the combat of Guy of Warwick with the dragon was depicted.

It would seem, from the examples above cited, that arras was valued at a very high price. Not only was it used for comfort and beauty, as an internal decoration, but also very largely at tournaments, the performance of mysteries, annual processions, and on other occasions of rejoicing. In 1399, Isabella, the queen of Charles the Sixth of France, entered Paris in state; on which occasion "all the strete of Saynt Denyce was covered over with clothes of sylke and chamlet, such plentie as thoughte suche clothes shulde coste nothyng. And I, Sir Johan Froissart, author of this hystorie, was present and sawe all this, and had great marveyle where suche nombre of clothes of sylke were gotten; there was as great plentie as though they had been in Alysandre or Damas; and all the houses on bothe sydes of the great strete of Saynt Denyce, unto the bridge of Parys, were hanged with clothes of Arras of divers histories, the which was pleasure to beholde."

The delight of Froissart at the quantity of precious stuffs exhibited on a grand occasion, appears to have been perfectly

justified. Tapestry, tedious and difficult as it is to produce, was turned out in immense quantities by the industrious Flemings. Yet, the genuine product of their looms remained so costly, that "counterfeit arras" was made. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, vast importations were made from Flanders. An Act passed in the fourth year of that monarch's rule mentions incidentally the importation of four thousand pieces of tapestry in one ship, and his Majesty appointed one John Mastian as his arras-maker. At the Field of the Cloth of Gold, tapestry and embroidered fabrics shone in gorgeous rivalry. The hangings of Cardinal Wolsey's apartments are particularly mentioned in his inventories. The magnificent hall of his palace at Hampton Court is still adorned by a fine series of tapestries, representing the History of Abraham, bought for him by Sir Richard Gresham. In a couple of letters—given by Sir Henry Ellis in his third series of original letters—Sir Richard advises the cardinal that he has taken the measure of eighteen rooms at Hampton Court, and that the cardinal's grace had such business that speech could not be had of him, and that as the mart was almost ended he could tarry no longer, but has departed "toward the parties of beyonde the see," where he will cause the said hangings to be made with diligence accordingly. Then follows a statement hardly in consonance with the great wealth of Flanders, at the period referred to. Sir Richard reminds the cardinal that the hangings will amount to a thousand marks and more, and that, as the makers of them are but poor men, and must have money beforehand for provision of their stuff, he shall "laye howtt" for the cardinal, "a preste of money to them before hande." Mr. Waring, in *The Art Treasures of the United Kingdom*, mentions that beside Mastian, the king's arras-maker, this kind of work was carried on in the latter part of the same reign by Mr. Sheldon, a private gentleman, who established at Burcheston, in Warwickshire, a manufactory, superintended by an artist named Robert Hicks, in which some pieces were made consisting of maps of English counties. Some fragments of these are mentioned in *Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting*, and are said to have been preserved at Strawberry Hill. In the will of Mr. Sheldon, he mentions Robert Hicks as the only author and maker of tapestry and arras within this realm. Three of these large maps hang, in

good preservation, in the hall of the Philosophical Society's museum, York, but of Robert Hicks and his factory history hath no more to tell.

Probably, on account of the union of Spain and the Low Countries under Charles the Fifth, the finest collection of tapestry in the world is that in the Royal Palace of Madrid. Of one thousand examples of various kinds, the earliest of which date from the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the finest are from Flemish looms; those made at Madrid, in the manufactory founded by Philip the Second, being very inferior. According to Senor Bianco, the earliest of these possess the characteristics of the Van Eyck school, of Quintin Matsys, Mabuse, and other pioneers of Flemish art. Despite these models, and the introduction of Flemish workmen into Spain, tapestry-making never flourished in Madrid. The air of France proved more congenial. Francis the First brought Primaticcio from Italy expressly to make designs for tapestry, which was executed at a manufactory founded by this monarch at Fontainebleau, and placed by him under the direction of Babou de la Bourdaisière, who introduced gold and silver thread very profusely. The establishment was kept up by Henry the Second, and in the year 1597, Henry the Fourth is said to have re-established a manufactory of tapestry on the premises of the Hôpital de la Trinité at Paris, which had suffered by the disorders of the preceding reign. After this it again declined till it was taken in hand by Colbert, who founded the since celebrated manufactory of the Gobelins. It appears that, in the reign of Francis the First, two brothers, named Gilles and Jean Gobelin, introduced from Venice the art of dyeing scarlet, and established works on a large scale in the Faubourg St. Marcel, Paris. So hazardous was the speculation considered, that at first it was dubbed the Folie Gobelin, but the excellence of its productions made it a great success. These were the works purchased by Colbert under a royal edict, and converted into a manufactory of tapestry and carpets. The famous Le Brun was appointed Director-in-chief, and produced some celebrated pieces. This establishment became the parent of those at Beauvais and Aubusson. It is now sought to localise this beautiful manufactory in England, and to produce, not only the fine work identified with the Gobelins, but the broader effects of the ancient web of Arras.

At Old Windsor, within gunshot of the spot selected as the scene of Sir John Falstaff's discomfiture, is the Royal Tapestry Manufactory, distinguishable from afar by the Union Jack which streams gaily from its highest point. This institution is a new thing, and is truly—although not yet very vast in its dimensions—a genuine national work, founded on the principle which has called many art-manufactures into existence, and which is diametrically opposed to the economic theories now in fashion. The history of art-manufacture simply explains the principle on which the finest work has been produced—to wit, an absence, at least in the earlier years of manufacture, of the necessity to make a commercial profit on every transaction. It has for some years past been, and still is, with the majority of English people, the fashion to decry the value of royal and distinguished patronage, and to preach the necessity of putting to everything the commercial question, "Does it pay?" Collectors of objects of art know very well that the treasures they value so highly would never have been produced, had the workman had no better guarantee for the continuance of his wages than the market demand for his wares. The matchless *Henri Deux* ware was made at the cost of the liberal lady of the manor of Oiron; the superb majolica under the patronage of the Lords of Urbino and of Faenza; the *pâte tendre* of Sèvres, at almost incalculable expense, under the luxurious Bourbons; the manufacture of the delicious lace known as *point d'Alençon*, was founded by Colbert with national funds, and we are indebted to Butcher Cumberland for Old Chelsea. It is many long years since any manufacture has been founded in this country under royal patronage. Recently, however, an exception has been made in favour of the works now under notice.

A revived taste for tapestry is one of the results of that extraordinary sympathy with every form of art, which is the most marked characteristic of the England of the latter half of this century. Without claiming for the time present any extraordinary amount of wit or wisdom, it is yet allowable to note the contrast between the dwellings and environments of English people now, and those of thirty and forty years ago, when garish vulgarity had invaded the homes of all but a few persons of exceptional wealth and culture. Architecture, furniture, and crockery were alike hideous, meaningless, and tasteless.

It may be good fun to laugh at the little harmless affectations of æsthetic folk, but they have marvellously improved our belongings for all that. The chinamaniac has supplied material for scores of caricatures, but his influence has in the main been good. It is, in fact, but one expression of that general uprising against the reign of ugliness, which within a few years has lifted decoration to its proper level among the arts. Bit by bit this busy age has been constructing a style of its own, borrowed, it is true, like everything else, in part from what had gone before, and called absurdly enough *Queen Anne*, or *Jacobean*, instead of *Modern English*, its natural and rational designation. By degrees our walls have ceased to be nightmares, and our carpets things of terror. The merit of oak has once more been recognised, and mirrors have reverted to the beautiful forms created in Venice. Last of art-manufactures to be employed in the *Modern English* style of decoration has been tapestry. Prominent among those who desire to restore tapestry to its ancient importance, is Mr. H. Henry, the artist, from whose designs the interior of Sir Gilbert Scott's grand edifice at the London terminus of the Midland Railway was decorated, and who is now engaged in decorating the pavilion for the use of the Prince of Wales during the Paris Exhibition, the Carlton Club, and Mr. Christopher Sykes's fine house in Hill Street. Mr. Henry's fixed idea is, that tapestry judiciously employed gives, especially in this climate, a homelike and essentially comfortable air to an apartment. That this idea is well-founded, will be conceded by all who have seen the private drawing-room, reserved for royal guests, at Goodwood House, on the walls of which glow the splendid productions of the Gobelins factory. Mr. Henry having determined on introducing tapestry largely into his decorative work, thought that this costly material could be made as well in this country as in France, if only a factory could be started. He submitted this idea to Prince Leopold, who concurred with him, and advised him to carry out his project; but Mr. Henry being endowed with prudence, as well as artistic feeling and power, hesitated to add to his other work the responsibility of a large commercial undertaking. Ultimately, the project was submitted to the Queen, and was cordially approved by her Majesty. A Crown grant of fifteen acres of land at Old Windsor supplied a

site for the proposed works, and, eighteen months ago, a committee was formed for carrying Mr. Henry's plan into execution. Prince Leopold consented to act as President, and the Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein and the Princess Louise (Marchioness of Lorne) as Vice-Presidents. The committee includes the Duke of Leinster, the Duke of Westminster, the Marquis of Bute, Lord Rosslyn, Sir Richard Wallace, Mr. Cunliffe Owen, the Duchess of Cleveland, Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, Lady Cowper, Lady Warwick, and Lady Wharnclyffe; Lord Ronald Gower officiates as Hon. Sec., Mr. Henry as Director, and Mr. Brignolas as Manager. Convinced that the wisest plan would be to begin on a small scale, Mr. Henry began work at Manor Lodge, and has had the satisfaction of finding that the business of the new manufactory has already outstripped the limits of its first habitation.

A very pleasant morning may be spent at the Royal Tapestry Manufactory. On the ground-floor we find the director's office, hung round with specimens of work already done, and plans for future development. In an adjacent room are arranged the various wools, after being dyed at the dyeing-house, a stone's-throw from Manor Lodge. The wool arrives at the works in the form of unbleached crewel, as it is called, and under the director's eye must be made to take the thousand and one shades required by the "tapesier," as Chaucer calls him. The soft, and yet rich, effect of tapestry is produced by employing a vast number of gradations of colour. Five minutes' study of the portrait of the Queen, produced at the Windsor works, will convince the spectator that enormous patience, as well as keen artistic insight, are required from the "tapesier." To ensure perfect purity and brightness in the colours, only vegetable substances are employed—such as fustic, logwood, and indigo—and insects, or the product of insects, such as cochineal. No mineral is suffered to enter into the dyeing process, save in producing the national colour, scarlet. To produce scarlet, a preparation of tin must be applied to the infusion of cochineal, which then becomes the true Gobelin scarlet-red, subsequently known in this country as Bow-dye, a hue which cannot be produced in silk with a brilliancy approaching that of wool. These vegetable dyes, according to the testimony of experts, will stand air and light for nearly two hundred years without fading

to any serious extent—at least in the opinion of enthusiasts. It is agreeable to note the extreme delicacy of the shades required to secure the soft and delicate outline of the daintiest kind of tapestry, such as the sofa just made for the Queen, which will bear comparison with the finest work of the Gobelins, and the strong colours necessary to produce the brilliant effect for which the old Flemish arras was famous. One important part of the work is not done on the premises—to wit, the preparation of the cartoons. To see this, we must hunt the artists up at their several studios. Mr. E. M. Ward, the royal academician, lives hard by in Windsor, and is now at work on the last of a series of cartoons for tapestry. As best suited to his vehicle and to utilise his experience in painting frescoes of a large size, the artist has designed three spirited hunting scenes, one of which, the Boar at Bay, is ready for the loom. The Start for the Chase is in progress at Manor Lodge. These large subjects are intended as decorations for Mr. Christopher Sykes's house, and will have a fine effect on the great oak staircase. Several more large subjects are in progress at the Royal Tapestry Works. Several of these are illustrative of scenes from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and are intended to decorate the octagonal pavilion now in preparation for the Prince of Wales in the International Exhibition building at Paris. This magnificent apartment has been constructed by the English exhibitors for the sole use of the Prince of Wales. The cartoons for the tapestry have been designed by Mr. T. W. Hay, in Mr. Henry's studio. In reverting to the old Flemish style of tapestry, the director of the Windsor Works is very anxious not only that the rich colouring of the old masters, but their "flat" treatment, should be adhered to. In tapestry of comparatively late date, the vicious principle crept in of giving excessive roundness to the figures—the "correggiosity of Correggio" was outdone, and vulgar rotundity achieved; like that bulbous puffiness visible occasionally on the enamels of Limoges. There was nothing of this during the best period of Flemish tapestry. The old masters recognised that tapestry is a thing to be placed against a wall—to form, in fact, the visible wall—and were far too correct in taste to affect the voluptuous fleshiness which afflicted the work of later artists in tapestry, and made it appear to spring out of its proper position.

In carrying the design of the artist out in tapestry, the cartoon is put beneath the warp, stretched in a loom of ancient pattern, and worked with a treadle, as the artificers of Arras and Ypres worked theirs five hundred years ago. As already explained, the warp is of very strong threads, and the weft is put in—not with one shoot, but piecemeal. The wool, having been dyed, is wound upon bobbins, not unlike those of a pillow-lace maker, and the weaver sits on a narrow bench behind his work. Separating the strings of the warp, for an instant he glances at the face of the cartoon, and then drives his bobbins to and fro, working the treadle with his foot, and bringing the short threads of weft up close with a wooden comb of peculiar make. The odd part of all this is the slight attention he appears to pay to the cartoon. It is only in appearance that he is reckless. After a few steady glances at his work, the outlines and colours of the artist are photographed on his brain, and he works away in calm confidence. It is pretty work to see this tapestry-weaving, and far less bewildering than pillow-lace making, of which the uninitiated can make out nothing at all. Of course the workman is an artist in his way, and has his knowledge at the tips of his fingers.

Turning away and crossing a long gallery, much encumbered by old tapestry, we come upon a bevy of women busily employed in repairing the works of the older masters. This must be done for the most part with the needle, and tedious enough it seems to be. However, the Windsor damsels have taken kindly to it, for with patience and practice they can earn good wages. It will be a longer task to train up a new generation of tapestry-weavers, but there is purpose and energy in the work, and all-powerful fashion has given its verdict in favour of woven pictures.

A NEAR SHAVE.

SOME years ago I was accountant at the Yokohama branch of one of our great Indian banks. At the time of which I am writing the natives of Japan had not entirely lost that simplicity, which made them pay so dearly for the civilisation they now strut about in. The character of the lower classes had not yet been altered by innovation and reform, and the commercial relations between the sons of Nippon and the traders of the West resembled very much

those which Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker describes as existing between the Dutch traders and the aboriginal Americans under the happy reign of Van Twiller. Difficulties arose occasionally; for John Bull, wherever he has planted his foot, has shown himself generally to be a bit of a bully; and the Japanese, a high-spirited and warlike race, occasionally resented attempts at bullying by drawing their swords in remote, unfrequented places on solitary, defenceless foreigners; the result of which was that Her Britannic Majesty's chargé d'affaires, with very plausible grounds of excuse, generally extorted a pretty round sum from the native government, and by thus appealing to the touchiest point of the Japanese—their purses—procured for a certain interval tranquillity and peace. However, the Japanese soon saw that the Western barbarians really meant nothing worse than trade and barter, so they dropped their pride and their swords, and descended to the arena on equal terms.

Trade was then good; there was less rivalry amongst bankers and merchants than at present, the greed for gain had not yet turned the heads of the natives, tea and silk paid well, and our half-yearly balance-sheets generally showed well on the right side. We had plenty of work to do, but we also had plenty of leisure, and at most times one of our staff could leave his duties for a few days' ramble up country, or a yachting expedition down the bay. For the information of those unacquainted with the office arrangements of the far East, it may be stated that all offices are divided into two distinct sections—the European and the Asiatic. In the European department are the manager or principal, the juniors, and the Portuguese clerks. All the head and book work is done here; there is no paying coin over the counter, or, in fact, any contact with the outer world beyond the mere inspection of drafts and cheques handed in for payment. In the Asiatic section are the comprador, a Chinaman, generally speaking, the petty king of the whole establishment; the "shroffs," also Chinamen, who are the actual receiving and paying cashiers, and who have absolute charge of the counter business, subject, of course, to subsequent checking by the Europeans; and the Japanese coolies. At our bank a European always superintended the weighing of all dollars received during the day at the termination of business hours, saw them packed, and locked up in

the treasury. Beyond this there was little interference with the hard money arrangements on the part of the Europeans; and hence the comprador and schroffs were chosen, not only for their intimate knowledge of all the ins and outs of exchange, and of the thousand and one dodges of the natives, but for their good birth, education, and respectability.

The tea season was well advanced and we were fairly busy; the weather was oppressively hot in our dusty settlement, so the European junior had a fortnight's leave for a ramble up country. I, as accountant, did his work as well as my own, and amongst the extra duties which devolved on me was the weighing of the dollars every evening, and seeing them safely locked up in the treasury. As I went into the office one morning, the comprador met me at the door, grinning all over with excitement, and pointing to a paragraph in the daily paper which announced that one of the great native banks in Curio Street had been robbed of some five thousand pounds' worth of gold coin, and that no trace had yet been found either of the robbers or their booty, remarked: "I think that belong number one clever robbery. S'pose we no can keep sharp look-out allo same happen to us." So I thought, and gave orders that the "momban" or night-gate guard should be doubled, that the treasury locks should be seen to, and that every precaution should be taken to guard against nocturnal visits.

One evening, some weeks after this, when autumn had fairly arrived and the days began to draw in, the comprador told me as we were putting the dollars into the treasury—I had got the notion into my head that I would see them in every night myself, notwithstanding that my junior had long since returned—that some Japanese of high birth and rural position, who had never been into a European settlement before, wished very much to see our treasury, which, from its strength and extent, had gained a name as one of the sights of Yokohama. After consulting with the manager, I acceded to the request, and was introduced to the visitors. They were three in number—a burly, simple-looking old man; his wife, a buxom damsel, many years younger; and a slim, wiry youth, with sharp, restless eyes, which seemed utterly at variance with his clownishly-cut clothes, and who seemed to be a sort of henchman or feudal retainer. They were soon in raptures over the big iron

gates, the complicated locks, the solid plates of the walls, ceiling, and flooring, the symmetrical rows of dollar-bags, and the general appearance of security and strength. None more so than the slim retainer, who was even ultra Japanese in his curiosity, for he inspected locks and bolts, thumped and stamped on iron plates, and enquired incessantly into the dimensions and thickness of the walls, required minute explanation about the foundations—and all with the most artless Bœotian air imaginable. I, as showman, allowed them to inspect everything to their hearts' content, carefully, however, inserting myself between them and the dollar-bags, for I had little faith in the immaculate character even of high-bred, rustic Japanese, especially when I called to mind the late great robbery. They must have remained a long-half-hour before I suggested that they should come round to the "Junior Hong;" and, as I locked the treasury doors behind them, I think I recollect a twinkle in the eyes of the old comprador as he prepared to take himself off to his opium-pipe behind. However I treated them to a bottle of Heidseick, filled their pouches with Bristol birdseye, and said good-bye in the most affectionate manner at the gates. Then I started for a spin on the running-path, as our annual athletic sports were shortly coming off, and I was in hard training.

It was pretty dark as I came back. Yokohama in those days could not boast of a solitary street oil-lamp, much less a gas-jet, and we had literally to feel our way with the uncertain aid of lanterns from house to house. Still it was not so dark but that I could distinguish three figures on the pathway opposite, in front of a large bungalow, which had been to let for some months past—a large house, with a prolific garden in front, in the midst of which was a huge azalea-bush, another of the sights of Yokohama. The three figures were close together; I could distinguish two men and a woman; and, unless my eyes played me wofully false, they were my rustic friends of the afternoon. However, I thought no more about it, and turned in to dinner. In another day or two, we heard that the bungalow opposite had been let to a highly respectable firm of Japanese merchants, who intended to live there in European style. Workmen were to be seen day and night, repairing, repainting, and generally doing up the place; brand-new furniture was discharged at the doors in van-loads; the garden,

which had become neglected and overgrown with weeds, was replanted and trimmed up; and in a very short time the mouldy old residence had assumed a spick-and-span appearance, which made it a prominent feature on the road.

Matters went on in the usually somewhat monotonous fashion of Yokohama at this season of the year; no more big robberies had been reported, nevertheless I still kept the double guard on the bank premises, and never lost sight of the idea, that any relaxation of vigilance might lure daring schemers to make an attempt on our dollar-bags one of these dark autumn evenings.

One evening I was returning from my usual spin on the running-path, and was passing the gate of the bungalow in front of our bank, when something struck me as peculiar in the aspect of the place. On nearer examination, I found that the giant azalea-bush had disappeared. At five o'clock, when I left the bank, I could swear it was there, but as I now peered through the bars of the gate, there was certainly nothing to be seen. This was very extraordinary, for the Japanese are such intense lovers of all that is striking, or picturesque, or beautiful in nature, that the removal of an object such as this gigantic azalea, merely for the sake of convenience, would be in their eyes a gross act of vandalism. I was looking farther into the garden to see if by chance it had been transplanted, and at the end of the piece of ground another unaccountable sight presented itself. Through a side entrance coolies were unloading a cart of dollar-boxes as fast as they could, and by the uncertain glimmer of a lantern, I could see that the man in the cart was my burly visitor of some time previous, and that the man at the house-door was he of the sharp eyes and inquisitive turn of mind, associated with the same visit. What did this mean? If men wanted dollar-boxes in the ordinary course of business, they had them in during the day-time, and not at seven o'clock in the evening. Besides, what could tea and silk dealers want with dollar-boxes? At the time, I put the disappearance of the azalea-bush down to the energy with which the proprietors of the house were embracing foreign notions—the dollar-box question was too much for me.

Judge of my surprise, when the next morning I beheld the azalea-bush in its accustomed place! I certainly wasn't in any way affected by liquor the previous evening, for I was in strict training, and

the disappearance of a huge azalea-bush would have been a trick too great, even for the eyes of a drunken man to be deceived by it. Putting this and the dollar-box business together, I am sorry to say that I began to suspect my rustic friends, but I resolved to wait till the evening, in order to have my suspicions verified. True enough, as I passed the gate at the same hour as on the previous evening, the azalea-bush was gone, and nothing but a bare uneven space marked its site. Well, I knew that azalea-bushes are not, even in eccentric Japan, put out during the daytime, and taken in at night to nurse like tender, delicate exotics, so I called the comprador, told him what I had remarked, and desired him to watch for a night. He told the same story, and my suspicions were confirmed, that something of an extraordinary nature was going on somewhere in the neighbourhood of the bungalow over the way. I set men to watch for the actual operation of carting away the bush, but on the nights when they watched, it remained undisturbed. One man reported that at midnight he had seen the glim of lanterns flitting about in the garden, had heard voices and the sounds of digging, and I watched myself for a night or two, but saw or heard nothing. I put the native police on the scent, but nothing came of it, and I began to think that, after all, it was merely a piece of Japanese eccentricity.

In about a week the athletic sports came off, which meant two half-holidays for the whole settlement, during which time Chinamen devoted their attention to opium-smoking and sleeping, and Japanese to drinking and lounging in wine-shops. On the evening of the last day, to celebrate the victories won, and the cessation from the bondage of training, we of the "Junior Hong" gave a big-dinner. It was a cold, wet night in November, and after a good bout at loo and vingt-et-un, we were seated in the drawing-room, talking about the funny phases of our Yokohama life; of the fires, of the stories of men cut down and robbed by Japanese in lonely places, of the extremely clever way in which the Curio Street bankers had been relieved of their gold, of the game laws, of the absurd opposition offered by the government to Europeans going up country, and of a hundred other things, when a boy came in, and whispered in my ear that the comprador wished to see me. In the passage I found the old man, trembling from head to foot with excitement, and utterly unable

to articulate a syllable. He seized me by the arm, hurried me downstairs through our strip of garden to the gate, and simply pointed to the bungalow opposite. The rain had changed to snow, and the keen wind blew down the street in fitful gusts, driving the snow into our faces. Through the mist and snowflakes, after some peering, I could make out the occasional glint of a lantern on the other side, and when the wind lulled for a moment, fancied I heard a grating sound, as of something being dug and shovelled up, immediately under our feet. If I hadn't been told that such a noise had been distinctly heard during the evening by one of the coolies on watch, I do not suppose I should have noticed it, but as I now listened, it was very palpable.

It was all very mysterious; but I had long been suspicious, and, as I was now certain that something unusual was taking place, I came to the conclusion that the treasury of the bank should be looked at. So I sent upstairs for the manager, placed the comrador at the door, ordered all lights to be kept hidden, despatched a messenger to the European police-station for a constable in case of need, and when the manager arrived, armed myself with a dark lantern and gently unlocked the treasury. As we peered through the iron bars into the blackness we distinctly heard the shovelling and digging sound, now much nearer. Enjoining strict silence on the part of the Chinamen and coolies outside, we entered. As yet nothing had been touched. We were, at all events, first in the field.

We trod very gently, the lantern half-darkened, and ensconced ourselves behind a row of dollar-bags. We waited fully half an hour; we could still hear the subterranean noises, but, beyond this and the occasional howl of the elements outside, there was not a sound. Suddenly we heard a very gentle tap in the very middle of the treasury, about three feet in front of our rampart of bags; then another; then a regular series; then a sound as of the application of some lever-power. We turned the lantern-ray round about the floor, and beheld one of the big plates gradually being tilted up; the manager nudged me, and crept gently up to the spot. In a couple of minutes three sides of the plate were loose; a bony hand appeared, followed by a Japanese head. In an instant the manager had seized the head; I had jumped forward, turned the

light full on, between us we had dragged up the remainder of our visitor's body, and in less than a minute I was smiling with grim satisfaction in the stupefied face of my slim and inquisitive visitor of some weeks previous. We gagged him, and tied him up in the office under a guard; the manager ran out at the gate into the garden opposite, taking with him the English constable, whilst I remained in the treasury. In a few seconds I heard the sound of a scuffle, and a subsequent "Hurrah! we've got the lot!" and manager and constable appeared with the burly companion of the captive now under guard, and the fair-cheeked young wife, who turned out to be a very ordinary peasant-man. Our captives secured, I descended the hole in the treasury, found myself in a very neatly-constructed cavern, which led under the road into the opposite garden, and terminating with a shaft on the site of the azalea-bush. Everything tended to show that the whole affair was a carefully-laid plan; and had it not been for the azalea-bush, another twenty-four hours would have seen us the losers of a good many thousand dollars. In the bungalow we found boxes ready for the reception of the dollars and coin, probably the same I had noticed being uncared, but there was no trace of any accomplice.

However, we handed the three clever rogues over to their countrymen for judgment, and they probably found rough accommodation, with an occasional taste of torturing thrown in, for some years at the institution on Tobé Hill. The old bungalow did not let again, but was pulled down and a substantial block of shops and offices erected on its site; so that nothing remains at present to remind the modern Yokohama banker of what we termed, when we told the story, "A near shave!"

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IX. FINIS CORONAT OPUS.

"FECIT Andreas Gordon."

What could it mean? It was not likely that there was a second Andrew Gordon in the world who composed operas. Had he really left a work behind him? And had it come into the hands of John March of Deepweald, ready to be produced just at the moment it was wanted? But just then his eye caught the date—it told him

that Cleopatra had been finished barely four weeks ago.

He was standing, lost in a maze of speculation into which a certain awe of unknown and mysterious impossibilities could not help intruding, when he heard the soft half-rustle of a dress, and Celia, whom he was waiting for, was in the room. But, for the moment, he had two hearts; one was Celia's, the other was mystery's.

The second, being uppermost for the moment, spoke first.

"Good morning. . . . You are not astonished to see me, I hope—I suppose? I—I heard you were in trouble." Somehow, the tables of Lindenheim were turned, and it was Walter of the cool head and ready tongue who was suddenly struck shy before timid Celia. "Can I help you?" Perhaps, after all, that was the best thing to say.

Celia's cheek was always ready to turn from pale to pink, or from pink to pale.

"Yes; we are in trouble. And—I thought I should see you soon."

She had thought nothing of the kind. But she believed she had thought so, since he was here.

"Thank you—if that means I can help you. I must, and I will. Lady Quorne must do something, and she shall—if—I came on purpose to see you. I have been a very poor sort of friend to you; it was easy enough to take care of you at Lindenheim. While I was waiting for you, I was turning over this music. What is it? Do you know?"

"What—you have been touching the score!" she exclaimed in dismay.

"Why not? It is worth looking at; but I don't envy the soprano. Look here—look at this passage, and sing it if you can. Clari could not do that. What is it? I see it is called Cleopatra, but how did it come here?"

"The score? That is my father's great work—that he has been working at ever since I can remember anything."

"Your father?"

"It was his life while we were at Deepweald. And now——"

"Celia—do you remember my telling you, the first time I ever saw you, of Andrew Gordon who composed Comus—the one great English opera that people are just beginning to recognise?"

Did Celia remember? Every word of the walk to Waaren was as fresh in her mind as her first hearing of Clari. The

two things were the epochs from which she dated all things.

"You said you never heard of him—or of Comus; and you say this work is your father's. See here—'Fecit, Andreas Gordon,' and the date, not a month ago. 'Composed by Andrew Gordon,' that means—but what does it mean?"

If his cleverness was at fault, Celia's stupidity was not like to be any better for the purposes of riddle-reading. She dared to touch with just the tips of her fingers, the terrible score which his hands and eyes had profaned, and looked at the words as if they had been Greek—which, though in Latin, they were to her.

"If it means," she said at last, "that the score"—she could not change its name at a moment's notice to Cleopatra—"if it means that, it would not be true—I mean, if it means that the score was composed by Andrew Gordon. It is my father's."

"But—but suppose it means that Cleopatra was composed by both John March and Andrew Gordon——"

"But how——"

"Suppose that Andrew Gordon never died, but became—Heaven knows why—John March of Deepweald?"

Celia could never take new ideas, except slowly. She could only look bewildered at the score.

"I have told you his story a dozen times. We never questioned his death—never. But that was from circumstance; I never heard that there was any direct proof; it was not likely I should, but my father would know. And your father is not an ordinary man, Celia; and he may have had motives of which we know nothing, and a strong one it must have been; it is true he was cut off with a shilling before he—disappeared, as I have always heard. Have you never heard him speak of your mother, Celia?"

"Never. Never once. I never heard of my mother."

"Have you never asked him? Of course not," he added quickly, catching the look on Celia's face that told him, more plainly than words could, what the wildest thought of questioning John March implied to her; an idea beyond grasping, not by reason of its novelty, but of its preposterous impossibility. "And you never remember any place but Deepweald. If your mother had died there—do you know if your father lived there long before you remember?"

Had she spoken her real belief she would

have said, "As long as the cathedral." The cathedral, the score, and John March were one and indivisible to her.

"No? Do you know nothing of your father's former life at all?"

"Nothing at all."

"You had a mother—and she gave you her eyes. We are cousins, Celia."

Celia was feeling faint, as before a general upheaving and confusion of all nature. We all have to distinguish between knowing and knowing at some turn of life—between knowing that a fact is true, and knowing that it is at the very root of life, and that if it were not true something would be gone that stands between us and such untheoretical things as happiness or despair. Some day we learn not only that love, for example, simply is, but is for our own very selves; some day we find the river that we only knew of by knowledge actually carrying us down to the sea. If this were all true, human life, though at the commonest inlets, was trying to pour in upon Celia. She felt it beating outside, and was too bewildered to give it any welcome but that of vague dismay.

The conclusion to which he had leaped startled even Walter. At least he felt that he should be startled so soon as he had time. A new element of romance took years from his heart, which, though he must be full eight-and-twenty, had not yet grown so very old. That not only should Andrew Gordon, the Bohemian, have been his hero, but that unheard-of Celia Gordon, all unknown, should have been his heroine; that two such diverse paths should have led them to Lindenheim, and then have circled round and round till they were brought together again at Saragossa Row—they had been strange currents of destiny indeed. All his best and strongest self went out to the heroine of his romance, of his heart, as he took her hand.

"Yes—it's as true as that you are you. You know nothing of your father. I know so much of my uncle that he may indeed have come to live again without black magic or miracle. Yes—John March is Celia Gordon's father; my cousin Celia is Celia of Lindenheim. Were we not friends from the first moment we ever met? Not that that had much to do with our fathers being brothers, though. We are made ten thousand times nearer than they are. Do you know how I was drawn to you the first moment I saw you? It was as if you had been given into my charge, when you first dropped among us all, like

a frightened dove out of some unknown skies, among us starlings and jays. Well, thank Heaven, there is nothing to keep me from helping you now, all I can."

"You have always been too good to me."

"I? I have done nothing for you—not one single thing. I have been calling myself a blind brute every minute for the last ten days. But I know what things mean now."

It was more than Celia knew. Indeed, this new kinship, which he welcomed as a direct way of bringing Celia into his life, and of solving a thousand difficulties at home which he recognised, and felt none the less deeply for ignoring and scorning them, put into her heart a root of bitterness. So Walter had helped her because some natural instinct of kindred had bidden him—that was all. She felt a dream, not quite flying away, but putting out its wings to fly. But then—after all, it was only a dream which had not even a name. The dumb pain that came from the spreading of its wings was itself so vague and nameless that she mistook it for a sort of ingratitude. Ought she not, for her father's sake, to be glad if all this were true? And, since Herr Walter believed it, true it must needs be.

"You have done all things for me!" she said with an eager impulse to make up in warmth of zeal for the shamefully and selfishly ungrateful coldness with which she had learned that Walter was so much nearer to her than her friend. For she was so utterly ignorant of what kindness means that she assumed cousinship and brotherhood to be more than friendship; as if accident were a closer bond than free choice, or to be named in the same breath with it. "Yes—everything." The tenderest light was coming into her face, for shame for ingratitude was not an impulse to make the shyest of girls ashamed; she felt warmth come into her own voice, and, for once, let herself go. "You have been the only friend I ever had. Do you know what that means to me? Of course that had to be over when you left Lindenheim—there was nothing you could do; and why should you? I never thought of it, indeed. I don't know, but it seems as if I had a life past helping, except by stray bits of sun, like you and Lotte, that come out and go in again—but they do come! If only my father was made safe, I should be—happy. I should go to sleep, and not dream of pence. Oh, Herr Walter,

do you know how I want to say 'Thank you,' as well as feel it all through and through me, and don't know how? Can you know without my telling? I don't know how to get words—I never did want them before. Thank you, for the sun."

To live alone with a deaf man, who had never talked to her even in his hearing days, is no preparation for eloquence, nor to have lived for three years with two incessant talkers in a crowd, for expansion; and one's words at best are bound to be vague when one wishes to say 'Thank you' with one's whole heart for a golden mist, and can find no more definite and tangible peg for one's gratitude than a pair of kid gloves, a cab fare, and a bank-note for five pounds. Celia could not mention these, especially the money. It needed no knowledge of the world to tell her that the most delicate way of taking a delicate loan is to say, as delicately as possible, nothing. But to Walter she had grown eloquent, and a very little expansion with her was doubled by its novelty. And all the more his heart smote him with shame at thanks that he had never earned.

"Celia," he said, very gravely, "do you know—don't you know why I came to see you to-day? It was to tell you that I have been a fool. It has taken me five years to find out why you drove every thought of every other girl on earth out of my head from the first time we ever met—that day when we went to Waaren. Our being cousins had nothing to do with that, Celia. I have six cousins besides you. That morning I thought myself over head and ears in love with Ilma. You know I never spoke six words to her again. And since that day I have been rolling on, from nowhere to nowhere, and no woman has ever been nearer to me than Ilma was when I left Lindenheim." He forgot a rather strong flirtation with a certain famous prima donna not five months ago, and perhaps another parenthesis or two, but he forgot them honestly. "And—when I met you at Deepweald, I knew why." It had been in truth much later; but love always antedates itself when it becomes self-conscious, and draws on itself at first sight as sublimely regardless of fact as any other forger. "And ever since I have known better and better. I did not come to find a cousin, Celia; no, nor a friend. No, nor only Celia—aus Lindenheim. Do you remember," he went on with acute incoherency, though with chronic fluency, "that day? You had taken your first

singing lesson, when I met you on the way to the Golden Lion, and when——"

Celia, instead of flushing under this new outbreak of sunshine, turned pale; not like a hungry red rose, but like a white one, for whom the open light is too strong. The wings of the dream on the verge of flight fluttered wildly, but not as if they were about to fly away. Her father's heart had opened and closed again, but hers had never opened; and the effort was as painful for the warm breeze to enter as for the cold. Indeed, how can she, who only as yet hears the wind on the outside of doors and windows, tell whether it be from east or from south till it has fairly burst the window-pane? At any rate, she knew one thing—that this was no flirtation à la Lindenheim. One may mistake the wind's quarter, but not the summer in one's own heart for mere spring.

"And when," began Walter again, with one hand pressing down hard on Cleopatra, when, suddenly——

"Good morning," spoke in a tone of deep, patient melancholy, a voice from the inner door—harsh, faint, and hollow, as if heard from farther still. "I have long abandoned the theory that an Englishman's house is his castle, not to speak of his ledging. But those sheets are at least my own, and I should be infinitely obliged if you could find another place for your hands. I will not ask you to give me the pleasure of your company, because you will no doubt give me that so long as it pleases you. Celia, give me my pipe, if you are not too busy; and if Mr.—the doctor, calls, tell him I am quite well, and mean to keep so, in spite of him. I don't suppose that will keep him out, but one can but try."

With more than a sigh Walter had to accept the fact that this was his romance here—this bitter, sour, grotesque creature, with a crazed brain, and suffering from impotent tyranny. What could he do? A deaf man may silence heart-speech by his presence as much as if he could hear the faintest whisper in the farthest corner. Celia had not spoken, save in the plain language that love alone can never read; and he could not, extemporising a speaking-trumpet with the sacred score, bawl out: "You are my lost uncle—I love Celia—I want to marry her."

Walter knew, by an instinct drawn from the only interview he ever had with John March, that for anyone but his daughter to write conversation for him was to

wound him sorely. He thought, shall I write him a letter? So far, at least, as he thought of anything but his interrupted tête-à-tête with Celia. But then a letter would be both lame and absurd, and he had a chronic aversion to letter-writing, being human and of his own time. And in any case he could not mention his discovery at the end of the score; he had been told, in so many words, that even his having laid his hand upon it was unpardonable profanation. He glanced at Celia; but he got no help there. She had turned away and was folding up the mantilla.

Under the circumstances, no possible resource could have been brilliant. Perhaps that which Walter desperately took to was as little dull as any. He took from his breast-pocket, where chance had placed it and presence of mind remembered it, the last printed criticism of Comus—a piece of glowing praise. Print could not hurt the deaf man, and any musician was presumably interested in reading of the music that chanced to be going on.

John March read it through slowly, from beginning to end.

"I don't know why you show this stuff to me," he said, with grim scorn. "So that wretched sham, that vile rubbish, is still on the boards? Well, I knew it would be an era in the degradation of art, and so it has proved. It is just as well to know that there is more need of a reformer than ever—only it will make his work harder by five-and-twenty years; each year with three hundred and sixty-five nails in art's coffin. I'll show you what Comus is worth." He tore up the cutting and threw the pieces where the fire should have been. "I won't even degrade my pipe by lighting it with what a fool writes in praise of a charlatan. And so—if you care to know it—you know what John March thinks of Andrew Gordon."

That one eccentric musician should despise the work of another, were that other Beethoven himself, was not strange; but that a musician should despise his own work, and that work the greatest and most famous of his time and country, should not even have heard of its triumph, and, when he heard of it by chance, should be thrown into a rage—all this was not strange, it was impossible. In the

face of that had he seen "Fecit, Andreas Gordon," written a hundred times over, he could not believe his own eyes. It must have been "Fecit, Johannes March;" and his mind, preoccupied with necromancy, must have acted as necromancer. Surely, had a true, great artist, Walter felt, heard of the revived triumph, after five-and-twenty years, of a true, great work, like Comus, his eyes would have flashed with the joy of living fame. No; that Walter's eyes should have deceived him was incredible; but this was impossible, simply and utterly.

He heard Celia say, without leaving the mantilla, "Go."

Fate had triumphed. The fools had been too much for one man, however strong, to conquer, raged the master within himself, as he fell into his old trick of striding fiercely up and down, lion-wise. Celia knew the mood and kept still. Comus revived, Comus triumphant—all the ruined hope, all the cruel disappointment, all the bitterness of a life, lost glory, wasted strength, lost love, concentrated in fifty lines of praise. It was more than mortal strength could bear. And meanwhile, there lay Cleopatra, never to be heard, to make sport for Philistines in far-off times to come.

Suddenly his eyes fell on Celia; he could not see hers, but one need not see tears to know where they are. And through his rage came back the look of appeal thrown to her by Walter, and the downcast face that had not raised itself to answer him. Another man would at least have laid his hand on her shoulder or touched her hair. Not he. He laid hold of Cleopatra.

"Let him take her, or any man that can keep her," he swore aloud, "and the devil take the score." And, in a second, the sole record of a life's work was torn once lengthwise, once breadth-wise, and lay in four different quarters of the room.

Having thus pulled down his house of cards, he lighted his pipe with trembling fingers, and sought to exorcise the demon by smoking grimly. Celia dared not look, or think, or feel; had Deepweald Cathedral itself come down, it would have been nothing to this. The windows that kept out the open air from blowing into her life had not been opened, but dashed to pieces by a storm.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXXII. LORD GEORGE IS TROUBLED.

THIS was a day of no little importance to Lord George; so much so, that one or two circumstances which occurred before he saw his brother at the hotel must be explained. On that day there had come to him from the dean a letter written in the dean's best humour. When the house had been taken in Munster Court there had been a certain understanding—hardly quite a fixed assurance—that it was to be occupied up to the end of June, and that then Lord George and his wife should go into Brothershire. There had been a feeling ever since the marriage that while Mary preferred London, Lord George was wedded to the country. They had on the whole behaved well to each other in the matter. The husband, though he feared that his wife was surrounded by dangers, and was well aware that he himself was dallying on the brink of a terrible pitfall, would not urge a retreat before the time that had been named. And she, though she had ever before her eyes the fear of the dulness of Cross Hall, would not ask to have the time postponed. It was now the end of May, and a certain early day in July had been fixed for their retreat from London. Lord George had, with a good grace, promised to spend a few days at the Deanery before he went to Cross Hall, and had given Mary permission to remain there for some little time afterwards. Now there had come a letter from the dean, full of smiles and pleasantness, about this visit. There were tidings in it about

Mary's horse, which was still kept at the Deanery, and comfortable assurances of sweetest welcome. Not a word had been said in this letter about the terrible family matter. Lord George, though he was at the present moment not disposed to think in the most kindly manner of his father-in-law, appreciated this, and had read the letter aloud to his wife at the breakfast-table with pleasant approbation. As he left the house to go to his brother, he told her that she had better answer her father's letter, and had explained to her where she would find it in his dressing-room.

But on the previous afternoon he had received at his club another letter, the nature of which was not so agreeable. This letter had not been pleasant even to himself, and certainly was not adapted to give pleasure to his wife. After receiving it he had kept it in the close custody of his breast-pocket; and when, as he left the house, he sent his wife to find that which had come from her father, he certainly thought that this prior letter was at the moment secure from all eyes within the sanctuary of his coat. But it was otherwise. With that negligence to which husbands are so specially subject, he had made the dean's letter safe next to his bosom, but had left the other epistle unguarded. He had not only left it unguarded, but had absolutely so put his wife on the track of it that it was impossible that she should not read it.

Mary found the letter, and did read it before she left her husband's dressing-room—and the letter was as follows:

"Dearest George;" when she read the epithet, which she and she only was entitled to use, she paused for a moment, and all the blood rushed up into her face.

She had known the handwriting instantly, and at the first shock she put the paper down upon the table. For a second there was a feeling prompting her to read no further. But it was only for a second. Of course she would read it. It certainly never would have occurred to her to search her husband's clothes for letters. Up to this moment she had never examined a document of his, except at his bidding or in compliance with his wish. She had suspected nothing, found nothing, had entertained not even any curiosity about her husband's affairs. But now must she not read this letter to which he himself had directed her? Dearest George! And that in the handwriting of her friend—her friend!—Adelaide Houghton—in the handwriting of the woman to whom her husband had been attached before he had known herself! Of course she read the letter.

"DEAREST GEORGE,—I break my heart when you don't come to me; for Heaven's sake be here to-morrow. Two, three, four, five, six, seven—I shall be here any hour till you come. I don't dare to tell the man that I am not at home to anybody else, but you must take your chance. Nobody ever does come till after three or after six. He never comes home till half-past seven. Oh me! What is to become of me when you go out of town? There is nothing to live for, nothing—only you. Anything that you write is quite safe. Say that you love me! A."

The letter had grieved him when he got it—as had other letters before that. And yet it flattered him, and the assurance of the woman's love had in it a certain candied sweetness which prevented him from destroying the paper instantly, as he ought to have done. Could his wife have read all his mind in the matter, her anger would have been somewhat mollified. In spite of the candied sweetness he hated the correspondence. It had been the woman's doing and not his. It is so hard for a man to be a Joseph! This Joseph would have fled, though after a certain fashion he liked the woman, had he been able to assure himself that the fault had in no degree been his. But looking back, he thought that he had encouraged her, and did not know how to fly. Of all this Mary knew nothing. She only knew that old Mr. Houghton's wife, who professed to be her dear friend, had written a love-letter to her husband, and that her husband had preserved it carefully, and had then

through manifest mistake delivered it over into her hands.

She read it twice, and then stood motionless for a few minutes thinking what she would do. Her first idea was that she would tell her father. But that she soon abandoned. She was grievously offended with her husband; but, as she thought of it, she became aware that she did not wish to bring on him any anger but her own. Then she thought that she would start immediately for Berkeley Square, and say what she had to say to Mrs. Houghton. As this idea presented itself to her, she felt that she could say a good deal. But how would that serve her? Intense as was her hatred at present against Adelaide, Adelaide was nothing to her in comparison with her husband. For a moment she almost thought that she would fly after him, knowing, as she did, that he had gone to see his brother at Scumberg's Hotel. But at last she resolved that she would do nothing and say nothing, till he should have perceived that she had read the letter. She would leave it open on his dressing-table, so that he might know immediately on his return what had been done. Then it occurred to her that the servants might see the letter if she exposed it. So she kept it in her pocket, and determined that when she heard his knock at the door she would step into his room and place the letter ready for his eyes. After that she spent the whole day in thinking of it, and read the odious words over and over again till they were fixed in her memory. "Say that you love me!" Wretched viper; ill-conditioned traitor! Could it be that he, her husband, loved this woman better than her? Did not all the world know that the woman was plain, and affected, and vulgar, and odious? "Dearest George!" The woman could not have used such language without his sanction. Oh, what should she do? Would it not be necessary that she should go back and live with her father? Then she thought of Jack De Baron. They called Jack De Baron wild; but he would not have been guilty of wickedness such as this. She clung, however, to the resolution of putting the letter ready for her husband, so that he should know that she had read it before they met.

In the meantime Lord George, ignorant as yet of the storm which was brewing at home, was shown into his brother's sitting-room. When he entered he found there, with his brother, a lady whom he could

recognise without difficulty as his sister-in-law. She was a tall, dark woman, as he thought very plain, but with large bright eyes and very black hair. She was ill-dressed, in a morning wrapper, and looked to him to be at least as old as her husband. The marquis said something to her in Italian which served as an introduction, but of which Lord George could not understand a word. She curtsied, and Lord George put out his hand. "It is perhaps as well that you should make her acquaintance," said the marquis. Then he again spoke in Italian, and after a minute or two the lady withdrew. It occurred to Lord George afterwards that the interview had certainly been arranged. Had his brother not wished him to see the lady, the lady could have been kept in the background here as well as at Manor Cross. "It's uncommon civil of you to come," said the marquis as soon as the door was closed. "What can I do for you?"

"I did not like that you should be in London without my seeing you."

"I daresay not. I daresay not. I was very much obliged to you, you know, for sending that lawyer down to me."

"I did not send him."

"And particularly obliged to you for introducing that other lawyer into our family affairs."

"I would have done nothing of the kind if I could have helped it. If you will believe me, Brotherton, my only object is to have all this so firmly settled that there may not be need of further enquiry at a future time."

"When I am dead?"

"When we may both be dead."

"You have ten years' advantage of me. Your own chance isn't bad."

"If you will believe me——"

"But suppose I don't believe you! Suppose I think that in saying all that you are lying like the very devil!" Lord George jumped in his chair, almost as though he had been shot. "My dear fellow, what's the good of this humbug? You think you've got a chance. I don't believe you were quick enough to see it yourself, but your father-in-law has put you up to it. He is not quite such an ass as you are; but even he is ass enough to fancy that because I, an Englishman, have married an Italian lady, therefore the marriage may, very likely, be good for nothing."

"We only want proof."

"Does anybody ever come to you and

ask you for proofs of your marriage with that very nice young woman, the dean's daughter?"

"Anybody may find them at Brotherton."

"No doubt, and I can put my hand on the proofs of my marriage when I want to do so. In the meantime I doubt whether you can learn anything to your own advantage by coming here."

"I didn't want to learn anything."

"If you would look after your own wife a little closer, I fancy it would be a better employment for you. She is at present probably amusing herself with Captain De Baron."

"That is calumny," said Lord George, rising from his chair.

"No doubt. Any imputation coming from me is calumny. But you can make imputations as heavy and as hard as you please—and all in the way of honour. I've no doubt you'll find her with Captain De Baron if you'll go and look."

"I should find her doing nothing that she ought not to do," said the husband, turning round for his hat and gloves.

"Or perhaps making a speech at the Rights of Women Institute on behalf of that German baroness who, I'm told, is in gaol. But, George, don't you take it too much to heart. You've got the money. When a man goes into a stable for his wife, he can't expect much in the way of conduct or manners. If he gets the money he ought to be contented." He had to hear it all to the last bitter word before he could escape from the room and make his way out into the street.

It was at this time about four o'clock, and in his agony of mind he had turned down towards Piccadilly before he could think what he would do with himself for the moment. Then he remembered that Berkeley Square was close to him on the other side, and that he had been summoned there about this hour. To give him his due, it should be owned that he had no great desire to visit Berkeley Square in his present condition of feeling. Since the receipt of that letter—which was now awaiting him at home—he had told himself half-a-dozen times that he must and would play the part of Joseph. He had so resolved when she had first spoken to him of her passion, now some months ago; and then his resolution had broken down merely because he had not at the moment thought any great step to be necessary. But now it was clear that some great step was necessary. He must

make her know that it did not suit him to be called "Dearest George" by her, or to be told to declare that he loved her. And this accusation against his wife, made in such coarse and brutal language by his brother, softened his heart to her. Why, oh why, had he allowed himself to be brought up to a place he hated as he had always hated London! Of course Jack De Baron made him unhappy, though he was at the present moment prepared to swear that his wife was as innocent as any woman in London.

But now, as he was so near, and as his decision must be declared in person, he might as well go to Berkeley Square. As he descended Hay Hill he put his hand into his pocket for the lady's letter, and pulled out that from the dean which he had intended to leave with his wife. In an instant he knew what he had done. He remembered it all, even to the way in which he had made the mistake with the two letters. There could be no doubt but that he had given Adelaide Houghton's letter into his wife's hands, and that she had read it. At the bottom of Hill Street, near the stables, he stopped suddenly and put his hand up to his head. What should he do now? He certainly could not pay his visit in Berkeley Square. He could not go and tell Mrs. Houghton that he loved her, and certainly would not have strength to tell her that he did not love her while suffering such agony as this. Of course he must see his wife. Of course he must—if I may use the slang phrase—of course he must "have it out with her," after some fashion, and the sooner the better. So he turned his steps homewards across the Green Park. But, in going homewards, he did not walk very fast.

What would she do? How would she take it? Of course women daily forgive such offences; and he might probably, after the burst of the storm was over, succeed in making her believe that he did in truth love her and did not love the other woman. In his present mood he was able to assure himself most confidently that such was the truth. He could tell himself now that he never wished to see Adelaide Houghton again. But, before anything of this could be achieved, he would have to own himself a sinner before her. He would have, as it were, to grovel at her feet. Hitherto, in all his intercourse with her, he had been masterful and marital. He had managed up to this

point so to live as to have kept in all respects the upper hand. He had never yet been found out even in a mistake or an indiscretion. He had never given her an opening for the mildest finding of fault. She, no doubt, was young, and practice had not come to her. But, as a natural consequence of this, Lord George had hitherto felt that an almost divine superiority was demanded from him. That sense of divine superiority must now pass away.

I do not know whether a husband's comfort is ever perfect till some family peccadilloes have been conclusively proved against him. I am sure that a wife's temper to him is sweetened by such evidence of human imperfection. A woman will often take delight in being angry; will sometimes wrap herself warm in prolonged sullenness; will frequently revel in complaint—but she enjoys forgiving better than aught else. She never feels that all the due privileges of her life have been accorded to her, till her husband shall have laid himself open to the carresses of a pardon. Then, and not till then, he is her equal; and equality is necessary for comfortable love. But the man, till he be well used to it, does not like to be pardoned. He has assumed divine superiority, and is bound to maintain it. Then, at last, he comes home some night with a little too much wine, or he cannot pay the weekly bills because he has lost too much money at cards, or he has got into trouble at his office and is in doubt for a fortnight about his place, or perhaps a letter from a lady falls into wrong hands. Then he has to tell himself that he has been "found out." The feeling is at first very uncomfortable; but it is, I think, a step almost necessary in reaching true matrimonial comfort. Hunting men say that hard rain settles the ground. A good scold with a "kiss and be friends" after it, perhaps, does the same.

Now Lord George had been found out. He was quite sure of that. And he had to undergo all that was unpleasant without sufficient experience to tell him that those clouds too would pass away quickly. He still walked homewards across St. James's Park, never stopping, but dragging himself along slowly, and when he came to his own door he let himself in very silently. She did not expect him so soon, and when he entered the drawing-room was startled to see him. She had not as

yet put the letter, as she had intended, on his dressing-table, but still had it in her pocket; nor had it occurred to her that he would as yet have known the truth. She looked at him when he entered, but did not at first utter a word. "Mary," he said.

"Well; is anything the matter?"

It was possible that she had not found the letter—possible, though very improbable. But he had brought his mind so firmly to the point of owning what was to be owned and defending what might be defended, that he hardly wished for escape in that direction. At any rate, he was not prepared to avail himself of it. "Did you find the letter?" he asked.

"I found a letter."

"Well!"

"Of course I am sorry to have intruded upon so private a correspondence. There it is." And she threw the letter to him.

"Oh, George!"

He picked up the letter which had fallen to the ground, and, tearing it into bits, threw the fragments into the grate.

"What do you believe about it, Mary?"

"Believe!"

"Do you think that I love anyone as I love you?"

"You cannot love me at all, unless that wicked, wretched creature is a liar."

"Have I ever lied to you? You will believe me?"

"I do not know."

"I love no one in the world but you."

Even that almost sufficed for her. She already longed to have her arms round his neck and tell him that it was all forgiven; that he at least was forgiven. During the whole morning she had been thinking of the angry words she would say to him, and of the still more angry words which he would speak of that wicked, wicked viper. The former were already forgotten; but she was not as yet inclined to refrain as to Mrs. Houghton. "Oh, George, how could you bear such a woman as that; that you should let her write to you in such language? Have you been to her?"

"What, to-day?"

"Yes, to-day."

"Certainly not. I have just come from my brother."

"You will never go into the house again! You will promise that!"

Here was made the first direct attack upon his divine superiority! Was he, at his wife's instance, to give a pledge that he would not go into a certain house

under any circumstances? This was the process of bringing his nose down to the ground which he had feared. Here was the first attempt made by his wife to put her foot on his neck. "I think that I had better tell you all that I can tell," he said.

"I only want to know that you hate her," said Mary.

"I neither hate her nor love her. I did—love her—once. You know that."

"I never could understand it. I never did believe that you really could have loved her." Then she began to sob. "I shouldn't—ever—have taken you—if—I had."

"But from the moment when I first knew you it was all changed with me." As he said this he put out his arms to her, and she came to him. "There has never been a moment since in which you have not had all my heart."

"But why—why—why——" she sobbed, meaning to ask how it could have come to pass that the wicked viper could, in those circumstances, have written such a letter as that which had fallen into her hands.

The question certainly was not unnatural. But it was a question very difficult to answer. No man likes to say that a woman has pestered him with unwelcome love, and certainly Lord George was not the man to make such a boast. "Dearest Mary," he said, "on my honour as a gentleman I am true to you."

Then she was satisfied and turned her face to him and covered him with kisses. I think that morning did more than any day had done since their marriage to bring about the completion of her desire to be in love with her husband. Her heart was so softened towards him that she would not even press a question that would pain him. She had intended sternly to exact from him a pledge that he would not again enter the house in Berkeley Square, but she let even that pass by because she would not annoy him. She gathered herself up close to him on the sofa, and drawing his arm over her shoulder, sobbed and laughed, as she crouched against his shoulder. But yet every now and then, there came forth from her some violent ebullition against Mrs. Houghton.

"Nasty creature! wicked, wicked wretch! Oh, George, she is so ugly!" And yet, before this little affair, she had been quite content that Adelaide Houghton should be her intimate friend.

It had been nearly five when Lord George reached the house, and he had to sit enduring his wife's caresses, and listening to devotion to himself and her abuses of Mrs. Houghton till past six. Then it struck him that a walk by himself would be good for him. They were to dine out, but not till eight, and there would still be time. When he proposed it, she acceded at once. Of course she must go and dress, and equally of course he would not, could not go to Berkeley Square now. She thoroughly believed that he was true to her, but yet she feared the wiles of that nasty woman. They would go to the country soon, and then the wicked viper would not be near them.

Lord George walked across to Pall Mall, looked at an evening paper at his club, and then walked back again. Of course it had been his object to have a cool half hour in which to think it all over—all that had passed between him and his wife, and also what had passed between him and his brother. That his wife was the dearest, sweetest woman in the world he was quite sure. He was more than satisfied with her conduct to him. She had exacted from him very little penitence; had not required to put her foot in any disagreeable way upon his neck. No doubt she felt that his divine superiority had been vanquished, but she had uttered no word of triumph. With all that he was content. But what was he to do with Mrs. Houghton, as to whom he had sworn a dozen times within the last hour that she was quite indifferent to him? He now repeated the assertion to himself, and felt himself to be sure of the fact. But still he was her lover. He had allowed her so to regard him, and something must be done. She would write to him letters daily if he did not stop it; and every such letter not shown to his wife would be a new treason against her. This was a great trouble. And then, through it all, those terrible words which his brother had spoken to him about Captain De Baron rang in his ears. This afternoon had certainly afforded no occasion to him to say a word about Captain De Baron to his wife. When detected in his own sin he could not allude to possible delinquencies on the other side. Nor did he think that there was any delinquency. But Cæsar said that Cæsar's wife should be above suspicion, and in that matter every man is a Cæsar to himself. Lady Susanna had spoken about this captain,

and Adelaide Houghton had said an ill-natured word or two, and he himself had seen them walking together. Now his brother had told him that Captain De Baron was his wife's lover. He did not at all like Captain De Baron.

CHAPTER XXXIII. CAPTAIN DE BARON.

Of course, as the next day or two passed by, the condition of Mrs. Houghton was discussed between Lord George and his wife. The affair could not be passed over without further speech. "I am quite contented with you," he said; "more than contented. But I suppose she does not feel herself contented with Mr. Houghton."

"Then why did she marry him?"

"Ah—why indeed?"

"A woman ought to be contented with her husband. But at any rate what right can she have to disturb other people? I suppose you never wrote her a love-letter."

"Never, certainly—since her marriage." This indeed was true. The lady had frequently written to him, but he had warily kept his hands from pen and ink, and had answered her letters by going to her.

"And yet she could persevere! Women can do such mean things! I would sooner have broken my heart and died than have asked a man to say that he loved me. I don't suppose you have much to be proud of. I daresay she has half-a-dozen others. You won't see her again?"

"I think I may be driven to do so. I do not wish to have to write to her, and yet I must make her understand that all this is to be over."

"She'll understand that fast enough when she does not see you. It would have served her right to have sent that letter to her husband."

"That would have been cruel, Mary."

"I didn't do it. I thought of doing it, and wouldn't do it. But it would have served her right. I suppose she was always writing."

"She had written, but not quite like that," said Lord George. He was not altogether comfortable during this conversation.

"She writes lots of such letters, no doubt. You do then mean to go there again?"

"I think so. Of course I do not look upon her as being so utterly a castaway as you do."

"I believe her to be a heartless, vile, intriguing woman, who married an old

man without caring a straw for him, and who doesn't care how miserable she makes other people. And I think she is very—very ugly. She paints frightfully. Anybody can see it. And as for false hair—why it's nearly all false." Lady George certainly did not paint, and had not a shred of false hair about her. "Oh, George, if you do go, do be firm! You will be firm; will you not?"

"I shall go simply that this annoyance may be at an end."

"Of course you will tell her that I will never speak to her again. How could I? You would not wish it—would you?" In answer to this there was nothing for him to say. He would have wished that a certain amount of half-friendly intercourse should be carried on; but he could not ask her to do this. After a time he might perhaps be able to press on her the advantage of avoiding a scandal, but as yet he could not do even that. He had achieved more than he had a right to expect in obtaining her permission to call once more in Berkeley Square himself. After that they would soon be going down to Brotherton, and when they were there things might be allowed to settle themselves. Then she asked him another question. "You don't object to my going to Mrs. Jones's party on Thursday?"

The question was very sudden, so that he was almost startled. "It is a dance, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, a dance of course."

"No; I have no objection."

She had meant to ask him to reconsider his verdict against round dances, but she could hardly do so at this moment. She could not take advantage of her present strength to extract from him a privilege which under other circumstances he had denied to her. Were she to do so it would be as much as to declare that she meant to waltz because he had amused himself with Mrs. Houghton. Her mind was not at all that way given. But she did entertain an idea that something more of freedom should be awarded to her because her husband had given her cause of offence and had been forgiven. While he was still strong with that divine superiority which she had attributed to him, she had almost acknowledged to herself that he had a right to demand that she should be dull and decorous. But now that she had found him to be in the receipt of clandestine love-letters, it did seem that she might allow herself a little liberty. She had forgiven

him freely. She had really believed that, in spite of the letter, she herself was the woman he loved. She had said something to herself about men amusing themselves, and had told herself that though no woman could have written such a letter as that without disgracing herself altogether, a man might receive it, and even keep it in his pocket, without meaning very much harm. But the accident must, she thought, be held to absolve her from some part of the strictness of her obedience. She almost thought that she would waltz at Mrs. Jones's ball; perhaps not with Captain De Baron; perhaps not with much energy or with full enjoyment; but still sufficiently to disenthral herself. If possible she would say a word to her husband first. They were both going to a rather crowded affair at Lady Brabazon's before the night of Mrs. Jones's party. They had agreed that they would do little more than show themselves there. He was obliged to go to this special place, and he hated staying. But even at Lady Brabazon's she might find an opportunity of saying what she wished to say.

On that day she took him out in her brougham, and on her return home was alone all the afternoon till about five; and then who should come to her but Captain De Baron. No doubt they two had become very intimate. She could not at all have defined her reasons for liking him. She was quite sure of one thing—she was not in the least in love with him. But he was always gay, always good-humoured, always had plenty to say. He was the source of all the fun that ever came in her way; and fun was very dear to her. He was nice-looking and manly, and gentle withal. Why should she not have her friend? He would not write abominable letters, and ask her to say that she loved him! And yet she was aware that there was a danger. She knew that her husband was a little jealous. She knew that Augustus Mildmay was frightfully jealous. That odious creature Mrs. Houghton had made ever so many nasty little allusions to her and Jack. When his name was announced she almost wished that he had not come, but yet she received him very pleasantly. He immediately began about the Baroness Banmann. The baroness had on the previous evening made her way on to the platform at the Disabilities when Dr. Fleabody was lecturing, and Lady Selina was presiding, and had, to use Jack's own words, "Kicked up the most delightfu

bobbery that had ever been witnessed! She bundled poor old Lady Selina out of the chair."

"Nonsense!"

"So I am told—took the chair by the back and hoisted her out."

"Didn't they send for the police?"

"I suppose they did at last; but the American doctor was too many for her. The baroness strove to address the meeting; but Olivia Q. Fleabody has become a favourite, and carried the day. I am told that at last the bald-headed old gentleman took the baroness home in a cab. I'd have given a five-pound note to have been there. I think I must go some night and hear the doctor."

"I wouldn't go again for anything."

"You women are all so jealous of each other. Poor Lady Selina! I'm told she was very much shaken."

"How did you hear it all?"

"From Aunt Ju," said the captain. "Aunt Ju was there, of course. The baroness tried to fly into Aunt Ju's arms, but Aunt Ju seems to have retired."

Then the quarrel must have been made up between Captain De Baron and Miss Mildmay. That was the idea which at once came into Mary's head. He could hardly have seen Aunt Ju without seeing her niece at the same time. Perhaps it was all settled. Perhaps, after all, they would be married. It would be a pity, because she was not half nice enough for him. And then Mary doubted whether Captain De Baron as a married man would be nearly so pleasant as in his present condition. "I hope Miss Mildmay is none the worse," she said.

"A little shaken in her nerves."

"Was—Angusta Mildmay there?"

"Oh dear no. It is quite out of her line. She is not at all disposed to lay aside the feebleness of her sex and go into one of the learned professions. By-the-by, I am afraid you and she are not very good friends."

"What makes you say that, Captain De Baron?"

"But are you?"

"I don't know why you should enquire."

"It is natural to wish that one's own friends should be friends."

"Has Miss Mildmay said—anything about—me?"

"Not a word—nor you about her. And, therefore, I know that something is wrong."

"The last time I saw her I did not think

that Miss Mildmay was very happy," said Mary, in a low voice.

"Did she complain to you?" Mary had no answer ready for this question. She could not tell a lie easily, nor could she acknowledge the complaint which the lady had made, and had made so loudly. "I suppose she did complain," he said, "and I suppose I know the nature of her complaint."

"I cannot tell; though, of course, it was nothing to me."

"It is very much to me though. I wish, Lady George, you could bring yourself to tell me the truth." He paused, but she did not speak. "If it were as I fear, you must know how much I am implicated. I would not for the world that you should think I am behaving badly."

"You should not permit her to think so, Captain De Baron."

"She doesn't think so. She can't think so. I am not going to say a word against her. She and I have been dear friends, and there is no one—hardly anyone—for whom I have a greater regard. But I do protest to you, Lady George, that I have never spoken an untrue word to Angusta Mildmay in my life."

"I have not accused you."

"But has she? Of course it is a kind of thing that a man cannot talk about without great difficulty."

"Is it not a thing that a man should not talk about at all?"

"That is severe, Lady George; much more severe than I should have expected from your usual good nature. Had you told me that nothing had been said to you, there would have been an end of it. But I cannot bear to think that you should have been told that I had behaved badly, and that I should be unable to vindicate myself."

"Have you not been engaged to marry Miss Mildmay?"

"Never."

"Then why did you allow yourself to become so—so much to her?"

"Because I liked her. Because we were thrown together. Because the chances of things would have it so. Don't you know that that kind of thing is occurring every day? Of course, if a man were made up of wisdom and prudence and virtue and self-denial, this kind of thing wouldn't occur. But I don't think the world would be pleasanter if men were like that. Adelaide Houghton is Miss Mildmay's most intimate

friend, and Adelaide has always known that I couldn't marry." As soon as Mrs. Houghton's name was mentioned a dark frown came across Lady George's brow. Captain De Baron saw it, but did not as yet know anything of its true cause.

"Of course I am not going to judge between you," said Lady George, very gravely.

"But I want you to judge me. I want you of all the world to feel that I have not been a liar and a blackguard."

"Captain De Baron! how can you use such language?"

"Because I feel this very acutely. I do believe that Miss Mildmay has accused me to you. I do not wish to say a word against her. I would do anything in the world to protect her from the ill words of others. But I cannot bear that your mind should be poisoned against me. Will you believe me when I tell you that I have never said a word to Miss Mildmay which could possibly be taken as an offer of marriage?"

"I had rather give no opinion."

"Will you ask Adelaide?"

"No; certainly not." This she said with so much vehemence that he was thoroughly startled. "Mrs. Houghton is not among the number of my acquaintances."

"Why not? What is the matter?"

"I can give no explanation, and I had rather that no questions should be asked. But so it is."

"Has she offended Lord George?"

"Oh dear no; that is to say, I cannot tell you anything more about it. You will never see me in Berkeley Square again. And now, pray say no more about it."

"Poor Adelaide! Well; it does seem terrible that there should be such misunderstandings. She knows nothing about it. I was with her this morning, and she was speaking of you with the greatest affection." Mary struggled hard to appear indifferent to all this, but struggled in vain. She could not restrain herself from displaying her feeling. "May I not ask any further questions?"

"No, Captain De Baron."

"Nor hope that I may be a peacemaker between you?"

"Certainly not. I wish you wouldn't talk about it any more."

"I certainly will not if it offends you. I would not offend you for all the world. When you came up to town, Lady George,

a few months ago, there were three or four of us that soon became such excellent friends! And now it seems that everything has gone wrong. I hope we need not quarrel—you and I?"

"I know no reason why we should."

"I have liked you so much. I am sure you have known that. Sometimes one does come across a person that one really likes; but it is so seldom."

"I try to like everybody," she said.

"I don't do that. I fear that at first starting I try to dislike everybody. I think it is natural to hate people the first time you see them."

"Did you hate me?" she asked, laughing.

"Oh, horribly, for two minutes. Then you laughed, or cried, or sneezed, or did something in a manner that I liked, and I saw at once that you were the most charming human being in the world."

When a young man tells a young woman that she is the most charming human being in the world, he is certainly using peculiar language. In most cases the young man would be supposed to be making love to the young woman. Mary, however, knew very well that Captain De Baron was not making love to her. There seemed to be an understanding that all manner of things should be said between them, and that yet they should mean nothing. But, nevertheless, she felt that the language which this man had used to her would be offensive to her husband if he knew that it had been used when they two were alone together. Had it been said before a roomful of people it would not have mattered. And yet she could not rebuke him. She could not even look displeased. She had believed all that he had said to her about Augusta Mildmay, and was glad to believe it. She liked him so much, that she would have spoken to him as to a brother of the nature of her quarrel with Mrs. Houghton, only that, even to a brother, she would not have mentioned her husband's folly. When he spoke of her crying, or laughing, or sneezing, she liked the little attempt at drollery. She liked to know that he had found her charming. Where is the woman who does not wish to charm, and is not proud to think that she has succeeded with those whom she most likes? She could not rebuke him. She could not even avoid letting him see that she was pleased. "You have a dozen human beings in the world who are the most

delightful," she said, "and another dozen who are the most odious."

"Quite a dozen who are the most odious, but only one, Lady George, who is the most delightful." He had hardly said this when the door opened and Lord George entered the room. Lord George was not a clever hypocrite. If he disliked a person he soon showed his dislike in his manner. It was very clear to both of them on the present occasion that he did not like the presence of Captain De Baron. He looked very gloomy, almost angry, and after speaking hardly more than a single word to his wife's guest, he stood silent and awkward, leaning against the mantelpiece. "What do you think Captain De Baron tells me?" Mary said, trying, but not very successfully, to speak with natural ease.

"I don't in the least know."

"There has been such a scene at the Women's Institute! That baroness made a dreadful attack on poor Lady Selina Protest."

"She and the American female doctor were talking against each other from the same platform, at the same time," said De Baron.

"Very disgraceful!" said Lord George. "But then the whole thing is disgraceful, and always was. I should think Lord Plausible must be thoroughly ashamed of his sister." Lady Selina was sister to the Earl of Plausible, but, as all the world knew, was not on speaking terms with her brother.

"I suppose that unfortunate German lady will be put in prison," said Lady George.

"I only trust she may never be able to put her foot into your house again."

Then there was a pause. He was apparently so cross that conversation seemed to be impossible. The captain would have gone away at once had he been able to escape suddenly. But there are times when it is very hard to get out of a room, at which a sudden retreat would imply a conviction that something was wrong. It seemed to him that for her sake he was bound to remain a few minutes longer. "When do you go down to Brothershire?" he asked.

"About the 7th of July," said Mary.

"Or probably earlier," said Lord George; at which his wife looked up to him, but without making any remark.

"I shall be down at my cousin's place some day in August," De Baron said.

Lord George frowned more heavily than ever. "Mr. De Baron is going to have a large gathering of people about the end of the month."

"Oh, indeed," said Mary.

"The Houghtons will be there." Then Mary also frowned. "And I have an idea that your brother, Lord George, has half promised to be one of the party."

"I know nothing at all about it."

"My cousin was up in town yesterday with the Houghtons. Good-bye, Lady George; I shan't be at Lady Brabazon's, because she has forgotten to invite me, but I suppose I shall see you at Mrs. Montacute Jones's?"

"I shall certainly be at Mrs. Montacute Jones's," said Mary, trying to speak cheerfully.

The bell was rung, and the door was closed, and then the husband and wife were together. "A dreadful communication has just been made to me," said Lord George in a most solemn and funereal voice; "a most dreadful communication!"

SINGULAR WAGERS.

SOME curious wagers have already been noted in these pages,* but the subject is not to be exhausted in a single chapter, for of making wagers there is no end. An Englishman naturally inclines to settle a disputed point at the hazard of his person or his purse; and although it was long since written,

Cunning old stagers
Say, fools for arguments use wagers,

it does not follow that they are out of date or that only fools do use them. Gibson, the sculptor, when asked to pronounce judgment on a brother-artist's model for a new work, walked round and round it with a slow, deliberate step, and after ten minutes' silent examination of the figure, said, "Yes, yes, indeed it does you great credit, sir. Very good, indeed—yes—if you put that into pure Carrara, and send it to the Royal Academy—yes, sir—I will make you a bet that it will be broken to pieces for paving-stones!" Nor is it so very long ago since a popular novelist issued the following challenge: "If any statesman, or practical lawyer, or compiler of law-books, who either by word

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 8, p. 389, "Wagers."

of mouth, or in print, has told the public copyright is a monopoly, dares risk his money or his brains, I will meet him on liberal terms; I will bet him a hundred and fifty pounds to fifty, copyright is not a monopoly, and is property. All I claim is capable referees—let us say, Lord Selborne, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, if those gentlemen will consent to act."

Ben Jonson made no such stipulation when he wagered that he weighed twenty stone. Capable referees might have insisted upon his emptying his pockets before he scaled, and proved the truth of his own aphorism, that poets, though divine, are men; for, although Big Ben had plenty of hard words and bitter rhymes for false gamblers, when he found himself unequal to winning his bet fairly, he invoked the aid of Arthur Squib to cheat the fair regent of the scale, writing,

I lack two pounds;
That's six in silver. Now within the cockpit
Stinketh my credit, if into the pocket
It do not come; one piece I have in store,
Lend me, dear Arthur, for a week, five more,
And you shall make me good in weight and fashion.

More legitimate was the ruse of Old Grecian, sometime cook at Slaughter's Club, when pitted against Lambert of Covent Garden Theatre, in a cooking-match. Old Grecian had long been vexed at hearing the steak-cooking in the Covent Garden scene-room cried up by everybody. One day, Lambert told him that if he would come to the theatre, he would give him a lesson in the art. The worthy cook was mighty wrath at the impudence of a scene-painter pretending he could teach him, the godson of Centlevre, a child of the queen's privy kitchen, her majesty's yeoman of the mouth, the favourite pupil of her majesty's master-cook, Patrick Lamb. "Challenge him to a broiling-match!" said Painter Sim, patting the angry old fellow's bald pate. "Will you dare try your skill, Mr. Lambert?" cried he. "What man dares, I dare; your place against mine!" was the amateur's reply. The match came off the same afternoon at Slaughter's, in the presence of a goodly throng of "steaks" and Slaughter's men, Hogarth being one of the number. Two umpires were chosen, and they decreed there should be three "heats" with pound cuts. To work the rivals went. Lambert handled the tongs like a master of the craft, and brought down the house. Seizing the poker, the exasperated cook gave the fire, already fierce enough to

roast a salamander, such a savage poke, that Lambert jumped back in dismay, and, shaking Old Grecian by the hand, exclaimed, "I yield the palm of victory, thou man of fat, more worthy of a golden chain than Wolsey's mighty cook!"

The turf dictum—you cannot win when you cannot lose—would have been incomprehensible to a certain Yankee pedlar. Finding all his eloquence of no avail to persuade a Vermont farmer into buying a dozen genuine razor-strops for a couple of dollars, he said, "Well, squire, look here; I'll bet you five dollars that if you'll make me an offer for them 'ere strops, we'll hev a trade yet." "Done!" said the farmer, putting down the five dollars. "I'll give you ten cents for them." "They're your'n, mister," said the pedlar, as he quietly pocketed the stakes; "but I calculate a joke's a joke, and if you don't want them strops, I'll trade back." "You're not such a bad chap, after all," replied the unsuspecting victim; "take your strops and give me the money." The Yankee laid fast hold of the despised goods, and put ten cents into the Vermonter's outstretched hand, saying, "A trade's a trade, a bet is a bet; next time you trade with them ten cents, squire, don't you speculate in razor-strops!" The shrewd fellow was a defter hand at fleecing than the Illinois girl who undertook to shear thirteen sheep in two hours, and did it too; but managed so as not to leave a whole ear or tail among them.

When Mr. Penn matched himself against the Hon. Danvers Butler, to walk from Hyde Park Corner to Hammersmith for a wager of one hundred guineas, somebody remarked to the Duchess of Gordon that it was a pity a young fellow like Penn should always be playing some absurd prank. "Yes," the old lady retorted; "it is a pity, but why don't you advise him better? Penn seems to be a pen that everybody cuts and nobody mends." What would the free-spoken dame have said to a couple of clergymen running a race on a Sunday for a crown aside? Such a thing has been done. Soon after Swift received his deanery, he dined on Sunday with Dr. Raymond of Trim, whose house was about two hundred yards from his church. The bell had nearly done ringing for evening service, when Swift exclaimed, "Raymond, I'll lay you a crown I begin prayers before you." "Done!" said the doctor, and off they ran. Raymond reached the doors first, and, entering the church, made for

the reading-desk at as quick a walking pace as his sense of propriety permitted. Swift did not slacken speed in the least, but ran up the aisle, passed his opponent, and, without stopping to put on a surplice or open the prayer-book, began the Liturgy and went on with the service sufficiently long to win the wager.

A feat, in better keeping with its performer's profession, was accomplished some thirty years ago by John Sloman, actor, singer, and manager of the five theatres constituting the Kent circuit; who, while playing at Canterbury, made a wager that he would act Tom in the interlude of *Intrigue* and sing a comic song in three of his theatres on the same night, between the hours of seven and eleven. The theatres selected were those of Canterbury, Rochester, and Maidstone, between which places there was at that time no railway communication. On the appointed evening the curtain rose at Canterbury exactly at seven; Sloman went through his part and sang a comic song, then jumped into a postchaise, and made for Rochester as fast as four good horses could take him, reaching that town in an hour and forty minutes—tolerably good work considering the distance was twenty-six miles, and he was obliged to halt at Sittingbourne to change horses. Part of the company had been sent on before, and they were ready to ring-up as soon as the manager arrived. The interlude was played, the song sung, and Sloman posted to Maidstone, eight miles, in forty-four minutes, to be welcomed by a house crowded to the ceiling, and win his hundred pounds by getting through his task with fifteen minutes to spare.

Frédéric Lemaitre, the spoilt child of the Parisian playgoer public, once put its good nature to too severe a test. He had wagered that he would take off his wig in the middle of a pathetic scene without exciting the disapprobation of the audience. He won his bet; but, not content with that, the reckless comedian took his wig off a second time and used it as a handkerchief; and this failing to bring any sign of disapproval from the front, he walked to the prompter's box, sat down before it, and offered that functionary a pinch of snuff. This was too much, and the impertinent actor was greeted with a storm of hisses, which grew into something like a riot when he refused to apologise, and Lemaitre was marched off the stage by the police. Three nights

afterwards he reappeared on the stage, to be received with groans, which he acknowledged, as soon as the uproar ceased, by thanking the audience for the extreme urbanity of their reception.

Watching some native carpenters at Agra making packing-cases, Colonel Amberton was impelled to tell the Hindoo superintendent that one English carpenter would turn out more work in a day than any ten of his men. The superintendent doubted; the colonel insisted. Upon making enquiry he discovered an artilleryman who had been a carpenter before he became a soldier, and next day matched him against ten of the native workmen. The boards of which the packing-cases were made were in the rough, had to be cut and split to dimensions, and nailed together. The Hindoos worked their hardest; but what with their own awkwardness and the clumsiness of their tools, they had no chance against the Englishman and his good Sheffield saws. When the hour struck for closing the shop, the artilleryman was three boxes ahead of his ten competitors.

Some merit attached to the victor in such a contest, which is more than can be said regarding Giacomo Sporeogambi, who, an American journalist says, "fills the trump of sounding fame with two thousand one hundred and sixty mortal and immortal yards of macaroni, consumed in pursuance of a wager that he could engulf more of that Italian paste than a rival. It was served in dishes, each containing thirty-five yards of macaroni, details of accessories and cooking being left to the discretion of the contestants. At the end of the first mile—time, twenty-two minutes—Signor Sporeogambi was two hundred and fourteen yards ahead, whereon he rested on his fork till his rival was within forty yards of him, then started off again with a magnificent spurt of four hundred yards; at the end of which Signor Bevere gasped apoplectically that he was used—and filled—up." A negro, named Bill Jackson, rejoiced in the reputation of being able to dispose of more food in a given time than any other darky in Brooklyn. A short time ago, however, a black, named Port, moved into the city, and, hearing of Jackson's renown, at once sought him out and bet him five dollars that his son Sam, aged fifteen, was a bigger eater. The match came off at Port's house, in the presence of as many coloured folk as could be crowded into the place.

On a table in the centre of the room was a heap of provisions, and by its side stood a tall thin man and a short fat boy. The referee, picking up two loaves, took a bite out of each and handed them to the judges for comparison. Then one loaf was given to Jackson and the other to Sam Port, who finished his in one minute and forty-five seconds, beating Bill by twenty seconds, amid the cheers of the darkies. Two lengths of Cologne sausages, weighing a pound each, were then handed to the gormandisers. Jackson disposed of his sausage in nine minutes, the boy taking two minutes longer. After drinking several glasses of beer, and eating a dozen cold boiled potatoes and half-a-dozen eggs apiece, the contestants took a ten-minutes' rest. When the match recommenced each received a pound of cold beef. Jackson showed signs of weakening, finding it so difficult to dispose of the dozen buns that followed hard upon the beef, that he asked for an hour's adjournment; but, the other side objecting, the referee ordered the match to proceed, and, while endeavouring to eat some ham, Jackson was seized with a fit of violent coughing and gave in, leaving Sam Port to be hailed as the champion eater of Brooklyn city.

It is astonishing what mad things men will do for the sake of winning a paltry wager. Three men of Indiana walked half a mile barefooted through the snow, under agreement that the one who suffered most damage was to buy a pound of tobacco for the one who suffered least; the result being that the toes of all three had to be amputated. Not quite so unlooked-for a catastrophe as befell the Alabama man, who, undertaking to swim across a river, carrying two small fishes in his mouth, let one escape from between his teeth to stick in his throat and choke him.

Sometime about 1724, Austin, a noted maker of fireworks and ink-powder, wagered that he would cook a big pudding ten feet below the surface of the Thames. He put his pudding into a large tin vessel and enclosed that in a sackful of lime, and sunk sack, pan, and pudding at the required depth, near Rotherhithe. In two hours and a half the pudding was hauled out of the water, and eaten with much liking, its only fault being that it was a trifle over-baked. Oldys says: "There was above a hundred pounds won in this experiment." A more comical experiment still came off, with tremendous success, at

Springfield, Illinois, on the eve of Independence Day. One of a party of roysterers offered to bet drinks round that he would, within five minutes, make every rooster in Springfield crow. The wager was promptly accepted, and as promptly decided. Leaping upon a fence, slapping his thighs, and elevating his mouth, chanticleer's mimic gave forth a "cock-a-doodle-do-o-o!" that reverberated through every nook and corner of the town, but without eliciting any response. A repetition of the performance brought a solitary reply from some remote suburb, which was taken up in different directions, and before the stipulated five minutes expired enough crowing was heard to satisfy the merry listeners that every cock in the town had contributed his fair quota to the din. But the fun did not end there: as soon as the crowing commenced all the boys of Springfield, verily believing the Fourth had dawned, leaped out of their beds, hurried on their clothes, and rushed pell-mell into the streets to rouse the astonished citizens with guns, pistols, and fireworks, after the manner of young America upon the national holiday.

An odd case arising out of a bet once came before the Shrewsbury county court, the subject of the wager being the very judge who had to try the cause. A man named James had put down a sovereign to back his assertion that the county court judge was not a judge in equity. One Lloyd covered the money, which was handed over to a farmer, who consented to act as stakeholder. This worthy told the court "it wor consulted and brought in that yer wanna a equiter judge, so I gen the money to James." Lloyd, believing the decision to be wrong, sued the farmer for his sovereign. The judge informed the parties that he was a common-law judge, a judge in bankruptcy, and a judge in equity; but decided in favour of the defendant—a decision one can hardly reconcile with one's notions of equity. The Shrewsbury judge took advantage of the opportunity to express his opinion that such transactions ought to be declared criminal. His horror of betting would have been incomprehensible to his Kentuckian brother, who had to decide whether thimble-rigging was a game of skill or a dead swindle, and whether the plaintiff then before the court had been defrauded of his money or had lost it fairly. To help judge and jury out

of the difficulty, the plaintiff's counsel undertook to give ocular demonstration of how the thing was done. Producing three innocent-looking cups and "the little joker," he thus addressed the court: "The defendant, your honour, placing these three cups on his knee, thus, shifted them so, offering to bet my client that he could not tell under which cup the little joker, meaning this ball, was; with the intention of defrauding my client. For example: When I raise the cup so, your honour supposes you see the ball——" "Suppose I see!" interrupted the judge. "Why any fool can see where it is. There ain't no defrauding there!" "Perhaps your honour would like to go a v—a five-dollar note—upon it?" insinuated counsel with a bland smile. "Go a v! yes, and double it too!" cried the excited court. "It's under the middle cup." "I'll go a v upon that!" said the foreman. "And I!" chorussed the jurymen. The lawyer secured the stakes. His honour cried, "Up!" and up went the thimble, but no little joker was to be seen. The dubious point was settled forthwith, the jury to a man agreeing with the judge that thimble-rigging was "the darnedest kind o' defrauding out." Verdict for the plaintiff.

THE SNOWDROP BULB.

Of its crown of glittering whiteness, of its clustering leaves bereft,
Unwarned by sun, unfed by dew, the dry brown bulb is left,
Dull and inert, through summer's glow, and autumn's bounteous power,
Of all the golden year to know but its own little hour.
Lay it by in dust and darkness, the poor unlovely thing,
To wait, uncared for and unseen, the summons of the Spring.
Nay, Nature knows no idleness; we wonder, doubt, suspect,
But find no flaw in all His work, the Almighty Architect;
No useless item can exist in all His hand has wrought.
As the heart has aye its pulsing blood, the brain its ceaseless thought,
So in each tree, and flower, and root, through the seasons one by one,
Unseen and silent all the while, the appointed task is done.
Hid in the little bulb you hold, calyx and petal shape,
The soft green hood forms ready from its prison to escape;
The tender lines, the graceful curve, from day to day they grow,
Waiting the warm, strong welcome, of the mould beneath the snow,
When, at its aid, to life and light, the tiny stem will burst,
And give the winter world its flower, the fairest and the first.

What use o'er storied wisdom of learnèd tomes to pore,
Why seek at need, for help to faith, at founts of earthly lore,
In Nature's yearly miracle, God writes His lesson plain,
Though heats may parch, and frosts may sear, each frail flower lives again,
And weary heart, and head inert, and dull unanswering mind,
In the story of the Snowdrop Bulb, may hope and comfort find.

BESSIE'S LITTLE BLACK BOW.

A STORY.

"No, George, not under any circumstances. Don't speak or think of it again."

"I suppose you're quite sure of the old boy's money, and so——"

"If I were a man, George, I should hit you;" and the tiny white hand crumples itself up into such a delicious little caricature of a fist, as it would be quite a luxury to be pummeled by. "But then," she continues philosophically, "if I was a man, you wouldn't dare say such things."

"If you were a man, I don't suppose I should want to marry you."

"You don't want to marry me now, George. Not one bit."

"Don't I, though! Want it awfully. Now, look here. 'Pon my soul——"

"You want nothing of the kind. You want to marry Uncle Ralph's money; and how you can come talking of such things, with him, poor man, lying dead upstairs, I can't think."

"Oh bother! Besides—— You know it was just what he wanted."

"I'm sorry for it. Though I don't suppose it matters much now."

"Ah, but it does though. Now look here, Bessie. Once more——"

"Once and for all, George. No."

"Oh, very well, then I'm off. Good-bye. You won't see me again for a time, Bessie."

"You'll be here for—for the funeral, of course?"

"Funeral be hanged!"

"George!"

"Oh yes; George! I daresay. Shocking, isn't it? No, thank you, ma'am. I had quite enough bother with the old bear while he was alive. I suppose I must come to hear the will read, all the same."

"If you can come to one you can come to the other. You were the only one of Uncle Ralph's relations he——"

"Was ever decently civil to? More shame for him. And it wasn't easy work

either, I can tell you. But it's all over now, thank goodness, and if the old boy has only done the right thing, why—I say, now Bessie, just think it over once more. Hallo!"

Which latter exclamation means that the speaker, who, during the former portion of his speech has been standing sullenly over the fire, kicking with the heel of his shooting-boot at the big lumps of coal piled up in quite novel profusion in the dead miser's parlour grate, has in this closing appeal turned round to face the person addressed. Thereby discovering that that highly disgusted little person has quietly taken measures for putting a stop to this distasteful discussion—has, in short, gathered up her work and retreated from the field.

George growls out a curse and springs after her. But on the very threshold of the parlour door he finds himself face to face with another member of the bereaved household, and pulls up with remarkable abruptness.

It may possibly be taken for granted that Mr. George Norton is more or less familiar with that particularly wise saw which, in homely but forcible language, points out the advisability of being "off with the old love before you are on with the new." But if so, he most certainly considered that in this one particular instance the wisdom of our ancestors was at fault. With Miss Julia Collette, the handsome daughter of dead Ralph Netherston's ancient harridan of a housekeeper, and prime favourite for at least three or four days in every week of the defunct miser himself, George has been in love, or has so assured her, for a good many years past. Next to his own prospect of the inheritance, there can be, he thinks, none more hopeful than that of Miss Julia Collette. Miss Julia Collette being equally of opinion that, next to her own chance, there is none so hopeful as his, the engagement has commended itself equally to the highest feelings of both. It was not to be dreamed of that that engagement should be prematurely broken off, merely because one of the parties had found it desirable to secure, if possible, a second string to his bow.

So George Norton and Julia Collette return together into the parlour, through the closed door of which comes for some minutes the sound of pretty high words. They calm down, however, gradually, and by-and-by George reappears, flings his hat

jauntily on one side of his head, sticks his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat, and swaggers out into the street, whistling cheerily.

Old Mrs. Collette hearing subsequently from her dutiful daughter the substance of the interview, opines—and sees no reason for concealing her opinion—that her dutiful daughter has been a fool.

"Don't you be a fool yourself, mother," is the dutiful daughter's reply. "There wasn't no witnesses, was there? Very well then."

And like an echo—Irish but accurate—comes from the far end of the street the chuckling self-gratulation of the other lover.

"Safe enough there, I think, anyway. Not much breach of promise to be got out of that."

Little Mr. Lewis, the dead man's lawyer for the last thirty years, and—oddly enough, considering the character of this his principal and most lucrative client—a living protest against the scandalous prejudice which maintains that no attorney can possibly be an honest man, opines, on the other hand, that Mr. George has been a fool and a sad one. But he does not impart his opinion to anyone. Nor has it been formed on the score of any engagement, with or without witnesser, to Miss Julia Collette or anyone else. Mr. Lewis's opinion is based upon what he learns from Bessie next morning, as to George's intention of absenting himself from the funeral. But Mr. Lewis is a discreet man, much bound by rules of professional confidence, and by no means imbued with sufficient personal interest in Mr. George Norton to subject him, in this instance, to the smallest temptation to any breach of it.

"Very good, my dear young lady," he replies. "Mr. George is of course the best judge of his own interests, or rather I should say of his own—ahem!—obligations."

And then Mr. Lewis pauses a moment, taking himself somewhat to task for having said too much. After which he pauses a moment or two longer, struggling, somewhat feebly, with a strong desire to say more. Our pretty Bessie has made her way into the old blue bag which serves the little attorney for a heart, as she is rather in the habit of making her way into articles of that kind; and professional confidence has to content itself with a compromise.

"You will attend, Miss Bessie, of course?"

"There would not be anything out of the way in my doing so, would there?"

"Oh dear no! Certainly not. Quite the correct thing, miss, I assure you."

And then the little attorney sets his head on one side, and hems, and clears his throat, and looks at Bessie as though he would very much like to say something more, if professional confidence could only be induced to allow of his so doing.

Bessie relieves his difficulty by herself consulting him. She is not without some liking for the little man, who has been very civil to her, and whose age and official relation give him a sort of semi-paternal position occupied by no one else.

"I was thinking, Mr. Lewis—you know I am not quite a millionaire—and I'm really afraid I can't afford to buy mourning."

"No, no. Certainly not. Ha, ha, ha! I mean—ahem! Not at all, not at all!"

"You see this old black dress is my only one. Would that be mourning enough?"

"Mourning—humph—mourning? No. I should say certainly not. Not mourning at all. Ha, ha!—That is to say—ahem! I really beg your pardon. Quite enough, my dear young lady, quite enough, I assure you."

"I have put a crape bow on my bonnet. That is mourning you know."

"Yes; that is mourning certainly. But still—ahem! Quite right, my dear Miss Bessie; you couldn't do better, I assure you. Ha, ha! I mean—ahem—good-day, Miss Bessie, good-day."

And so the little man hustles himself, as it were, out of the house, before the struggle with professional confidence shall have led to worse results. Outside in the darkened hall, he stops for a moment, smites his little thigh jovially, and breaks out again into chuckling Ha, ha, ha! then suddenly recollects where he is, checks himself severely, and walks away down the street with a countenance so preternaturally solemn, that worthy old Mr. Podgkison, the stoutest and most litigious, if not the oldest inhabitant of Sowerton, at once concludes that the great case of Podgkison v. The Local Board of Health has come to a premature and unfavourable termination, and very nearly has a fit of apoplexy on the spot.

Finally the important day comes round, and it is clear that, despite the determination of his favourite nephew, old Ralph Netherston will have a well-attended

funeral. Little Mr. Lewis has written—in compliance, as his epistles state, with the express injunctions of the deceased—to each separate member of the family, requesting his or her individual attendance on the mournfully festive occasion. And, with the striking exceptions of the favourite nephew and of Dick, the only son, every member of the family duly puts in an appearance. George Norton's absence is, of course, deliberate; as is also the flaunting defiance of the striped trousers and bright blue tie in which he lounges on the platform, cigar in mouth, telling off uncles and aunts and cousins to the third and fourth remove, as they alight in little black flocks, like provident rooks at an autumn sowing. Poor Dick has had no invitation. It is a good many years now since that headstrong youth, undutifully resisting the paternal command to break off instantly an unauthorised engagement with a penniless member of his own family, was turned by his justly indignant parent "neck and crop" out of the paternal mansion, within the walls of which he was forbidden ever to show his undutiful face again. Since that time nothing has been heard of him; or so, at least, it was believed by Bessie, who, a day or two after the old man's death, was not a little surprised at being told by Mr. Lewis, with an infinity of nods and winks and chuckles, that he himself had not long since had a letter from the exile. Why Bessie should start so at the news, or flush up with such a delicious little rose-tint to the very roots of her golden-brown hair, I can no more tell you than I can explain why, the very instant the little lawyer had departed, she should rush like a little whirlwind to her own particular room, fling herself on her knees by the little white bedside, and sob and laugh and pray all in a breath.

One thing, however, is clear: Mr. Lewis knew Dick's address, and might have written to invite him to the funeral if he had pleased. However, "Atlantic Ocean or elsewhere" is rather a vague address—too vague, perhaps, Mr. Lewis may have considered, for any practical purpose of correspondence.

Somehow, however, the good little attorney seems very anxious that, even without an invitation, every chance shall be given him of arriving in time. As sole executor and only man of business of the deceased, he has begun by appointing for the old man's funeral the latest possible

hour of the latest possible day. And even now that that hour has come, he shows a disposition to protract the preliminary ceremonies, which, combined with a constant flitting to and fro between the Shipping News of The Times, and that particular window of the grim old dining-room which commands the best view of the road from the railway station, aggravates not a little the natural impatience of the bereaved company to get, as one of the more plain-spoken of its female members puts it, "the old gentleman buried and done with, and come to the real business, my dear—the will, you know."

The bereaved company begins to murmur, and it is a formidable company, numerically and otherwise. Mr. and Mrs. Goodchild have an odour of sanctity about them which, even without the brilliantly black broadcloth that envelopes the one, or the fathomless depths of crape that surge round the other, should surely impress any common attorney with respect and awe. Mr. Samuel Netherston is as dark as his brother-in-law. Not quite so shiny. It is sanctity only, and that only of the one especial type, that can put the true gloss upon coat and vest and pantaloons; a sort of modern and strictly Protestant development, probably, of that inward shining which, in the old Popish days, would seem to have broken out in aureoles a little higher up. Mr. S. Netherston has no claims of this kind, and his garments shine not. But he is reported to be as rich as was the dead man himself. And if that be not a title to respect, I should like to know what is.

Then there is Mr. Serjeant Netherston, a terrible fellow with a timid witness; and Dr. Netherston, the medical light of Puddleton in the Black Country, whose presence here ten days ago would have obviated—so at least little Mrs. Netherston is fully convinced—all occasion for any mournful gathering now. And there is the Hon. Joshua G. Crabshells, of Utica, N.Y., popularly supposed to have been in more oil and other swindles than any other man in the United States, and carrying weight accordingly. And there are—well, some twenty or thirty more; all owning some degree of relationship to the dead man upstairs; and all under the clear conviction that if, as the letter of pressing invitation would seem to imply, "marks of respect" are advisable, they had better be as marked as possible; and

all, therefore, drowned to the hat-roof and topmost bonnet-ribbon in symbols of deepest woe.

If it were conceivable that an attorney and an executor could feel hilarious on so solemn and serious an occasion, one would almost imagine that little Mr. Lewis, as he takes stock of the funereal array, is laughing horribly in his own little black sleeve. And even though this is of course impossible, a singular presentiment of all not being quite as it should be, seems for the moment to take possession of the assembly, as each becomes in turn aware of the presence of the rest, and awakes to the delusive nature of the hope that the little attorney's very pressing and personal invitation may have been addressed to him alone. By the time the party is complete, the average length of its general countenance has increased by at least fifty per cent.

Mr. Joshua G. Crabshells, indeed, goes even farther in his reactionary sentiments.

"Darn me!" says that intelligent citizen, searching diligently as he speaks in the pockets of his swallow-tailed coat of state for a fresh supply of toothpicks, "darn me, ef I don't believe the ole fox hes jest bin playing 'possum with the hull lot of us."

The irreverent suggestion, however, is promptly frowned down. Mr. Goodchild, and Mr. Samuel in particular, feel strongly that to hint at any trick having been played upon personages of their importance, is to prejudice the future condition of the deceased in a way quite unjustifiable. Fortunately, at this moment, Mr. Lewis seems finally to abandon the idea of further delay. The smothered shuffle of hushed but heavy-laden feet is heard in the hall, the coffin with its velvet draperies issues from the door, and the sombre procession, assiduously marshalled by the local undertaker, follows in a long train two by two; which undignified mode of procedure is a fresh grievance to most of the party, the more practical of whom, however, console themselves with the reflection, that there will be the more left to divide. Mr. Lewis, who brings up the rear, with pretty Bessie in her plain everyday gown, and the solitary little mourning badge upon her bonnet, explains as he goes that this procession is according to the deceased's especial command.

So the profound respect and esteem in which the dead miser's name is held by his entire family, is duly advertised in this

most striking manner all through the thriving town of Sowerton, to the bright new cemetery at the farther end. And Sowerton is much edified, and comments audibly and exasperatingly.

And so the ceremony comes at length to an end, and the disconsolate family—who have somehow managed to get back, with a really marvellous rapidity, over the ground they have just traversed in the opposite direction with such mournful deliberation—are all assembled once more in the grim old parlour, where for the present the interest centres breathlessly upon little lawyer Lewis and his big blue bag.

So breathlessly, that no one seems to notice the intrusion of a good-looking stranger, with bronzed face and big curly brown beard, who has somehow slipped quietly in with the rest, and is now sitting motionless in an obscure corner, quite out of range of the twenty or thirty pairs of eyes, all focussed just now upon the all-important blue bag. No one, that is to say, of any sort of consequence. Our Bessie has seen him. Saw him first some time ago now, just as the funeral congregation broke up at the anxiously expected signal of the last "Amen," and gives such a startled jump, that little Mr. Lewis promptly abandons the knotty point of law on which his thoughts have been engaged, and looks eagerly round for its cause. Discovering it, the reflections induced by the discovery put the knotty point of law out of his head altogether. Reflections, apparently, of a somewhat complex character, for even as he at length proceeds to open the will, he shakes his head with an air of final negation, and simultaneously stops a rising chuckle with a huge pinch of snuff.

And then comes at last the reading of Ralph Netherston's last will and testament.

It is not what the penny-a-liners call a "lengthy" document—consists, in fact, only of one single side of foolscap paper; and its first appearance at once impresses upon the more astute among the audience the conviction that, "whoever gets it, will get it all." Whoever may be disappointed, the good fortune of the one fortunate legatee will be unalloyed by anything in the shape of a long string of legacies to other people.

Naturally this consideration tends to heighten not a little the interest with which the document is anticipated. Nor is that interest lessened by the fact that

the all-important document is dated no farther back than the very day before the testator's death. The excitement becomes almost solemn in its intensity, the only sound in the well-filled room being the tap-tapping of a silver-headed cane against the teeth of Mr. George Norton, who in his striped trousers and blue tie has lounged in among his sombre-hued relations, much to their bescaudalment and disgust.

A horrible thought runs simultaneously through the breast of almost everyone present.

What if this outrageous young man were to be—

Hush!!

Ten minutes more, and it is over, and the outrageous young man, springing up from the sofa, against the end of which he has been lounging in a gracefully *dégage* manner, smites his hand upon his thigh and bursts into a loud guffaw.

"Blessed if it don't all come to me after all. Ha, ha, ha!"

And, in truth, the will has proved as remarkable as it is short. Four-fifths of its not extravagant length has been taken up by a hurried résumé of the cynical old testator's professed doubts as to which of his many relations has loved him most, or deserved best at his hands. The solitary bequest is contained in about a couple of lines, and simply conveys the old man's entire property to that one among them, "who shall have attended my funeral with the least outward display of mourning!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Blessed if it don't come to me after all." And shocking as is the sound of that boisterous exultation in the ears of all present, the dread conviction forces itself upon them all, that there is only too much ground for it.

Little lawyer Lewis, however, is of a different opinion.

"No, Mr. George," he says quietly, stilling for a moment as he speaks the rising storm of general protest. "No, Mr. George, it does not come to you."

"The devil it don't! Who else then? I don't think there's anybody here with much less mourning about them than I have."

"No, Mr. George. So I am sorry to see."

"I don't doubt it, you canting old humbug. But you're done this time anyway. The will says the one who has on the least mourning. Don't it?"

"Not quite, Mr. George."

"Eh?"

"The will says, the one who shall attend the funeral with the least mourning. I don't think I saw you at the funeral, Mr. George?"

Mr. Peter Goodchild opines, that never in his life has he heard so terrible a blasphemy as breaks from George Norton's lips, at this unanswerable demolition of his newly-raised hopes. If he had only taken Bessie's advice! But he hasn't, and no amount of swearing will avail him now.

And then, for a few moments, all sit and look one at another. Some of the ladies even go so far as to make little furtive clutches at the more conspicuously mournful portions of their own attire, in the vain hope of reducing its too clamorous woe. Others, detecting them in this surreptitious proceeding, do not scruple to express aloud their reprobation of this mean and underhand proceeding. The situation is exciting. In a very few minutes more complications may possibly arise, of a somewhat serious character.

Lawyer Lewis brings matters to a crisis, and with a decision which looks as though he were as little displeased as surprised at the dénouement, which has so startled the rest of the company.

"I don't think there can be much doubt as to who the real legatee is under the will you have just heard read, ladies and gentlemen. Miss Daryl, allow me to wish you joy."

Thereon arises on a small scale no bad imitation of the Tower of Babel. Poor Bessie's faint little startled "Me!" is scarcely audible even in her own pretty little ears, amid the chime of semi-articulate protest which breaks out on all sides.

Little Bessie Daryl! Insignificant little Bessie Daryl! Shabby little Bessie Daryl! whom not one of the family has deigned so much as to notice, in her dingy old frock and the fashionless old straw bonnet, with the one poor little crape bow upon it! Bessie Daryl! Absurd! The old man must have been out of his mind. The will is monstrous, idiotic, cannot possibly be allowed to stand a single moment.

Mr. Serjeant Netherston puts the inarticulate feeling of the assembly into articulate words.

"Mr.—ahem!—Lewis; this will is preposterous. I shall dispute it."

"Very good, Mr. Serjeant. You know best, sir, of course. As you please."

"I shall upset it, sir; upset it altogether."

"Just as you please, Mr. Serjeant. There being no other will, as I can personally avouch, of course you know how the property will go in such case."

"To the next of kin, sir, I presume?"

"To the heir-at-law, Mr. Serjeant. The heir-at-law."

"And pray who may he be?"

"Well, serjeant, I take it, Mr. Richard Netherston, only son of the deceased."

"Dick Netherston! Stuff and nonsense! He died abroad three years ago, the young vagabond."

"Not quite, Uncle Simon," says a quiet voice, from the dark corner where the bronzed, big-bearded stranger has hitherto been sitting so silently. "On the contrary, I have been making rather a good thing of it out there lately. I wish I could have got back in time to have seen the poor dear old man. However, here I am now, at all events."

This time it is Mr. Serjeant Netherston whose profane ejaculation scandalises the pious ears of Mr. Peter Goodchild. The learned serjeant's interest in the disputing of the will has altogether cooled. The only possible question now is whether the property shall go to Bessie under the will, or to Dick in default of it.

Bessie herself thinks she sees another alternative, and slips softly up to little Mr. Lewis to point it out.

"Mr. Lewis, cousin Richard is the right person in every way. He was in the churchyard, and you see he is not in mourning at all."

Which latter claim on the part of the heir-at-law is indeed clear enough. Dick has only landed that morning—has first learned the news of his father's death from the mutes at the hall door. The other matter is not quite so self-evident.

"It's a very delicate point, my dear. Mr. Dick did not come with us—did not join us till the ceremony was just over. On the whole, I don't think it would be considered an attendance within the meaning of the bequest. But it can be tried, you know; it can be tried."

"Indeed no, Mr. Lewis. I am quite satisfied. I shall give it up altogether."

But by this time Dick himself is at the table, and Dick does not take this view of the situation at all. Miss Daryl—well, cousin Elizabeth—may give it up if she pleases; but he'll be—ahem!—whipped if he has anything to do with it—in that way, at all events.

"Dear me, now," says little lawyer Lewis, with something exceedingly like a very roguish twinkle in one corner of his keen grey eye, "dear me, how very unfortunate! Such a fine property too. Don't you think—don't you think you might settle it amicably somehow? Suppose now you—divided it?"

Bessie opens her mouth to repudiate the insidious suggestion, lifts her eyes unfortunately at the same time, meets the full gaze of Dick's honest blue optics fixed earnestly upon hers, and somehow finds herself unable to do anything but colour crimson, shut the pretty mouth up again, and confine her protest to a silent but vehement shake of the head.

Dick is, under his bronze, much the same colour as herself; but his mouth, if not so pretty, is more under command, and he expresses his dissent plainly enough. He will have all or nothing. And it shall be emphatically nothing, unless—well, unless somebody else consents to have it all too.

To which declaration there comes no reply at all from Bessie's side for some time, and then only a tiny whispered one.

"Oh, Dick!"

Dick, however, finds it quite enough. So also do the rest of the company—sorely shocked by such barefaced proceedings at such a time.

"I think," says Mr. Goodchild, freezing, "it is time for us to go."

"Well," replies Dick, as he draws the little white hand through his arm and faces round smilingly, "perhaps it would be as well just now. By-and-by, you know, we shall both be delighted; shan't we, Bessie?"

But Bessie does not feel eloquent just now, and only murmurs blushing once more, "Oh, Dick!"

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER X. MUD-LIGHT.

CELIA had said "Go" to Walter with her lips, and there had been nothing for him but to obey her. But he had not reached the bottom of the stairs when he heard the wave of her dress above him, and in another moment she was with him, out of breath and eager. Even she knew that this was no time to be shy.

"Pray don't think my father would be like this if he knew all! He does not know all you were to me at Lindenheim—how good you have been; he does not heed such things—he has so much in his life, without me. You must not come here again. Only you must know, please, that I know, and always shall. You do know, don't you? That's all."

"I went because you told me, Celia; you don't suppose I was not coming again? I am just bewildered about your father; and I don't know what to think or do. I suppose my thoughts misled my eyes. The composer of Comus deny his own work—the one great English work?—no; that can't be. Well, there are such things as illusions; there's nothing strange in the eyes seeing what the mind is looking for. So we are not cousins, Celia. Never mind. I did not come to look for a cousin—no, nor for a friend. I have something to say to you—I must say it now. You have on your things, I see. Will you come out for five minutes? I can't say it here. I wish—I wish Saragossa Row was the Rosenthal."

"Yes," said Celia with a sigh, "so do I."

"For just five minutes—will you come?"

Celia's pulse did not beat one whit the faster. She was relieved to find that Herr Walter had not misunderstood her "Go;" and his asking her to go out with him had once been so natural, that her obeying him as a matter of course was merely a piece of an old habit revived. She felt like doing wrong; but what else could she do? And she felt intensely stupid—but that was no new phase of hers, and intensely happy with absolutely no shadow of reason. It was so strangely like old times, as she took his arm; like going to sleep for a minute, and dreaming some lost-dream over again. She did not notice that Walter did not speak a word till they had passed out of the Row, had crossed a bridge, and were walking slowly along the river, more than five minutes away.

"Celia," he said at last, "I have brushed Cleopatra clean out of my mind. You don't think I've been thinking of that all this while, I suppose? What have I been thinking of?"

"Lindenheim?"

"Well, yes; Lindenheim. That's the background, any way. Were you thinking of Lindenheim too?"

"I think so."

"But I was thinking more of now. Just look at the river, there. If there's one lovelier colour on earth than another it's the colour of mud, when it turns silver-grey at the end of an afternoon. Don't you think so? The Grand Canal is a fool to the Thames."

How he would have stared if, after that walk to Waaren, some Prosper or other magician had foretold that, some five years hence, he, Walter Gordon, should feel shy before Celia. But so it was; and even so Time had his full revenge. The truth is that first love is first love, come when it will, and that a hundred flirtations, or a thousand, will but take off its edge. Every man will prove "fey;" the timid man bold, and the bold man shy. If he could only have been conscious that Celia's own blood was running one grain more swiftly than the mud below, then he would be at ease; but Celia, with miraculous perversity, was both as slow and as calm. She was simply and honestly thinking mud-colour, under that special aspect, very beautiful indeed, and wishing that the minute gathered back from the lost old times would last for at least one hour more.

"Celia, I have been thinking about you awfully—terribly. And of myself, too. Do you think I want to save you out of this horrible life of yours only because I'm your friend? I want you, Celia. Nothing more. I want all life to be like Lindenheim—for you and me. I want you to be my wife—always Wait—don't speak, if you're not sure. I can wait five whole seconds, if you like," said the man who had waited five whole years. "But—Celia!"

She knew he was looking up at her, though in mere literal prose he was looking down—that is to say, his imploring "Celia," and the look that went with it were, in better truth than prose knows, upward, for they were prayers. What had come to her? Her gossamer dream of love had been spun all too fine for it not to tremble as if before breaking at such unheard-of words as these. That she should ever hear such had been as undreamed of in her life as a Phoenix chicken is by a barn-door hen. She almost felt as people when drowning are said to feel by those who have never tried—as if Deepweald, Lindenheim, Hinchford, Saragossa Row, were all confused in one chaotic Now. Was she the very Celia

who had heard Reginald Gaveston read Locksley Hall? So inappropriate and incongruous were the Nows and Thens that came together.

"I can't—I don't know—I don't understand!"

Walter's heart gave a leap forward! Once more, he felt, they were in the proper relation of Walter the absolute, and Celia the shy.

"But I know, dear! I believe, in my heart, you want me—all I can be to you; I know I want you; and everything that you are. I don't think even your father will think of a No, when he knows. I don't expect you care for me much—yet, that is to say. But I'll make you, if you'll let me try. I love you—and you're the only girl I ever loved."

Some sprite as incongruous as her memories must have inspired Celia, in her longing for some word, to stammer out:

"Not—Lotte?"

"Lotte!"

"Nor—Ilma?"

"Ilma!—Good Heaven, Celia, if you hadn't reminded me, I should have forgotten their names. As if there were a ghost of love in a Lindenheim flirtation. No; I loved you then, if I had only known. And now—don't you want me to live for you? Don't you want to be lived for, poor darling, for whom life is so hard?"

"Please—we must go back now."

"Look here—Celia!—You must say Yes first. Will you?—Celia!"

No; Celia was not stupid altogether, to misquote the old song that ran in Walter's head after the day at Waaren. The slowest growing blossoms, after their first wonder at themselves, must find out at last what all the sunshine means; and so must Celia. The silver grey of the mud, and the sun setting in the coal-smoke, as if trying to copy Turner and ignominiously failing, took upon them the ideal atmosphere that changes landscape into Turner, and a heart-dream into glory. He want her?—well; he had said so, he, Herr Walter—and therefore it was true.

But one does not say Yes just when one feels like Celia.

"Celia!" implored Walter again, taking the ungloved hand, spoilt years ago by straining after octaves, that still lay on his left arm.

"Good afternoon!" said Comrie.

Now, it is the very first rule in the only guide-book to etiquette worth reading—to wit, that which has never been written

—that, when you see a young man and a young woman engaged in a certain sort of conversation of which the symptoms are unmistakable, you must look hard to see what weather it is going to be to-morrow, and pass by on the other side. There is but one law of politeness: Do as you would be done by. The only possible excuse for the surgeon is that, never, to his knowledge, having had a woman in his own head, he was unaware of what he would be done by in the like case, and probably assumed that Walter Gordon and Celia March were engaged in discussing what might concern reasonable people in a world where, if one has not one's father's debts to pay, one has at any rate one's own, and where there is a great deal of heart disease—endocarditis, cyanosis, angina pectoris, and so on. Walter was far more polite. Had he disturbed a talk of this kind, he would have asked for no greater justice than to be knocked down; and, on the principle of doing as he would be done by, longed to inflict equal justice on his friend. The Thames a fool to the Grand Canal, indeed! Why, what sort of river can that be where, in spite of all the glory of the greyest mud, one cannot speak out one love-word without being interrupted by a Scotch doctor? It was an outrage. After waiting five years, was he never to have five minutes with Celia alone?

"How is your father, Miss March?" asked Comrie. "I have not seen him to-day, because I was thinking irritation would be bad for him."

"Confound him; he can think himself in the way, then?" thought Walter. And thereon a new feeling woke up in him for which all the experience of Oxford, Paris, Jena, Lindenheim, and Rome together had failed to prepare him. Without being exceptionally vain, for one may have a great deal of vanity in one without being vainer than one's fellows, he knew himself to be better-looking than Comrie; and indeed a racer who does not know himself to be a finer-looking animal than a cart-horse is less modest than stupid. And, for that matter, the man of his type who can see what any woman can see in any other man, is not, and never has been. And yet, where love is, jealousy will somehow manage to intrude, like Comrie himself, upon Walter and Celia; and the less cause his presence has, the more certain will his intrusion be. Did not Comrie live in the Row? Had he not daily access to his patient and his patient's daughter?

Was there not the sympathetic companionship of common poverty? How much might not Comrie have been helping her, while he, Walter, had been holding aloof and doing nothing? That Comrie was over head and ears in love with Celia went without saying; for, when there is but one woman in the world, all the world wants her. It is surely an unaccountable thing that Nature, who makes all her dumb creatures more beautiful at love-time, should delight in making the eyes of reasonable men dull and their wits blind, and make them feel themselves looking their worst, without help, in the only eyes they care for.

Celia felt as when she had first heard Clari sing, and when she woke from that new world to the need of going home. Had she said "Yes?" Had she looked it, without a word? She could not tell—only the light went out of the air, and she knew that something more terrible had happened even than having heard Clari sing. And yet there was still all the light in her heart that had gone out of the sky, and—but how can one say, or paint, or sing even, the joyful pain of innocent sin, the courage of fear, the ignorance of knowledge, and all such things as words only darken, and song turns to unfathomable prose?

"He is better, thank you," said Celia, with mechanical composure. The three turned back together towards the bridge, for it was evident that, whether Walter led Celia onward or back, Comrie was going the same way; and, in any case, Celia knew that there was but one way for her. None of the three said very much; there is no need to say why.

When they reached the Row—

"Good-bye," said Walter, humbled and a little crestfallen, to Celia. "I will see you again to-morrow. I will write too, perhaps; but I must see you, any way. Comrie, where are you going to dine?"

Celia escaped at last, and did not wait to realise what had happened, even for a moment, before going straight to where the deaf musician was sitting in the midst of the ruins of Cleopatra, smoking with a stoical serenity which had not yet given way. She did not observe what had happened to the score. Kingdoms, nay, even the Cleopatra itself, might fall in ruins, but there was that in Celia which is only called blind because it is too far up over the stars to see what lies so far away

below. She had not paused to feel even, because she was afraid of being afraid. Not a moment must be lost; her father must know at once that the end of the world had come. Oh, if the deaf ears could only hear!

"Walter—Gordon—wants—me—to—marry—him."

She had never written a sentence so fast in her life before. The stump of a pencil seemed to leap and sing, and the letters to play leap-frog over one another's shoulders.

John March looked at her as if through the words. It was for them, for these very seven words, that Cleopatra lay in four pieces. But this was strangely sudden. It is not often that we question Fate, and have not to wait an answer for at least one day. Well, he had fought the battle now. He had lived his life, and sacrificed brains and heart that art might die after all—just that two hearts might be enriched out of the thousands that hunger. Was it worth such an end? But surely any end, even this, was better than none.

"Then, marry him!" he said at last, as if he were hurling out a defiance to the gods to do their worst and have done with it, instead of making, as in truth he was, the lowliest "Amen."

The world had already come to an end, but now the skies fell too. It was the only answer she had never dreamed of hearing. She could not believe her own ears, any more than Walter his own eyes.

"Yes, marry him. I have said it. I have nothing more to say. Yes, I say it with my will. You shall go to him as freely as I give you. As for me, I only want a little rest for the end of my days. I have worked enough for one man. Go to him, and live all you can. So there ends a dream; and I am glad of it. Heaven's end is the best end. Go and live; and only let me have a room, with a door that has a key."

"Father!" She did not write the cry, unless with her hands upon his arm.

"Yes," said John March, firmly and not fiercely. And once more she knew that the one sweet moment of sympathy between them that she had known had come back again—surely at last to stay. Out of the ruins of Cleopatra a light that was to Love's as gold to silver seemed to rise.

Such light is as infectious as a panic in battle. Was it possible that they were tears

that came into the eyes of the musician, from whom nothing, not only the doom of deafness, had been able to draw a tear? Cleopatra lay unheeded, not with stoical acceptance of destiny, but unthought of, as if all that had happened for the last generation had been blotted out and washed away. I know not how, but in that instant of sympathy Celia was inspired with a comprehension of the glory that came over her that afternoon like a cloud. Her incomprehensible tyrant, whoever else he was, had at least become a man, and it was not for her to ask how far the transformation was due to bodily weakness or mental despair.

"Yes," he said again, the chronic Bourdon stop of his voice combining for once with the veritable vox humana, "I think it must be enough for me if life ends in putting out a natural flower or two. I don't wish I had known. That is absurd; whoever can know till afterwards? But now I know, and——"

Celia's head was gradually disappearing among the volume of white smoke, and falling upon his arm. Her first dream of conscious happiness was falling over her, and her father's words were sweeter to her than her lover's.

"Aha! I am late, Signor Stefano—Mr. March, but never mind. You are musician——"

It was worse than being interrupted by Comrie—it was Prosper. Celia lifted her head with a start. Her father did not move.

"Good-day, mademoiselle. I hope you are not fatigued, Monsieur—I am Prosper; that shall say, I am not of words. Enfin, you are musician—I am Prosper. I come to a point, at the end, and arrive at the things at once at the bottoms. Is it possible that mademoiselle shall leave us alone?"

"My father is deaf, sir."

"Deaf? Is he possible? But, never mind. Then he shall not have heard the news? But I am sorry—it is not easy to speak to a deaf man. Never mind. If mademoiselle permits——"

He took out his gold pencil-case and wrote quickly, while John March sat and smoked as unheeding as if there were no Prosper in the world. He had yielded so utterly as to have even given up resenting intrusion. However, it would not last for much longer now.

At last, Prosper finished writing, folded

up the leaf, and handed it to the deaf musician. John March read it—first mechanically; then frowningly; then he faced Prosper with more than all his old fierceness—

“And you dare propose this to me? To help you cheat the public by a forgery? Not for ten thousand pounds—not for— Do you know who I am?”

Prosper, as if in a fit of absence, took up the mantilla from the back of its chair, and smiled—queerly. Then he looked straight and hard at Celia’s eyes. He wrote:

“Mr.—Andrew—Gordon. I—forget—not—laces—monsieur.”

“Nor shall you handle them, if you please. So you want a work by Andrew Gordon? Then you must go elsewhere. Andrew Gordon is dead. He wrote Comus, and—died.”

“Ha! He is dead? But, never mind. It is the same thing. But he shall leave something. Pardon, monsieur, that I forget you do not hear. I—shall—give—your—term—for—what—you—will—if—it—shall—have—the—name.”

Celia knew nothing of what was written; she only knew the spoken words. And, hanging on her father’s eyes as he read, she followed them till, as if by a caprice of chance, they fell on a scattered heap of paper on the floor. She did not recognise in it the treasured score. But the musician knew what his own hands had made and torn. Cleopatra—and her time had come—at last, had come!

Prosper, too, followed his eyes. He was a stout man, but he managed to stoop and gather up the ruins, which he politely gave back to their maker. It was the sound of the trumpet to the war-horse—the very touch of fire. He yield to the fate, to a moment’s desperate weakness, when the hour had come for the crowning of an artist’s lifetime! John March, the beaten and baffled man, who but a minute ago was tamely looking for a little spring-flower to plant over the grave of the dead art that at least something might grow there, rose up and said:

“I understand! They want something from the composer of Comus—the fools! They come out to find trash; they shall find— Yes; you shall have what you ask for; and on my terms. I will take no

money. I will not sell my life—it has cost me dear. Here is the work—Cleopatra. It is yours. It may not be too late for art—even now. But on one condition. It must be performed as I will; and only as I will.” For a moment he paused—the vision of himself ruling with his own bâton, like a sea-god, his own flood of sound was not to be. “There is only one woman who can sing Cleopatra in all the world. She must sing it, or the four pieces shall be torn into four hundred. I give no reasons; it is my will.”

Prosper threw him a slip of paper on which was written but one word.

“No—never! She is as dead as—as Andrew Gordon has been. My one singer is here.”

“Father!” cried out Celia, aghast. She did not yet comprehend; but she felt that the summer had gone out, and the old winter come back with tenfold strength and chillness.

“Mademoiselle?” asked Prosper.

“I will trust it to no other hands. Take Cleopatra on those terms, or leave it, as you will.”

“Father!” this time whispered Celia, forgetting that he could not hear. It may be that, if he could, he would not have said, with a sternness that made the girl shudder and freeze back into the old Deepweald days:

“Celia, I did not bring you up to dream. You must forget your dreams. I must forget mine. We are the servants of art, you and I—of art alone. Think of it; at last, the Cleopatra, the score! Celia,” he went on, with a voice almost of appeal, “you must not fail me! I have given my whole life for this! I have kept you pure! I have built every thought and hope on your faithfulness and on your glory! I have done my part—my all; it is now for you to do yours!”

Celia turned pale, and felt as if her heart were dying. Clari might have known what to say; but how could Celia, being but Celia, at this crowning moment, and for her own happiness, take her father’s whole life into her hands and throw it away?

“He—wants—me,” traced the pencil-stump, as if of its own accord.

“Art wants you!” answered Andrew Gordon.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXXIV. A DREADFUL COMMUNICATION.

"A MOST dreadful communication!" There was something in Lord George's voice, as he uttered these words, which so frightened his wife that she became at the moment quite pale. She was sure, almost sure from his countenance, that the dreadful communication had some reference to herself. Had any great calamity happened in regard to his own family he would not have looked at her as he was now looking. And yet she could not imagine what might be the nature of the communication. "Has anything happened at Manor Cross?" she asked.

"It is not about Manor Cross."

"Or your brother?"

"It is not about my brother; it does not in any way concern my family. It is about you."

"About me! Oh, George! do not look at me like that. What is it?"

He was very slow in the telling of the story; slow even in beginning to tell it; indeed, he hardly knew how to begin. "You know Miss Augusta Mildmay?" he asked.

Then she understood it all. She might have told him that he could spare himself all further trouble in telling, only that to do so would hardly have suited her purpose; therefore she had to listen to the story, very slowly told. Miss Augusta Mildmay had written to him, begging him to come to her. He, very much astonished at such a request, had nevertheless obeyed it; and Augusta Mildmay had assured him that his wife, by wicked wiles and

lures, was interfering between her and her affianced lover, Captain De Baron. Mary sat patiently till she had heard it all—sat almost without speaking a word; but there was a stern look on her face which Lord George had never seen there before. Still he went on with his determined purpose. "These are the kind of things which are being repeated of you," he said at last. "Susanna made the same complaint. And it had reached Brotherton's ears. He spoke to me of it in frightfully strong language. And now this young lady tells me that you are destroying her happiness."

"Well?"

"You can't suppose that I can hear all this without uneasiness."

"Do you believe it?"

"I do not know what to believe I am driven mad."

"If you believe it, George—if you believe a word of it, I will go away from you. I will go back to papa. I will not stay with you to be doubted."

"That is nonsense."

"It shall not be nonsense. I will not live to hear myself accused by my husband as to another man. Wicked young woman! Oh, what women are, and what they can do! She has never been engaged to Captain De Baron."

"What is that to you or me?"

"Nothing, if you had not told me that I stood in her way."

"It is not her engagement, or her hopes, whether ill or well founded, or his treachery to a lady, that concerns you and me, Mary; but that she should send for me and tell me to my face that you are the cause of her unhappiness. Why should she pitch upon you?"

"How can I say? Because she is very wicked."

"And why should Susanna feel herself obliged to caution me as to this Captain De Baron? She had no motive. She is not wicked."

"I don't know that."

"And why should my brother tell me that all the world is speaking of your conduct with this very man?"

"Because he is your bitterest enemy. George, do you believe it?"

"And why, when I come home with all this heavy on my heart, do I find this very man closeted with you?"

"Closeted with me!"

"You were alone with him."

"Alone with him! Of course I am alone with anyone who calls. Would you like me to tell the servant that Captain De Baron is to be excluded, so that all the world might know that you are jealous?"

"He must be excluded."

"Then you must do it. But it will be unnecessary. As you believe all this, I will tell my father everything and will go back to him. I will not live here, George. To be so suspected that the very servants have to be told that I am not to be allowed to see one special man."

"No; you will go down into the country with me."

"I will not stay in the same house with you," she said, jumping up from her seat, "unless you tell me that you suspect me of nothing—not even of an impropriety. You may lock me up, but you cannot hinder me from writing to my father."

"I trust you will do nothing of the kind."

"Not tell him! Who then is to be my friend if you turn against me? Am I to be all alone among a set of people who think nothing but ill of me?"

"I am to be your friend."

"But you think ill of me."

"I have not said so, Mary."

"Then say at once that you think no ill, and do not threaten me that I am to be taken into the country for protection. And when you tell me of the bold-faced villany of that young woman, speak of her with the disgust that she deserves; and say that your sister Susanna is suspicious and given to evil thoughts; and declare your brother to be a wicked slanderer, if he has said a word against the honour of your wife. Then I shall know that you think no ill of me; and then I shall know that I may lean upon you as my real friend."

Her eyes flashed fire as she spoke, and he was silenced for the moment by an impetuosity and a passion which he had not at all expected. He was not quite disposed to yield to her, to assure her of his conviction that those to whom she had alluded were all wrong, and that she was all right; but yet he was beginning to wish for peace. That Captain De Baron was a pestilential young man, whose very business it was to bring unhappiness into families, he did believe; and he feared also that his wife had allowed herself to fall into an indiscreet intimacy with this destroyer of women's characters. Then there was that feeling of Cæsar's wife strong within his bosom, which he could, perhaps, have more fully explained to her but for that unfortunate letter from Mrs. Houghton. Any fault, however, of that kind on his part was, in his estimation, nothing to a fault on the part of his wife. She, when once assured that he was indifferent about Mrs. Houghton, would find no cause for unhappiness in the matter. But what would all the world be to him if his wife were talked about commonly in connection with another man? That she should not absolutely be a castaway would not save him from a perpetual agony, which he would find to be altogether unendurable. He was, he was sure, quite right as to that theory about Cæsar's wife, even though, from the unfortunate position of circumstances, he could not dilate upon it at the present moment. "I think," he said, after a pause, "that you will allow that you had better drop this gentleman's acquaintance?"

"I will allow nothing of the kind, George. I will allow nothing that can imply the slightest stain upon my name or upon your honour. Captain De Baron is my friend. I like him very much. A great many people know how intimate we are. They shall never be taught to suppose that there was anything wrong in that intimacy. They shall never, at any rate, be taught so by anything that I will do. I will admit nothing. I will do nothing myself to show that I am ashamed. Of course you can take me into the country; of course you can lock me up; of course you can tell all your friends that I have misbehaved myself; you can listen to calumny against me from everybody; but if you do I will have one friend to protect me, and I will tell papa everything." Then she walked away to the door as though she were leaving the room.

"Stop a moment," he said. Then she

stood with her hand still on the lock, as though intending to stay merely till he should have spoken some last word to her. He was greatly surprised by her strength and resolution, and now hardly knew what more to say to her. He could not beg her pardon for his suspicion; he could not tell her that she was right; and yet he found it impossible to assert that she was wrong. "I do not think that passion will do any good," he said.

"I do not know what will do any good. I know what I feel."

"It will do good if you will allow me to advise you."

"What is your advice?"

"To come down to the country as soon as possible, and to avoid, as far as possible, seeing Captain De Baron before you go."

"That would be running away from Captain De Baron. I am to meet him at Mrs. Montacute Jones's ball."

"Send an excuse to Mrs. Montacute Jones."

"You may do so, George, if you like. I will not. If I am told by you that I am not to meet this man, of course I shall obey you; but I shall consider myself to have been insulted—to have been insulted by you." As she said this his brow became very black. "Yes, by you. You ought to defend me from these people who tell stories about me, and not accuse me yourself. I cannot and will not live with you if you think evil of me." Then she opened the door and slowly left the room. He would have said more had he known what to say. But her words came more fluently than his, and he was dumfounded by her volubility; yet he was as much convinced as ever that it was his duty to save her from the ill-repute which would fall upon her from further intimacy with this captain. He could, of course, take her into the country to-morrow, if he chose to do so; but he could not hinder her from writing to the dean; he could not debar her from pen and ink and the use of the post-office; nor could he very well forbid her to see her father.

Of course, if she did complain to the dean, she would tell the dean everything. So he told himself. Now, when a man assumes the divine superiority of an all-governing husband, his own hands should be quite clean. Lord George's hands were by no means clean. It was not, perhaps, his own fault that they were dirty. He was able at any rate to tell himself that the fault had not been his. But there

was that undoubted love-letter from Mrs. Houghton. If the dean were to question him about that he could not lie. And though he would assure himself that the fault had all been with the lady, he could not excuse himself by that argument in discussing the matter with the dean. He was in such trouble that he feared to drive his wife to retaliation; and yet he must do his duty. His honour and her honour must be his first consideration. If she would only promise him not willingly to see Captain De Baron, there should be an end of it, and he would allow her to stay the allotted time in London; but, if she would not do this, he thought that he must face the dean and all his terrors.

But he hardly knew his wife—was hardly aware of the nature of her feelings. When she spoke of appealing to her father, no idea crossed her mind of complaining of her husband's infidelity. She would seek protection for herself, and would be loud enough in protesting against the slanderous tongues of those who had injured her. She would wage war to the knife against the marquis, and against Lady Susanna, and against Augusta Mildmay, and would call upon her father to assist her in that warfare; but she would not condescend to allude to a circumstance which, if it were an offence against her, she had pardoned, but as to which, in her heart of hearts, she believed her husband to be, if not innocent, at least not very guilty. She despised Adelaide Houghton too much to think that her husband had really loved such a woman, and was too confident in herself to doubt his love for many minutes. She could hate Adelaide Houghton for making the attempt, and yet could believe that the attempt had been futile.

Nevertheless, when she was alone she thought much of Mrs. Houghton's letter. Throughout her interview with her husband she had thought of it, but had determined from the very first that she would not cast it in his teeth. She would do nothing ungenerous. But was it not singular that he should be able to upbraid her for her conduct—for conduct in which there had been no trespass, knowing as he must have known, feeling as he must have felt, that every word of that letter was dwelling in her memory! He had, at any rate, intended that the abominable correspondence should be clandestine. He must have been sadly weak, to make the least of it, to have admitted such a correspondence.

"Pray tell me that you love me!" That had been the language addressed to him only a few days since by a married lady to whom he had once made an offer of marriage; and yet he could now come and trample on her as though his marital superiority had all the divinity of snow-white purity! This was absolute tyranny. But yet in complaining to her father of his tyranny she would say nothing of Adelaide Houghton. Of the accusations made against herself she would certainly tell her father, unless they were withdrawn as far as her own husband could withdraw them. For an hour after leaving him her passion still sustained her. Was this to be her reward for all her endeavours to become a loving wife?

They were engaged to dine that evening with a certain Mrs. Patmore Green, who had herself been a Germain, and who had been first cousin to the late marquis. Mary came down dressed into the drawing-room at the proper time, not having spoken another word to her husband, and there she found him also dressed. She had schooled herself to show no sign either of anger or regret, and as she entered the room said some indifferent words about the brougham. He still looked as dark as a thunder-cloud, but he rang the bell and asked the servant a question. The brougham was there, and away they went to Mrs. Patmore Green's. She spoke half-a-dozen words on the way, but he hardly answered her. She knew that he would not do so, being aware that it was not within his power to rise above the feelings of the moment. But she exerted herself so that he might know that she did not mean to display her ill-humour at Mrs. Patmore Green's house.

Lady Brabazon, whose sister had married a Germain, was there, and a Colonel Ansley, who was a nephew of Lady Brotherton's; so that the party was very much a Germain party. All these people had been a good deal exercised of late on the great Popenjoy question. So immense is the power of possession that the marquis, on his arrival in town, had been asked to all the Germain houses in spite of his sins, and had been visited with considerable family affection and regard—for was he not the head of them all? But he had not received these offers graciously, and now the current of Germain opinion was running against him. Of the general propriety of Lord George's conduct ever since his birth there had never been a doubt, and the Greens and

Brabazons and Ansleys were gradually coming round to the opinion that he was right to make enquiries as to the little Popenjoy's antecedents. They had all taken kindly to Mary, though they were, perhaps, beginning to think that she was a little too frivolous, too fond of pleasure for Lord George. Mrs. Patmore Green, who was the wife of a very rich man, and the mother of a very large family, and altogether a very worthy woman, almost at once began to whisper to Mary: "Well, my dear, what news from Italy?"

"I never hear anything about it, Mrs. Green," said Mary, with a laugh.

"And yet the dean is so eager, Lady George!"

"I won't let papa talk to me about it. Lord Brotherton is quite welcome to his wife and his son, and everything else for me—only I do wish he would have remained away."

"I think we all wish that, my dear."

Mr. Patmore Green, and Colonel Ansley, and Lady Brabazon all spoke a word or two in the course of the evening to Lord George on the same subject, but he would only shake his head and say nothing. At that time this affair of his wife's was nearer to him, and more burdensome to him, than even the Popenjoy question. He could not rid himself of this new trouble even for a moment. He was still thinking of it when all the enquiries about Popenjoy were being made. What did it matter to him how that matter should be settled, if all the happiness of his life were to be dispelled by this terrible domestic affliction? "I am afraid this quarrel with his brother will be too much for Lord George," said Mr. Patmore Green to his wife, when the company were gone. "He was not able to say a word the whole evening."

"And I never knew her to be more pleasant," said Mrs. Patmore Green. "She doesn't seem to care about it the least in the world." The husband and wife did not speak a word to each other as they went home in the brougham. Mary had done her duty by sustaining herself in public, but was not willing to let him think that she had as yet forgiven the cruelty of his suspicions.

CHAPTER XXXV. "I DENY IT."

DURING the whole of that night Lord George lay suffering from his troubles, and his wife lay thinking about them. Though the matter affected her future life almost more materially than his, she had the

better courage to maintain her, and a more sustained conviction. It might be that she would have to leave her home and go back to the Deanery, and in that there would be utter ruin to her happiness. Let the result, however, be as it would, she could never own herself to have been one tittle astray, and she was quite sure that her father would support her in that position. The old "ruat cœlum" feeling was strong within her. She would do anything she could for her husband short of admitting, by any faintest concession, that she had been wrong in reference to Captain De Baron. She would talk to him, coax him, implore him, reason with him, forgive him, love him, and caress him. She would try to be gentle with him this coming morning. But if he were obdurate in blaming her, she would stand on her own innocence and fight to the last gasp. He was supported by no such spirit of pugnacity. He felt it to be his duty to withdraw his wife from the evil influence of this man's attractions, but felt, at the same time, that he might possibly lack the strength to do so. And then, what is the good of withdrawing a wife, if the wife thinks that she ought not to be withdrawn? There are sins as to which there is no satisfaction in visiting the results with penalties. The sin is in the mind, or in the heart, and is complete in its enormity, even though there be no result. He was miserable because she had not at once acknowledged that she never ought to see this man again, as soon as she had heard the horrors which her husband had told her. "George," she said to him at breakfast the next morning, "do not let us go on in this way together."

"In what way?"

"Not speaking to each other—condemning each other."

"I have not condemned you, and I don't know why you should condemn me."

"Because I think that you suspect me without a cause."

"I only tell you what people say!"

"If people told me bad things of you, George—that you were this or that, or the other—should I believe them?"

"A woman's name is everything."

"Then do you protect my name. But I deny it. Her name should be as nothing when compared with her conduct. I don't like to be evil spoken of, but I can bear that, or anything else, if you do not think evil of me—you and papa." This reference to her father brought back the black

cloud which her previous words had tended to dispel. "Tell me that you do not suspect me."

"I never said that I suspected you of anything."

"Say that you are sure that in regard to this man I never said, or did, or thought anything that was wrong. Come, George, have I not a right to expect that from you?" She had come round the table and was standing over him, touching his shoulder.

"Even then it would be better that you should go away from him."

"No!"

"I say that it would be better, Mary."

"And I say that it would be worse—much worse. What? Will you bid your wife make so much of any man as to run away from him? Will you let the world say that you think that I cannot be safe in his company? I will not consent to that, George. The running away shall not be mine. Of course you can take me away, if you please, but I shall feel——"

"Well!"

"You know what I shall feel. I told you last night."

"What do you want me to do?" he asked, after a pause.

"Nothing."

"I am to hear these stories and not even to tell you that I have heard them?"

"I did not say that, George. I suppose it is better that you should tell me. But I think you should say at the same time that you know them to be false." Even though they were false, there was that doctrine of Cæsar's wife which she would not understand! "I think I should be told, and then left to regulate my own ways accordingly." This was mutinously imperious, and yet he did not quite know how to convince her of her mutiny. Through it all he was cowed by the remembrance of that love-letter, which, of course, was in her mind, but which she was either too generous or too wise to mention. He almost began to think that it was wisdom rather than generosity, feeling himself to be more cowed by her reticence than he would have been by her speech.

"You imagine, then, that a husband should never interfere?"

"Not to protect a wife from that from which she is bound to protect herself. If he has to do so, she is not worth the trouble, and he had better get rid of her. It is like preventing a man from drinking by locking up the wine."

"That has to be done sometimes."

"It sha'n't be done to me, George. You must either trust me, or we must part."

"I do trust you," he said at last.

"Then let there be an end of all this trouble. Tell Susanna that you trust me. For your brother and that disappointed young woman I care nothing. But if I am to spend my time at Cross Hall, whatever they may think, I should not wish them to believe that you thought evil of me. And, George, don't suppose that because I say that I will not run away from Captain De Baron, all this will go for nothing with me. I will not avoid Captain De Baron, but I will be careful to give no cause for ill-natured words." Then she put her arm round his neck, and kissed him, and had conquered him.

When he went away from the house he had another great trouble before him. He had not seen Mrs. Houghton as yet, since his wife had found that love-letter; but she had written to him often. She had sent notes to his club almost wild with love and anger—with that affectation of love and anger which some women know how to assume, and which so few men know how to withstand. It was not taken to be quite real, even by Lord George; and yet he could not withstand it. Mrs. Houghton, who understood the world thoroughly, had become quite convinced that Lady George had quarrelled with her. The two women had been very intimate ever since Lady George had been in town, and now for the last few days they had not seen each other. Mrs. Houghton had called twice, and had been refused. Then she had written, and had received no answer. She knew then that Mary had discovered something, and, of course, attributed her lover's absence to the wife's influence. But it did not occur to her that she should, on this account, give up her intercourse with Lord George. Scenes, quarrels, reconciliations, troubles, recriminations, jealousies, resolves, petty triumphs, and the general upsetting of the happiness of other people—these were to her the sweets of what she called a passion. To give it all up because her lover's wife had found her out, and because her lover was in trouble, would be to abandon her love just when it was producing the desired fruit. She wrote short letters and long letters, angry letters, and most affectionate letters to Lord George at his club, entreating him to come to her, and almost driving him out of his wits. He had, from the first, determined that he would go to her. He had even received

his wife's sanction for doing so; but, knowing how difficult it would be to conduct such an interview, had, hitherto, put off the evil hour. But now a day and an hour had been fixed, and the day had come. The hour had very nearly come. When he left his house there was still time for him to sit for awhile at his club, and think what he would say to this woman.

He wished to do what was right. There was not a man in England less likely to have intended to amuse himself with a second love within twelve months of his marriage than Lord George Germain. He had never been a Lothario—had never thought himself to be gifted in that way. In the first years of his manhood, when he had been shut up at Manor Cross, looking after his mother's limited means, with a full conviction that it was his duty to sacrifice himself to her convenience, he had been apt to tell himself that he was one of those men who have to go through life without marrying—or loving. Though strikingly handsome, he had never known himself to be handsome. He had never thought himself to be clever, or bright, or agreeable. High birth had been given to him, and a sense of honour. Of those gifts he had been well aware and proud enough, but had taken credit to himself for nothing else. Then had come that startling episode of his life, in which he had fallen in love with Adelaide De Baron, and then the fact of his marriage with Mary Lovelace. Looking back at it now, he could hardly understand how it had happened that he had either fallen in love or married. He certainly was not now the least in love with Mrs. Houghton. And, though he did love his wife dearly, though the more he saw of her the more he admired her, yet his marriage had not made him happy. He had to live on her money, which galled him, and to be assisted by the dean's money, which was wormwood to him. And he found himself to be driven whither he did not wish to go, and to be brought into perils from which his experience did not suffice to extricate him. He already repented the step he had taken in regard to his brother, knowing that it was the dean who had done it, and not he himself. Had he not married, he might well have left the battle to be fought in after years—when his brother should be dead, and very probably he himself also.

He was aware that he must be very firm with Mrs. Houghton. Come what might, he must give her to understand

quite clearly that all love-making must be over between them. The horrors of such a condition of things had been made much clearer to him than before by his own anxiety in reference to Captain De Baron. But he knew himself to be too soft-hearted for such firmness. If he could send someone else, how much better it would be! But, alas! this was a piece of work which no deputy could do for him. Nor could a letter serve as a deputy. Let him write as carefully as he might, he must say things which would condemn him utterly were they to find their way into Mr. Houghton's hands. One terrible letter had gone astray, and why not another?

She had told him to be in Berkeley Square at two, and he was there very punctually. He would at the moment have given much to find the house full of people; but she was quite alone. He had thought that she would receive him with a storm of tears, but when he entered she was radiant with smiles. Then he remembered how on a former occasion she had deceived him, making him believe that all her lures to him meant little or nothing, just when he had determined to repudiate them because he had feared that they meant so much. He must not allow himself to be won in that way again. He must be firm, even though she smiled. "What is all this about?" she said in an affected whisper, as soon as the door was closed. He looked very grave and shook his head. "Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks at me." That wife of yours has found out something, and has found it out from you, my lord."

"Yes, indeed."

"What has she found out?"

"She read a letter to me which you sent to the club."

"Then I think it very indecent behaviour on her part. Does she search her husband's correspondence? I don't condescend to do that sort of thing."

"It was my fault. I put it into her hand by mistake. But that does not matter."

"Not matter! It matters very much to me, I think. Not that I care. She cannot hurt me. But, George, was not that careless, very careless; so careless as to be—unkind?"

"Of course it was careless."

"And ought you not to think more of me than that? Have you not done me an injury, sir, when you owed me all solicitude and every possible precaution?" This was not to be denied. If he chose

to receive such letters, he was bound at any rate to keep them secret. "But men are so foolish—so little thoughtful! What did she say, George?"

"She behaved like an angel."

"Of course. Wives in such circumstances always do. Just a few drops of anger, and then a deluge of forgiveness. That was it, was it not?"

"Something like it."

"Of course. It happens every day, because men are so stupid, but at the same time so necessary. But what did she say of me? Was she angel on my side of the house as well as yours?"

"Of course she was angry."

"It did not occur to her that she had been the interloper, and had taken you away from me?"

"That was not so. You had married."

"Psha! Married! Of course I had married. Everybody marries. You had married; but I did not suppose that for that reason you would forget me altogether. People must marry as circumstances suit. It is no good going back to that old story. Why did you not come to me sooner, and tell me of this tragedy? Why did you leave me to run after her and write to her?"

"I have been very unhappy."

"So you ought to be. But things are never so bad in the wearing as in the anticipation. I don't suppose she'll go about destroying my name and doing me a mischief?"

"Never."

"Because if she did, you know, I could retaliate."

"What do you mean by that, Mrs. Houghton?"

"Nothing that need disturb you, Lord George. Do not look such daggers at me. But women have to be forbearing to each other. She is your wife, and you may be sure I shall never say a nasty word about her, unless she makes herself very objectionable to me."

"Nobody can say nasty things about her."

"That is all right, then. And, now, what have you to say to me about myself? I am not going to be gloomy because a little misfortune has happened. It is not my philosophy to cry after spilt milk."

"I will sit down a minute," he said, for hitherto he had been standing.

"Certainly; and I will sit opposite to you—for ten minutes, if you wish it. I see there is something to be said. What is it?"

"All that has passed between you and me for the last month or two must be forgotten."

"Oh, that is it!"

"I will not make her miserable, nor will I bear a burden upon my own conscience."

"Your conscience! What a speech for a man to make to a woman! And how about my conscience? And then onethings further. You say that it must be all forgotten?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Can you forget it?"

"I can strive to do so. By forgetting, one means laying it aside. We remember chiefly those things which we try to remember."

"And you will not try to remember me—in the least? You will lay me aside like an old garment? Because this—angel—has come across a scrawl which you were too careless either to burn or to lock up! You will tell yourself to forget me, as you would a servant that you had dismissed, much more easily than you would a dog? Is that so?"

"I did not say that I could do it easily."

"You shall not do it at all. I will not be forgotten. Did you ever love me, sir?"

"Certainly I did. You know that I did."

"When? How long since? Have you ever sworn that you loved me since this—angel—has been your wife?" Looking back as well as he could, he rather thought that he never had sworn that he loved her in these latter days. She had often bidden him to do so; but as far as he could recollect at the moment, he had escaped the absolute utterance of the oath by some subterfuge. But doubtless he had done that which had been tantamount to swearing; and, at any rate, he could not now say that he had never sworn. "Now you come to tell me that it must all be forgotten! Was it she taught you that word?"

"If you upbraid me I will go away."

"Go, sir, if you dare. You first betray me to your wife by your egregious folly, and then tell me that you will leave me because I have a word to say for myself. Oh, George, I expected more tenderness than that from you."

"There is no use in being tender. It can only produce misery and destruction."

"Well, of all the cold-blooded speeches I ever heard, that is the worst. After all that has passed between us, you do not scruple to tell me that you cannot even express tenderness for me, lest it should

bring you into trouble! Men have felt that before, I do not doubt; but I hardly think any man was ever hard enough to make such a speech. I wonder whether Captain De Baron is so considerate?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"You come here and talk to me about your angel, and then tell me that you cannot show me even the slightest tenderness, lest it should make you miserable, and you expect me to hold my tongue."

"I don't know why you should mention Captain De Baron."

"I'll tell you why, Lord George. There are five or six of us playing this little comedy. Mr. Houghton and I are married, but we have not very much to say to each other. It is the same with you and Mary."

"I deny it."

"I daresay; but at the same time you know it to be true. She consoles herself with Captain De Baron. As to you and me, you used, I think, to get consolation here. But such comforts cost trouble, and you hate trouble." As she said this, she wound her arm inside his; and he, angry as he was with her for speaking as she had done of his wife, could not push her from him roughly. "Is not that how it is, George?"

"No!"

"Then I don't think you understand the play as well as I do."

"No, I deny it all."

"All?"

"Everything about Mary. It's a slander to mention that man's name in connection with her—a calumny which I will not endure."

"How is it, then, if they mention mine in connection with you?"

"I am saying nothing about that."

"But I suppose you think of it. I am hardly of less importance to myself than Lady George is to herself. I did think I was not of less importance to you."

"Nobody ever was or ever can be of so much importance to me as my wife, and I will be on good terms with no one who speaks evil of her."

"They may say what they like of me?"

"Mr. Houghton must look to that."

"Is it no business of yours, George?"

He paused a moment, and then found the courage to answer her. "No—none," he said. Had she confined herself to her own assumed wrongs, her own pretended affection—had she contented herself with quarrelling with him for his carelessness, and had then called upon him for some

renewed expression of love—he would hardly have been strong enough to withstand her. But she could not keep her tongue from speaking evil of his wife. From the moment in which he had called Mary an angel, it was necessary to her comfort to malign the angel. She did not quite know the man, or the nature of men generally. A man, if his mind be given that way, may perhaps with safety whisper into a woman's ear that her husband is untrue to her. Such an accusation may serve his purpose. But the woman, on her side, should hold her peace about the man's wife. A man must be very degraded indeed if his wife be not holy to him. Lord George had been driving his wife almost mad during the last twenty-four hours, by implied accusations, and yet she was to him the very holy of holies. All the Popenjoy question was as nothing to him in comparison with the sanctity of her name. And now, weak as he was, incapable as he would have been, under any other condition of mind, of extricating himself from the meshes which this woman was spinning for him, he was enabled to make a most salutary plunge by the genuine anger she had produced. "No—none," he said.

"Oh, very well. The angel is everything to you, and I am nothing?"

"Yes; my wife is everything to me."

"How dared you, then, come here and talk to me of love? Do you think I will stand this—that I will endure to be treated in this way? Angel, indeed! I tell you that she cares more for Jack De Baron's little finger than for your whole body. She is never happy unless he is with her. I don't think very much of my cousin Jack, but to her he is a god."

"It is false."

"Very well. It is nothing to me; but you can hardly expect, my lord, that I should hear from you such pleasant truths as you have just told me, and not give you back what I believe to be truth in return."

"Have I spoken evil of anyone? But I will not stay here, Mrs. Houghton, to make recriminations. You have spoken most cruelly of a woman who never injured you, who has always been your firm friend. It is my duty to protect her, and I shall always do so in all circumstances. Good morning." Then he went before she could say another word to him.

He would perhaps have been justified had he been a little proud of the manner

in which he had carried himself through this interview; but he entertained no such feeling. To the lady he had just left he feared that he had been rough and almost cruel. She was not to him the mass of whipped cream turned sour which she may perhaps be to the reader. Though he had been stirred to anger, he had been indignant with circumstances rather than with Mrs. Houghton. But in truth the renewed accusation against his wife made him so wretched that there was no room in his breast for pride. He had been told that she liked Jack De Baron's little finger better than his whole body, and had been so told by one who knew both his wife and Jack De Baron. Of course there had been spite, and malice, and every possible evil passion at work. But then everybody was saying the same thing. Even though there were not a word of truth in it, such a rumour alone would suffice to break his heart. How was he to stop cruel tongues, especially the tongue of this woman, who would now be his bitterest enemy? If such things were repeated by all connected with him, how would he be able to reconcile his own family to his wife? There was nothing which he valued now but the respect which he held in his own family and that which his wife might hold. And in his own mind he could not quite acquit her. She would not be made to understand that she might injure his honour and destroy his happiness even though she committed no great fault. To take her away with a strong hand seemed to be his duty. But then there was the dean, who would most certainly take her part—and he was afraid of the dean.

MAKING READY AT WOOLWICH.

WOOLWICH is just now tuneful, not exactly with the clink and fall of swords, but with that of instruments compared with which the mightiest of swords is but a toothpick. In speaking of Woolwich, I may premise that my remarks are confined to that part of it known as the Royal Arsenal, and by no means extend to the town itself. Considered as a town, Woolwich is one of those odd places which convey a remarkable idea of the aridity of the military throat—their chief trade being in the dispensing of beer by retail. There are many places of this kind, notably Sheerness and Chatham, where nothing

seems to grow but soldiers, sailors, tarpaulin suits, and beer; but it is not with the consumption of intoxicating liquors that I have now to deal, my business being chiefly to see Britannia hard at it in one of her greatest workshops, with her sleeves tucked up, and her mind addressed to the production of weapons, great and small, to the end that her watery empire may not become a mere empty boast of the past.

The great gun factory just now in full blast is one of the most interesting sights in England, the famous works of Sheffield, and the Whitworth factory at Manchester, not excepted. Since the inauguration of the Age of Peace and Brotherhood at the Great Exhibition of 1851, Britannia has very sensibly kept a sharp look-out for improvements in artillery and musketry, and some other engines of war, of which more presently. Between the great mortar, nicknamed "Big Will," and the guns at present made, there is the difference not of years but of centuries—the science of artillery having been twice reversed since that great gun hurled its enormous shell into the air. The great battle of breech-loaders and muzzle-loaders has been fought—that is to say, in part, for it would be as ridiculous to assume that perfection has been attained in artillery as in anything else. So far as great ordnance is concerned, the world has already changed its mind several times as to the proper end of a gun to receive the charge.

Military museums afford abundant proof of the antiquity of breech-loading cannon. The precise construction of the guns used at the battle of Crécy can only be conjectural, but breech-loaders, certainly as old as the Tudor period, and one probably of the time of Henry the Sixth, are still to be seen at the Museum of the United Service Institution. There lie the old guns, breech-pieces and all, which sank in the Mary Rose, and which, by their rough workmanship, account for the accidents which oftentimes befell ancient bombardiers. It was these accidents which probably led to the abandonment of the breech-loading system, and the employment of muzzle-loaders for the last two centuries. The old cast-iron gun may be seen at Woolwich and other places in its original form, and also in the various stages of conversion into the weapon for the moment in favour.

A great revolution was brought about by the new rifled breech-loaders, introduced by Sir William Armstrong. To

those unacquainted with the former slowness of military reform, it may appear incredible that rifled muskets existed for a hundred years before rifled ordnance; but the fact is indisputable, and the combination of rifling and breech-loading by Sir William Armstrong may be accepted as a new point of departure in the history of English artillery. Sir William's invention was by no means the only one experimented upon. The conical, or at any rate the long, as distinguished from the spherical, bullet was advocated by a variety of inventors. There was the Lancaster shell, and the flat-headed steel bolt projected from a polygonal bore, still adhered to by Sir Joseph Whitworth; but, after a variety of trials, the Armstrong gun was chosen. The shot for this gun was coated with lead to make it fit into the grooves of the barrel, and thus acquire that rotatory motion by which accuracy of flight is secured to rifle-bullets of all sizes and shapes. For a while, the virtues—and they are many—of the Armstrong gun were loudly extolled, but it was not long before complaints arose against this supposed perfect cannon. The old vice of the breech-loader gave it an evil reputation among those who had to manage it in actual warfare. Owing either to negligence in charging, or to some other cause, accidents occurred so frequently that, with much reluctance, the gun which attracted more spectators than any other object at the Second Great Exhibition of Peaceful Industry in 1862, became discredited at Woolwich, and the entire system of our ordnance was revolutionised. The Armstrong gun was not disused; it is in use now; a large number being in course of repair at this moment in a kind of hospital for worn and injured guns, which forms part of the Arsenal—but its further introduction was stopped, and the "Woolwich system," as it is called, adopted in its place. This is a modification of the canon rayé, which made as much noise in the campaign which freed Italy from the Austrian yoke, as did the needle-gun in that of Sadowa. Foreign nations are not quite so communicative as we are, and the late Emperor of the French had, at least, one virtue—that of holding his tongue. It is not my purpose to open a discussion concerning the actual inventor of the studded projectile. Many clever men thought that the device of coating an iron shot or shell with lead to make it "bite" into the grooves of the rifled cannon was a mistake, and pro-

posed in its stead that studs or wings of copper or brass should be attached to the plain iron or steel shot, in such order as to fit into the grooves. Plans for projectiles on this system were submitted to and ignored by the English authorities, and also, ostensibly, by the French emperor. While, however, several inventors were waiting for the patronage of the French Government, the emperor was quietly at work making canons rayés and "studded" projectiles. When the Solferino campaign commenced, very few people knew anything about the new rifled cannon, which were privately sent to Genoa, and there put upon their carriages. The effect of those guns was so remarkable, as to produce a great influence on the campaign, and the canons rayés were the talk of artillerymen. In the year 1859, however, Britannia had, by the advice of the Rifle Cannon Committee, already adopted the Armstrong system, and, despite the great practical test undergone by the canons rayés, stuck to it for some years, during which many thousands of Armstrong guns were introduced into her service.

The advocates of muzzle-loaders were not satisfied, and gathering strength with time, at last succeeded in stopping, as I have already pointed out, the further introduction of Armstrong guns, and in substituting for them a muzzle-loading rifled cannon, bored with a few deep grooves, into which fit the copper studs of the shot; and it is the manufacture of these guns and this peculiar ammunition that is now going on so briskly at Woolwich. The new gun may be briefly described as a steel tube, covered with successive strengthening pieces of wrought iron. It is a steel-lined gun in fact; the steel bore being covered by wrought-iron coils, so disposed as to enable the gun to bear the "transverse" strain of the discharge without bursting, while the breech end is supported by a solid forged breech-piece of enormous strength, to resist the "longitudinal" strain. These successive coils are shrunk on to the gun, and the result is a tube of twice the strength that could be obtained by ordinary forging.

On this plan a vast number of guns have been constructed, and many more are being produced with all possible speed. In the great open space in front of the Gun Factory are regiments of guns—mostly of enormous size, ranging from twelve tons upwards. The "Woolwich Infant," once an object of wonder, is now an ordinary

article of production—the staple, as it were, of Britannia's workshop. With years the "Infant" has grown, and weighs no longer thirty-five, but thirty-eight tons. It is now completely dwarfed by the eighty-one ton guns, four of which are now being made for the Inflexible. It is important that the best metal should be used for these enormous weapons of war, and to that end Britannia buys largely of scrap iron, which undergoes infinite forging and welding before its fragments are brought together in the vast masses seen in the Arsenal on every side. Forged and rolled into bars of various sizes, the metal is at last ready for coiling into one of the great pieces to be afterwards shrunk on to the gun. The huge bar welded, forged, and rolled, is heated to a white heat in the furnace, from which one end is drawn out and fixed on a revolving coil, or mandril, as it is technically called. As the mandril turns slowly round, it wraps itself in a glowing coil of living fire, which clings round and round it, ring by ring, like a gigantic boa-constrictor. When complete, the coil is a hollow cylinder, with the successive rings imperfectly joined, and needing, therefore, a further process of forging. This forging of the breech-piece of an eighty-one ton gun is a sight to remember, and can only be witnessed in perfection at night.

Imagine a great dark space into which we have penetrated from the rain and fog outside. Through the gloom move dusky figures, and at one extremity of this Hall of Eblis is gathered a knot of visitors specially invited to witness the most brilliant scene that Woolwich can afford—a night-forging. As our eyes become accustomed to the gloom, we make out the dim outline of the great steam-hammer, and the enormous pincers and cranes which look like instruments of torture for Titans under "the question." All at once there is a cry of surprise. The front of the furnace has gone up, disclosing the interior of a blazing cavern. In the midst stands a gigantic cylindrical frame of iron at a white heat, suggesting to a hungry guest a comparison with a vast Stilton cheese well scooped out. There is no difficulty in moving this enormous mass of incandescent iron. The great cranes move slowly round, and the Titan pincers seize it with a terrible grip. Again the cranes move, and the blazing coil is swung under the giant hammer. This celebrated instrument is an admirable illustration of real power. There is in its work none of the fuss and

clatter of such tiny hammers as deal with tin-tacks or ten-penny nails. Silently but surely it descends, and drives with resistless force the coils closer together. The forty-ton hammer seems to administer rather a friendly persuasive tap than a crushing blow, but the effect is startling. The coils close perceptibly, and there is a mighty splash from the blazing coil which sheds liquid flame on every side under the blow. Tears of burning metal pour out on every side as the hammer comes down again and again upon the great coil, driven by every blow closer and closer together. Shorter and shorter it grows with each persuasive tap, until the forging is completed, and the Titan pincers remove the trunnion-piece from beneath its tormentor.

When built up of coils all wound together, subsequently welded as just described, and then shrunk one on the other, the great guns of Woolwich pass into the hands of an army of workmen. Let us glance at the turning-shop. Here are mighty monsters slowly revolving, while their exterior is being turned to its proper shape. As we step in, one of the "Infants" is undergoing the operation of having ribands of iron cut from his epidermis. As he goes round and round, a sharp cutting edge takes off a riband of iron several inches wide and curling round like a wood shaving. An idea of the enormous pressure employed can be easily got by putting the hand near the riband, which comes off scalding hot. Another beautiful operation is the boring of the lining-tube out of a solid block of toughened steel. Immense pressure is required to enable the cutter to do its work, and a stream of cold water is constantly poured into the grooving tube to reduce the heat generated by the operation. They are busy in the boring-mill, as every where else at Woolwich just now, and the skilful workmen watch their powerful machinery with a keen eye. Akin to the boring-machine is that used for rifling—a work requiring great delicacy and absolutely perfect accuracy. It must be remembered that the efficiency of every gun and every shot depends upon the perfectly accurate fit of the grooves in the barrel, and the huge and costly studded projectile prepared for it. The cutting of these grooves is therefore a serious matter, and is only entrusted to men who are as careful as they are skilful, for the slightest blunder would damage a gun gravely if not irretrievably. There is no appearance of bustle in these departments, no sign of haste.

Saving the inevitable rattle of machinery, the work goes on in silence, every man being intent on the task set him.

When all these numerous operations, including the sighting and proving of the gun, are complete, the "Infant" is blackened and "passed into store." Not only guns are made at Woolwich but ammunition, and in this department the present activity is very marked. It is of course much quicker and easier work to make shot than guns, but great care and accuracy is needful even in this subordinate department. Thousands upon thousands of shot and shell have been turned out recently, and the immense ammunition factory is filled with projectiles of the new shape, in every stage of construction. It is extremely interesting to watch the process of manufacturing the elaborate projectiles which have taken the place of the old segment shell and spherical shot. On the ground outside the foundry are great heaps of old shot. These are broken with a hammer into pieces of convenient size, and are then taken to the row of cupolas for melting down into fluid metal. While this process is going on, the moulders are seen busily at work preparing the sand receptacles for the iron. The shot now made is of two kinds, known as "common" and "Palliser." Projectiles are again divided into shot, shell, and shrapnel. The shot is a solid iron cone of the form familiar to everybody; the common shell contains a cavity to hold the bursting charge; and the shrapnel shell is of a peculiar construction, to be described presently. The peculiarity of the Palliser projectile, invented to pierce iron plates, is that it is not cast entirely in a sand mould, but with its head in an iron chill. The mould is very ingeniously made, and is perfect, even to the holes left to receive the copper studs to be hereafter fixed. Round the casting-pit move the founders, who have already fixed the sand-moulds, each on an iron chill, and arranged them in a circle. Others are busy removing the previous castings, and burying them in the ground that they may not cool too rapidly and crack. In the present busy time at Woolwich, we find no difficulty in following the immense shot for the "Infants" from the melting-pot to the store, as work is being pushed forward vigorously in every department. Our Palliser shell having cooled off properly, and shown neither crack nor flaw, is now ready to be ground to gauge; so hard and brittle is the metal that it cannot be turned in a lathe, and

must therefore have any slight inequalities removed by the grindstone. Being perfect as to size, the projectile, which when finished weighs about nine hundred pounds, is next tested, and then undergoes a remarkable course of treatment. Workmen stand before machines, on each of which a shell is slowly turning round; as it revolves the workman picks up cylindrical lumps of copper from a basket before him, and deftly drops one into each of the spaces left in casting, for its reception. As it leaves his hand, the copper stud travels underneath a hammer which gives it a friendly tap in passing; this tap drives the copper into its place so firmly, as to make it an integral part of the shot, leaving just as much above its level as is needed to catch the grooves of the gun-barrel. The studding of the shot, however, is not yet complete. The ponderous cone is swung by tackle on to other machines, in which the copper studs are cut and planed down to the exact height and shape required. Swiftly and deftly performed, these operations excite admiration at the skill which devised the beautiful machinery, which appears to go about its work like an intelligent being. Supposing the shot to be solid, there is not much more to be done to it, save to blacken it all over, except in the case of the Palliser projectile, the apex of which is painted white, to distinguish it from the "common" kind. Shrapnel, however, has yet to go through a special course of treatment. A shrapnel shell may be shortly described as a cast-iron hollow cylinder, with a wooden conical head fitted on to it. Around and above the powder chamber, the internal space is filled with leaden bullets for small shrapnel, and cast-iron grape-shot for shells of larger size. A small army of men and boys is employed in filling in these shells; every precaution being adopted to make their deadly effect as certain as possible. To ensure the scattering of the bullets when the shell bursts, resin is being poured in to fill, up the spaces between them, as it has been found in practice that, without this, they are apt to clog together and not to kill one-tenth of the people they are intended to destroy. Woolwich is turning out a great store of shrapnel, which has entirely superseded the grape and canister of former days. The latter is only available at very short range, but shrapnel can be hurled for an immense distance with all the effect of a discharge of musketry at old-fashioned distance. On the wharf,

which extends along the whole river-front of the Arsenal, are now accumulating thousands of those deadly missiles. All the military and naval depôts ask for ammunition, but Woolwich appears equal to the demand.

Not only projectiles for the eighty-one-ton gun—costing some five-and-twenty pounds apiece—and others for the "Infants" of about half the weight and price, are made at Woolwich. There are pretty little toys in the way of shrapnel, for instance, weighing seven pounds only, to suit the "mountain gun," a useful instrument for bringing the "noble savage" to book, but not rising to the dignity of historic warfare. Smaller deer than even these scientific playthings engage the attention of Woolwich. Rifled muskets are not made on the site of the old rabbit-warren and Prince Rupert's tower, but the cartridges for them are. Now the modern cartridge is as serious an affair as the modern rifle. In the bygone days of Der Freischütz, rifle-shooting was a very different affair from the routine business now so well known to all of us—thanks to the volunteer movement. The old-fashioned rifleman, Kuno, head-ranger to the Grand Duke of Schloss-Windbeutel, used a rifle as unlike the Martini-Henry or the Snider as could well be imagined. Into the nature of Caspar's gun and bullets it is needless to enquire; but it is perfectly well known how Kuno's weapon was constructed, and what he did with it. It was a heavy grooved rifle, with a rather sharper twist than that now in fashion. Kuno carried with him a quantity of apparatus besides his flint-lock gun. He had two powder-horns, one for loading and the other for priming; he had a store of wadding and of greased circles of leather, and a little hammer. When he loaded his gun he gave his mind to a very serious operation. First of all he wiped out his gun carefully, then poured in his coarse powder and wad, and rammed all down. He next took a greased piece of leather, or, in default of leather, of linen, and placed this over the muzzle of his gun. In this greased disc was laid the old-fashioned spherical bullet, too large to enter the barrel without persuasion. This he applied with the hammer before mentioned, driving the ball by main strength into the muzzle, and then forcing it down with the ramrod. He then primed his gun with some very fine powder, and if his hand were steady, and both flint and steel were in good condition,

all went well. Excellent shooting was made with these old rifles, within, of course, a far more limited range than that of the last new improvements. Whatever may be thought of the comparative merits of breech and muzzle loading in the case of infallible artillery, there is little doubt that the breech-loader has, as a small-arm, completely superseded its sometime rival. Hence the cartridges made at Woolwich for the Snider and Martini-Henry rifles contain all the work which our old friend Kuno was obliged to perform for himself. The complex character of these cartridges is well and briefly described by Major Majendie: "The Boxer service cartridge for the Snider rifle consists of a case of thin brass, rolled into a cylinder, and covered with paper, by which the coil is cemented together. The coiled case is fitted into a double base-cup of brass, with an iron disc forming the end of the cartridge which abuts against the breech-block of the rifle. The case is secured in its position by means of a rolled paper wad inside, which is squeezed out with great force against the sides of the case. The iron base is attached to the cartridge by means of the copper "cap-chamber," which contains the detonating arrangement; the cap-chamber, being riveted over at each end, holds the base tightly to the cartridge. The ignition is effected by means of a percussion cap, resting on a small shouldered brass anvil in the base of the cartridge. To explode the cap, it is necessary that the crown of the cap should be indented—by the striker of the rifle, for example—when the detonating composition is brought into contact with the anvil, and the flash passes through the fire hold at the bottom of the cap-chamber to the powder in the case. The top of the cartridge is closed by means of a small quantity of wool, over which is fitted the bullet. This bullet has four grooves or cannelures round it, which serve to carry the wax lubrication."

Each of these little bits, which go to make up a cartridge, requires a separate set of mechanical appliances. A series of machines is necessary for the bullet alone. The first cuts a bit off a lead rod, and gives it a rude flowerpot-like form; the next turns up its edge, and two others form the internal cavity, which lightens the bullet at the conical end. Another set of machinery is employed for making the clay plugs which fit into the base of the bullet. Some very pretty work is

turned out in the appliances for the propelling end of the cartridge. The iron base is cut out and bevelled as to its orifice by one machine; another makes the copper cap which holds all together; and others, again, are engaged in making the cap which contains the detonating powder and the anvil which, when struck by the "needle" of the gun, explodes the cartridge. All the machines are attended by boys—very smart lads, indeed, quick of eye and hand, and glib of tongue, too, when they have an opportunity. For charging, the cartridges, like the great shells, are removed from the workshops, and when ready for work are consigned to the floating magazine. Several millions of these complex Snider and Martini-Henry cartridges are turned out every week at Woolwich.

There is yet another department among many at Woolwich especially interesting to friends at home and abroad—especially the latter; but for once the large-hearted, if somewhat thick-headed, Briton, has put on his considering-cap, and decided to keep the intelligent foreigner out of this particular corner of the Arsenal. Dame Britannia has for a long time past had specimens of the Whitehead torpedo in her possession—and very wonderful things they are, as Mr. Whitehead has found to his advantage in his manufactory on the Adriatic Sea near Fiume. The Whitehead or fish-torpedo is the beautiful engine of war which sent Lord Charles Beraford in a transport of delight to the House of Commons, then and there to declare his belief that "it could do anything but talk." It is a wonderful instrument, or rather combination of instruments. Outwardly its outline is that of a cigar, pointed at both ends, and of shining steel. Throughout the greater part of its length it is supplied with a dorsal and pectoral fin of steel, which give it a certain resemblance to a fish, and prevent it rolling over. At the bow, or striking end, is the percussion apparatus, communicating with a charge of gun-cotton powerful enough to blow the side out of the mightiest iron-clad yet built. This occupies one-third of its length, and behind it is the mysterious submerging apparatus and the machinery for working the screw-propeller. These ingenious appliances occupy the middle compartment, the third being a receptacle for the compressed air which supplies the motive power. It is beautiful to see the Whitehead torpedo sink to the exact depth required, and then shoot off in the pre-

scribed direction, like some great fish, but endowed with intelligence superior to that vouchsafed to the pisces. There is, however, not much secret about its construction, as specimens can be bought for money of Mr. Whitehead, who is ready to serve all customers for cash; but little is known concerning the new engine constructed at Woolwich, and called the Laboratory torpedo, which possesses all the other qualities of the Whitehead with twice its speed. A submarine engine travelling at the rate of forty miles an hour is a wonder indeed; and, as the authorities at Woolwich hope, will remain one. The days of wooden walls have long since gone by, and the trust of Britannia can no longer be in courage and seamanship alone, but in infallible artillery and the mysterious monsters with which science, when war again breaks out, will people the great deep.

OLD FRENCH ACTORS.

TALMA.

AFTER the death of Lekain, tragedy in France—at least so far as its male representatives were concerned—had fallen to a comparatively low ebb, and bade fair to degenerate even more rapidly, when the advent of a new candidate for popular favour suddenly arrested its downward progress, and raised it to a pitch of excellence which, if equalled, has hardly been surpassed at any previous period of its history. At the epoch of which we speak, Brizard had left the stage; Larive, still a member of the Comédie Française, was failing in health, and played but rarely; and although neither Mdlle. Sainval the younger, Madame Vestris, nor Mdlle. Rancourt had as yet retired, they were but inadequately supported by St. Prix, Monvel, and the emphatic St. Fal. Comedy, on the other hand, had perhaps never been more brilliantly interpreted; Dazincourt, Molé, Fleury, Dugazon, and Mdlle. Contat presented an ensemble such as even in its best days the national theatre had seldom boasted. Such was the state of things when a young man, unknown and unprotected, appeared to take up the gauntlet in behalf of the tragic muse; and it is possible that a slight record of the career of this adventurous champion, destined to effect a revolution in the drama of his time, may be neither deemed inappropriate nor uninteresting.

François Joseph Talma was born in Paris, January 15, 1763, a day celebrated

in theatrical annals as the anniversary of the birth of Molière. His father, a dentist established in London, and enjoying a fair amount of practice, intended him to follow the same profession; and after sending him to prosecute his studies in his native city, instructed him on his return to England in the elements of surgery. By way of relaxation, he was permitted to frequent the society of several young compatriots also settled in London; and these being all more or less dramatic enthusiasts, their leisure hours were mainly employed in organising amateur performances of French comedies, which eventually attracted the notice of certain eminent connoisseurs, one of whom, Lord Harcourt, struck by the precocious talent displayed by the youthful Talma, strongly advised him to try his fortune on the English stage. This project, if ever seriously entertained, was not destined to be realised, for we find him shortly after again in Paris, attending surgical lectures with tolerable assiduity, but still secretly cherishing the idea of becoming an actor.

It is probable that his frequent visits to the Comédie Française, and the encouragement he received from some of its leading members, especially Dugazon, decided his future career; but before definitively abandoning the profession he had already begun to exercise, he determined to abide by the judgment of those best qualified to estimate his ability. With this view, after having taken lessons in declamation from Molé, he invited the persons of his acquaintance whose opinion he desired to ascertain, to be present at a performance of *Iphigénie en Tauride* at Doyen's private theatre, in which he purposed playing Oreste. The result of this essay by no means responded to his expectations. The spectators, with one exception, pronounced the attempt a failure, Mdlle. Sainval the younger alone dissenting from the general verdict, and recognising amid the natural defects of inexperience a germ of future excellence, which only needed cultivation to ensure its speedy development into maturity. To the judicious counsels of this celebrated artist Talma was indebted for the necessary self-confidence which induced him to disregard the unfavourable criticism of his friends, and prepare himself for an ordeal far more perilous and decisive than the one he had as yet encountered—namely, his approaching début at the Théâtre Français. He appeared there for the first time November 21, 1787,

as Séide in Voltaire's tragedy of *Mahomet*, and, according to contemporary accounts, with complete success. "This young actor," says the *Journal de Paris*, "promises well. He possesses every quality requisite for the line of parts selected by him; his face, figure, and voice leave nothing to be desired. He was deservedly applauded, particularly in the three first acts; and with study and application bids fair to attain a brilliant position."

The prediction was verified sooner than the writer could possibly have anticipated, Talma's admission as pensionnaire being at once unanimously agreed to; and his definitive reception as member of the society dating from 1789. Of him it might truly be said that "ses premiers essais furent des coups de maître." More fortunate than his great predecessor Lekain, he had no long and wearisome apprenticeship to undergo, no intrigues to baffle, no professional rivalries to fear; the path to celebrity lay open before him, and he was not a man to miss the opportunity. Even at this early stage of his career, his society was courted by the principal dramatists of the day. One of his biographers relates that after a performance of *Iphigénie en Tauride*, in which he had played *Pylade* in company with Larive, the authors assembled in that actor's dressing-room, including Ducis, Palissot, and Lemierre, overwhelmed him with compliments, and his good-natured chef d'emploi, then on the point of retiring, openly expressed his satisfaction at leaving behind him so worthy a successor. A still greater proof of the esteem accorded to his talent was the choice made of him by Marie Joseph Chénier, November 4, 1789, as the representative of his Charles the Ninth, the triumphant reception of which tragedy, principally due to the powerful acting of its chief interpreter, was eventually destined to destroy the harmony hitherto existing between the *Comédie Française* and its new recruit.

The Revolution had already commenced, and the theatre, as has invariably been the case in Paris on similar occasions, had become a political arena, devoted to the wordy warfare of conflicting parties. Every allusion in the slightest degree applicable to passing events was eagerly seized upon, and vehemently applauded or frantically hissed, according to the temper of the audience; and Charles the Ninth, abounding in clap-traps, and containing moreover divers anti-

monarchical tirades much appreciated by the republican portion of the spectators, its popularity was a foregone conclusion. Such, indeed, was its attraction that the Government, anxious to prevent the nightly scandals arising from a source over which it had practically no control, hinted to the actors the expediency of temporarily withdrawing the piece; and for some weeks it had disappeared from the bills. This veto, however, being in direct opposition to the majority, only made matters worse; and on July 21, 1790, the federal deputies of Provence, headed by Mirabeau, assembled in large numbers in the pit of the *Théâtre Français*, and imperatively demanded that Charles the Ninth should be given on the following evening. Naudet, who was at that moment on the stage, and who, having been forewarned of their project, had his answer ready, replied that owing to the illness of Madame Vestris and St. Prix, both of whom had important parts in the tragedy, it would be impossible for some days to comply with their desire; upon which the tumult increased tenfold, and Naudet, unable to make himself heard, retired. At this critical juncture Talma stepped forward. "Messieurs," he said, "your wish shall be gratified. I will answer for Madame Vestris, who is too sincere a patriot to refuse her co-operation; the part of the Cardinal can be read, and to-morrow you shall have Charles the Ninth." Thereupon shouts of applause, mingled with menaces and imprecations on the unpopular comedians, rang through the house; in the midst of which Talma withdrew behind the scenes, where he and Naudet met face to face. One angry word brought on another, and blows were finally exchanged, the result being a duel, which happily had no serious consequences. Things, however, had gone too far to admit of any amicable adjustment of the quarrel. A few of the actors took part with Talma, but the majority decided against him, and voted his exclusion from the society. Upon this the Municipal Council interfered, and insisted on his readmission, which, after much discussion, was agreed to; but any permanent reconciliation was henceforth impossible, and on April 1, 1791, he voluntarily resigned his position of sociétaire, and, together with Dugazon, Grandmesnil, Madame Vestris, and Mlle. Desgarcins, quitted the *Comédie Française* for the theatre recently erected in the Rue Richelieu, which had been opened under the especial patronage of Chénier, Ducis,

Fabre d'Eglantine, Lemercier, and other leading dramatists of the day.

On the 19th of the same month he married Mdle. Julie Careau, whose salon, famous under the monarchy as the resort of the most eminent personages, political and literary, of the period, had maintained its prestige since the commencement of the Revolution. Among its regular frequenters were Condorcet and Vergniaud, with whom, as well as with most of the Girondins, Talma became intimately acquainted. He then owned a house in the Rue Chantierine—subsequently sold to General Bonaparte—where he gave a splendid entertainment in honour of Dumouriez, on his return from the army of the north. Chénier, Méhul, and the entire Gironde were present on the occasion; and Marat, who had not been invited, came of his own accord, and profited by the opportunity to address some uncomplimentary invectives to the victorious general, who coolly turned his back upon him. While this was going on, Dugazon evinced his disgust at the intrusion by heating a shovel and sprinkling it with perfume, “for the purpose,” as he audibly remarked, “of purifying the air which had been infected by the presence of such a monster.” This malicious pleasantry, perfectly understood by the individual alluded to, nearly cost our hero his head; on the following day he, and the other “conspirators assembled in his house,” were denounced by Marat, and from that moment his name was on the list of the suspected.

During the Reign of Terror he lived in perpetual dread of being summoned before the fatal tribunal; but this constant apprehension, far from paralysing his artistic talent, imparted to his acting a feverish energy which electrified his auditors; and he doubtless owed his exemption from arrest, and its probable consequences, to their passionate admiration of his genius. Strangely enough, after the ninth Thermidor, he was accused of having participated in the crimes of the very Jacobins by whom he had been proscribed, as well as of having contributed to the imprisonment of Fleury, St. Prix, and other members of the Théâtre Français in 1793. This report spread rapidly, and one evening, on his appearance in Epicharis et Néron, he was received with a storm of hisses. Divesting himself for a moment of the imperial dignity, and advancing to the footlights: “Citizens,” he said, “I

have been, and still am a partisan of liberty, but I have no sympathy with assassins. The Reign of Terror has brought me nothing but affliction, for most of my friends have perished on the scaffold.” This justification, applauded to the echo, was speedily confirmed by the testimony of Larive and Mdle. Contat, both of whom explicitly declared that they had been indebted for their safety to the intervention of Talma; the former stating that, when the order for his arrest had been signed by Henriot, he had been enabled to escape pursuit by a timely warning communicated at great personal risk by his old comrade; and the latter, in a note addressed to the editor of the *Républicain Français*, alluding to the kindness shown her by the tragedian and his wife, and indignantly repelling the charge against him as an utterly groundless calumny.

About this time he made the acquaintance of Bonaparte; and, referring to his intimacy with the then obscure lieutenant, mentions an absurd story circulated at a later period. “It was positively affirmed,” says Talma, “that I instructed him how to play his part of emperor. Had such a necessity arisen, he would certainly have been the master, and I the pupil.” It is but justice to Napoleon to add that, during his entire reign, his friendly interest in the career of the actor never diminished. Once a week, at least, Talma went to the Tuileries, timing his visit according to the hour of the emperor’s breakfast; and on such occasions a long discussion on literary and dramatic topics ensued, and the recent performances of the artist were elaborately criticised. One instance may be given in the tragedian’s own words. “The day after I had played Cæsar in *La Mort de Pompée* at Fontainebleau, I arrived at my usual hour; and found that my interpretation of the character had not satisfied the emperor. “While addressing Pompey in the opening scene,” he said, “you are too much in earnest; Cæsar is no Jacobin, he only argues against the royal authority because he is aware that his Romans are listening to him. He is far from believing that the throne, which is in reality the object of his desire, is a thing to be despised. You should show by your tone and manner that what he says is exactly the contrary to what he thinks.”

His first marriage having been annulled by divorce in 1801, Talma contracted a second in the ensuing year with Mdle. Caroline Vanhove, one of the most talented

actresses of the Théâtre Français.* With her he started in September, 1808, for Erfurth, where the meeting between Napoleon, Alexander, and several other potentates had been arranged to take place. On his arrival the emperor sent for him, and after promising him "un beau parterre de rois," examined the list of pieces selected for representation, and ordered *La Mort de César* to be added to the number. In vain Talma urged the impolicy of offering so suggestive a production to the assembled sovereigns; the imperial will was law, and to the evident surprise and embarrassment of the spectators the tragedy was played. "Never," says our hero, "was seen so extraordinary a spectacle; the actors themselves were paralysed by the singularity of their position; we hardly knew how to speak, look, or gesticulate; and at the close of the performance my wife, who was among the audience, overcome by her anxiety, fainted away." In the same year Talma played before Goethe at Weimar, and was highly complimented by the poet; Genast also, in his *Journal of an Old Actor*, thus records his youthful impressions of the great tragedian. "His voice was so clear and powerful, he spoke with such expression, and his gestures were so admirably natural, that he quite stood out from the others, who appeared to me little better than mere ranters."

On his return to Paris, Talma devoted himself with fresh ardour to the study of his art, and was amply rewarded by a popularity which every succeeding year only tended to augment. One dissident alone from the general enthusiasm steadily refused to acknowledge his superiority. This was Geoffroy, the dramatic critic of the *Journal de l'Empire*, who, by his constant and acrimonious attacks, so incensed the irascible Roscius, that one evening, December 9, 1812, when the censor was quietly installed in his box at the Théâtre Français, he caused the door to be opened, and administered to his persecutor a severe castigation. This method of taking the law in his own hands was universally disapproved, and Talma himself afterwards deeply regretted having

adopted it; but the storm eventually blew over, and the only notice taken of the circumstance by Geoffroy was the publication of an article, wherein he declared that in future he would leave the actor to his flatterers, and neither speak well nor ill of him—a promise, by the way, which he forgot to keep. A coloured caricature, entitled *Les fursurs d'Orreste*, and representing the scene in the theatre with more or less fidelity, obtained great success in the print-shops at the time, but is now extremely rare.

Grateful for the kindness he had uniformly received from the emperor, and hearing of his proposed abdication, Talma addressed to him a letter, which, coming at a moment when friends and fortune seemed alike to have forsaken him, touched him deeply; on their next meeting, during the Hundred Days, Napoleon observed to his correspondent that he had brought the answer in person. "However," he added, "I am glad that Louis the Eighteenth appreciated your talent; he ought to know what good acting is, for he has seen Lekain."

After an unprecedentedly brilliant career of nearly thirty-nine years, this great artist made his final appearance in public, June 13, 1826, as Charles the Sixth in Delaville's tragedy of that name. He had been suffering for some weeks from an internal complaint, which he imagined to be merely temporary; and, although in the course of the next three months the disease progressed so rapidly that it was evident to all but himself that his end was approaching, he received his friends as usual, and until within a few hours of his death conversed with them on his favourite subject—the regeneration of the drama. At length, on the morning of October 19, 1826, he expired, apparently without suffering; his last intelligible words were, "Voltaire—like Voltaire!" Two days later, his funeral at Père la Chaise was attended by an immense concourse of people, including members of every class of society from the peer to the artisan; the customary discourses being pronounced by Lafon, in the name of the Comédie Française, and by the Academicians Jouy and Arnault, as representatives of dramatic literature.

It is evident, from the unanimous testimony of his contemporaries, that at no epoch of his life had the genius of Talma so nearly approached perfection as during the period immediately preceding his retirement from the stage. He was then in

* When very young, she had personated the dumb boy in Bouilly's *L'Abbé de l'Épée* with such touching expression, that the spectators were moved to tears. "If," said a writer of the time, "she can affect us so deeply without the aid of words, what would she do with them?" Madame Talma survived her husband many years, and after his death became, by a second marriage, Comtesse de Chalot.

the plenitude of his powers; and those alone who had seen him in his younger days could fairly estimate the gradual progress in artistic excellence, which time and unremitting study had combined to develop. Fleury, who had been an eyewitness of his early successes, and who, from the political antagonism formerly existing between them, can certainly not be deemed an over-partial judge, thus speaks of him in one of the concluding chapters of his memoirs: "Talma invests modern tragedy, which is in itself only a form or shadow, with reality; for without him it would not exist. Nowadays, the tragedian is no longer the interpreter of the poet; the latter merely furnishes the sketch which in the artist's hands becomes a picture. With such insufficient materials at his command, Talma has, during the last twenty years, in my opinion, performed miracles."

A still more graphic description is that given by Macready, in a passage from his diary dated 1822: "The genius of Talma rose above all the conventionality of schools. Every turn and movement as he trod the stage might have given a model for the sculptor's art, and yet all was effected with such apparent absence of preparation as made him seem utterly unconscious of the dignified and graceful attitudes he presented. His voice was flexible and powerful, and his delivery articulate to the finest point without a trace of pedantry. . . . His object was not to dazzle or surprise by isolated effects; the character was his aim;—he put on the man, and was attentive to every minutest trait that might distinguish him. To my judgment he was the most finished artist of his time; not below Kean in his most energetic displays, and far above him in the refinement of his taste and extent of his research; equalling Kemble in dignity, unfettered by his stiffness and formality."

This accomplished actor occasionally visited London, and treated the amateurs of our metropolis to a taste of his quality, by performing selections from his most popular pieces in company with Mdlle. Georges. He was an intimate friend and great admirer of John Kemble, and was present, not only at that tragedian's farewell appearance, but also at the dinner subsequently given in his honour. He spoke English fluently, but with a strong accent; that he could write it perfectly is evident from the letter quoted in Mr. Raymond's memoir of Elliston, in acknow-

ledgment of a handsome Roman sword sent to him by the Drury Lane manager. This epistle, highly interesting and expressed with equal elegance and correctness, concludes as follows: "God bless you, my dear Elliston, and let me tell you, like the doctor in our Molière, 'Salus, honor, et argentum, atque bonum appetitum.' Your ever well-wisher and friend, Talma."

In private life he was thoroughly amiable, fond of society, and entirely free from pretension. Once off the stage, he was no longer the actor, but the polished and genial man of the world, eager to oblige others, and never happier than when it was in his power to serve them. Generous and open-handed to excess, he was far more disposed to squander than to hoard; and through his recklessness in money matters, found himself more than once in embarrassed circumstances. "If my tastes were as expensive as yours," one day remarked his wife; "if I wished for diamonds and brilliant equipages, what would you say?" "In that case, my dear," coolly replied Talma, "I should say that we were likely to be still more in debt than we are now."

His chief delight consisted in the embellishment of his country house at Brunoy. There he was in the habit of organising private theatricals, the pieces being mostly selected from the répertoire of the Variétés. Like his successor Rachel, who considered her *Célimène* and *Marinette* masterpieces of acting, he strangely enough imagined his forte to be not tragedy but farce; and after a deplorable failure in *Le Désespoir de Jocrisse*, gravely asked his friends if he did not act it better than Brunet.

He had a bad memory for names and faces, and often fell into conversation with strangers, fancying them to be old acquaintances. While walking with his wife one morning, a young man accosted him familiarly, and engaged him in a discussion on dramatic topics. Talma was in high spirits, and enchanted with his agreeable companion; and when they separated, it was with a promise on both sides to meet again soon. "Who is that gentleman?" enquired his wife when they were alone. "Ma foi, I haven't the least idea," replied the tragedian. "But you seemed to know him very well; you called him your friend." "Very likely; but now I think of it, I don't remember ever having seen him before to-day."

His correspondents not unfrequently

suffered from his habitual forgetfulness. One of them, who had been absent four years in America, and had in vain waited for an answer to his letters, on his return to Paris hastened to the theatre, and reproached the actor for his unpardonable neglect. "Mon cher," said Talma, in a tone of unfeigned surprise, "you are doing me an injustice. There is a letter of four pages for you in my desk. You shall have it to-morrow; but pray don't accuse me of negligence again."

When he played Titus, he wore his hair out after the fashion of a Roman bust. This coiffure à la Titus became the rage; and the services of the hairdresser of the Théâtre Français were so continually in request, that Talma, seeing one evening the shop floor covered with the spoils of many heads, laughingly remarked that although Titus might, for all he knew to the contrary, have lost a day, his coiffeur certainly had not.

Previous to his second marriage he was for a time deeply smitten by the charms of Mdlle. Bourgoïn, one of the most fascinating actresses of the Comédie Française. An extract from an unpublished letter to Madame Dugazon would seem to prove that his attachment was but indifferently responded to. "Mdlle. Bourgoïn is the plague of my life; I feel that if I have not the courage to break with her at once, I shall end by being the unhappiest of men. I will not see her, for I know my own weakness, and it is time to put a stop to the uncertainty that tortures me. Go to her, I beg of you, this very day, and ask her for my letters, if by chance she has not destroyed them. She shall not keep them to make me the laughing-stock of her future lovers." Not long after, Mdlle. Bourgoïn consoled herself for the defection of her admirer by accepting the homage of the minister Chaptal, an event in her career recorded as follows by a complacent penny-a-liner of the period:

Tremblez tous devant moi, Lafon, Fleury, Talma,
Tremblez tous devant moi, car Monsieur Chaptal
m'a!

One more extract from a letter, also unpublished, addressed to the Duc de Duras, first gentleman of the chamber, and dated March, 1817, is curious as particularly referring to certain misunderstandings between him and the management of the Théâtre Français since the Restoration. After expressing his desire, for special motives, to relinquish his position as

member of the society for that of pensionnaire, with a salary of twenty thousand francs and six months' leave of absence—for the present year only—and adding that the proposal has not been favourably entertained by his brother-actors, he says: "I am very far from esteeming myself at a higher rate than I am worth; but I cannot, without affecting a false modesty, avoid feeling that I am still fully capable of contributing for some time longer to the prosperity of the theatre and the success of dramatic art."

According to M. Regnier of the Comédie Française, none of the numerous portraits of Talma, engraved or lithographed, are entirely satisfactory. The best he considers to be the one painted by Picot four years before the actor's death, and engraved by Lignon. He cites also a sketch by Gérard, and a lithograph, signed Amélie M. R., as giving a tolerably correct idea of the original.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I. A DELPHIC ORACLE.

THE Straits of Dover can scarcely be regarded as especially strange waters; but few are they in whom familiarity breeds contempt for them. On a certain last Monday in Lent, in particular, and after sundown—to be more particular still—few who had to do with them but were as shy of them as of strangers, and none parted with them but as from bitter enemies. Neither steward nor stewardess had a sinecure that evening. A strong wind had been blowing up the Channel for a week, and had left the waves to settle as they best could with one another—like fellow-citizens, who fly to civil war as the only means of conquering somebody when a foreign enemy has swept over them. The hearts of the passengers on board the Dover packet were now left somewhere with the moon when the vessel sank, and now far under water when she swung up to the moon, and—in short, everyone had a worse time than anybody but a stewardess cares to dwell upon: as bad as the extraction of a second tooth, and worse than the rejection of a first offer.

But it was over at last. The packet lay along the pier, too late to afford a spectacle for those disciples of Lucretius who enjoy

nothing so much as to stand in all the self-satisfaction of a secure breakfast, and to compare their own placid complexions with the green cheeks and yellow eyes that file before them. England grew dear, indeed. Even the next-door neighbours, and therefore the natural enemies of that nation—perfidé, bourgeoisie, all else that is despicable, excepting poor—felt a sense of serene relief on seeing at last those white cliffs which even in the wildest moonlight look the very type of terra firma, and the castle, which has probably seen more of cosmopolitan humanity than any other building in the world. No; there is no country so dear as England—excepting France, when, on an equally bad night, we cross the same strait the other way.

“Ilma!” moaned a voice from out of a bundle of furs, that seemed to have been thrown down upon deck haphazard.

“Giulia,” answered a wail from another heap of wraps hard by.

“I am dying.”

“I am dead, Giulia.”

“Where is Thérèse?”

The wail did not answer.

“Ilma, per l'amor di Dio—go and bring me Thérèse.”

“I daresay she is seeing after the things.”

“And leaving me to die. Oh, but I suffer! And you lie dozing there. But it is all for oneself in this world.”

“Ah—in the world. But I'm out of it, Giulia.”

“Then you are not selfish any more. Per carità, bring me Thérèse.”

“Yes, Giulia.”

The disembodied spirit made an effort and rose.

“Now that you are up, Ilma, please look for my salts, and my handkerchief, and my fan. They must be very near me, I'm sure, but I dare not open my eyes. Where are you?”

“Here, Giulia. And—and—I never will be here any more.”

Of course she who asked for help needed it the less, and she who tried to give it needed it the more. But that was the way of the world about that period. Giulia still lay passively among the furs, and talked, and ordered, while Ilma crept, ghost-like and woe-begone, across the deck, and did her best to pick up a vinaigrette that lay within three inches of Giulia's hand. But in her prostration, and in the dark, she fell forward, and in trying, selfishly, to save herself, dropped the vinaigrette and broke it in pieces.

Giulia, who had been too prostrate even to reach out a finger or raise an eyelid, started up from among her furs lioness-fashion.

“Asino! stupidaccio! If there is one thing I care for on earth it is that vinaigrette. It has been over the Atlantic, yes, and the Lago Maggiore; and has never been broken before. It is a bad omen—it is a warning. I had sooner you had broken your leg, or anything. It only happened to me twice before. Once I broke a fan, just before an engagement at Brussels, and the theatre was burned before I had appeared ten times; and once I broke a plate, and then a new dress was spoiled by the gravy. And this is now three times—it is the third warning. I will not land. I will go back again.”

Ilma heaved as deep a sigh as she dared. “To-night, Giulia?”

“So soon as the ship goes back again. Thérèse! Thérèse!”

“Perhaps she is at the custom-house.”

“Then go and ask for me when this ship goes back. I will not land in England, no, not for an hour.”

“And break your engagement?”

“Corpo di bacco—si! What is an engagement to me? I have broken twenty—but never that vinaigrette before.”

“But what shall you say to the impresario?”

“I shall say that I do what I please. We will go back again—now.”

“Giulia—I cannot go back again. I should die of agony. Oh, Giulia, for the love of heaven, let us sleep to-night on land!”

“It is true I must have some soup—but no. I will not be mad. Thérèse shall bring me some bouillon, and I will take it here.”

It was certainly hard, after having escaped at last from those ills of the sea, which are harder to bear than its dangers, into the immediate prospect of rest and comfort, to be ordered to resign the dream, and to set her face seaward again. Ilma looked desperately at the sky and the sea, and yearningly at the shore, where the lights seemed blinking a welcome. But it was clear enough that Giulia was one of those whose caprices are destinies to themselves and laws to others.

“And what is to become of me?”

“Of you? Oh, you will be well again when you have eaten some bouillon. If I can go back to Calais, you can—nobody suffers like me.”

“I cannot, Giulia. I will leave the ship,

and sleep on the pier. I would rather get my death of cold, than—oh, it is horrible.”

“You are a coward, Ilma—a child.”

“I don't know that it's more like a child,” said Ilma sullenly, “to be afraid of the sea, where one might be drowned to death any minute, or burned, or shaken inside out, than to be frightened because one breaks a smelling-bottle. I don't see how staying isn't braver than running away. And I thought, Giulia—”

“You would think nothing of such things, if you knew what I know. And, in short, I intend to go back again.”

“All the others are on land, and Thérèse will have got the things to the hotel,” said Ilma—not having learned that the surest way to turn a caprice into a resolve is to tell a woman like Giulia that her whim is eccentric, or against reason.

“Let them, and let her. The others may go on, and Thérèse must have the things brought back again.”

“I—you will die of—”

“Very well. I will die. But I will not land.”

Ilma looked appealingly to earth and heaven—everywhere, save to the pitiless sea—and clasped and wrung her hands in despair. They were the last passengers left on board, and she doubted not but that Giulia would remain, in spite of anything that could be said or done.

“I don't think they will let you stay.”

“No? Then I shall stay without letting. If they asked me to stay, perhaps I should go. Who knows?”

“I wish the captain would fall in love with you.”

“He shall, if I can stay no other way—yes, sallow and thin as I am. But here I am, and here I stay. Go to the custom-house and find Thérèse. Tell her that I return by this or by the next packet, and find a porter to bring back the luggage to the pier. I shall speak to the captain, and if I may remain on board, well; if not, I will lie down among the luggage. The pier is not the shore, after all. And then go to the hotel and order them to send me some bouillon, and some champagne, and a pillow, and some bread. Here is my purse, if they want to be paid. Yes; I will wait upon the pier after all. It is not the shore—and I shall be more comfortable than here.”

Ilma, too ill for anything but obedience, crept off, in all the gloom of martyrdom, without any of its consolations, to sacrifice herself against her will to another woman's

whim. Clari wrapped her furs round her, and sat down on a stone bench to revel in her self-inflicted martyrdom—all the more enjoyable because it was absolutely without reason. Since she had left Hinchford, all the world that cared in the least to gossip about her—and it was to the full as large as any other special world—knew that her capricious eccentricities had increased, were increasing, and only ought not to be diminished, because, in that case, the world would have had less to talk about than ever. As it was, people were now beginning to talk less about the magnificent voice, than about the oddities of Mademoiselle Clari. She seemed to take a perverse delight in doing anything that would make somebody stare, if it were only a crossing-sweeper, by giving him a piece of twenty francs, instead of one of two sous. In great things or small, it seemed to be all one to her. She would make engagements, as if for the express purpose of breaking them at the last hour, or order herself to be woken in the afternoon, that she might rise at some unearthly hour in the early morning. She would buy some work of art at an extravagant price, and leave it behind her at a railway-station, on the ground of its being inconvenient to carry. She had been hissed at Naples for some shadowy musical offence, too subtle for non-Italian ears to grasp, and narrowly escaped imprisonment for hurling at her audience the name of “canaglia” from the stage. She sent the unfortunate Thérèse nearly mad with her whims about dress, and would have sent her quite mad, but that the femme de chambre found such caprices not unprofitable. She went into rages over crumpled rose-leaves, and yet, at other times, would revel in discomfort and hardship—so long as it was perfectly avoidable. She would have quarrelled with Providence for not making it rain roast ortolans in Kamschatka, and yet, in Paris, would take it into her head to dress like a quakeress and live like an anchorite—for, perhaps, a whole half day at a time. That the breaking of a smelling-bottle should prove cause enough for her to turn back from England, a week before the season began, was in nowise strange for her. The only strange thing about it was, that she should have had so good a reason for her whim. Mostly, she was best satisfied with having no reason at all. Reason is so painfully and vulgarly reasonable.

She had intended, or rather planned,

that she, and her maid Thérèse, and Mademoiselle Ilma Krasinska—a young Polish soprano who had made a lamentable fiasco in Italy—should spend a comfortable night at Dover and, as comfortably as might be, travel to London the following afternoon. She avoided the night express, because that was a quicker, cheaper, and more usual mode of proceeding. She carried Mademoiselle Krasinska with her because the Polish soprano was both a social and a musical failure—at any rate she had no other reason, unless it were the innate propensity of prime *donne* to patronise and make much of those who can never hope to rival them. Cheap generosity is beyond all question the greatest luxury in the world; and Mademoiselle Krasinska had, for some weeks past, proved that the star's condescension had not been sown upon ungrateful soil. So lively was her sense of favours to come that nothing would part her from her patroness, whose whims she obeyed as divine laws. And therefore, and for all these reasons and unreasons, Mademoiselle Clari was sitting out of doors alone in the moonlight, deliberately feeling as ill as she could, delightfully self-conscious of being homeless and friendless, deserted alike by the maid who had gone to look after the luggage and the protégée whom she had herself despatched to see after the bouillon, and thinking over the broken vinaigrette in tragic despair. People who are bent on being miserable need not be so ingenious as Clari to invent miseries, when they obstinately refuse to come by nature.

But there was more in the vinaigrette than common sal ammoniac, after all.

Though nobody ever said it, though not even her looking-glass ever hinted it, there was no doubt about it—the youth of Mademoiselle Clari was past and gone. She had worn well, had lasted perhaps even better than she had fairly worn; but not even the stars of heaven have a voice for ever in the music of the spheres. There are suns now in the skies that have not shone there always, and even the sun which we know the best is supposed to be dying and growing cold while he gives light and heat to more than a hundred worlds. A thousand years or so are not much to him; but a great singer is a patriarch only in the eyes of a butterfly. She comes nowhence, and she goes nowhither. And it was now the last generation of opera-goers who had made Clari a queen

of song. Already there were those who said to their nephews and nieces: "Ah, but you should have heard her fifteen years ago—when she was in her prime!"

When she was—that is the root of the whole matter. There are those living who have seen a great queen, whom kings and queens of smaller nations have honoured, hissed by a gallery of gods at half-a-crown a head, who could only hear the tuneless voice, and missed altogether the pathos which lay in it because it was out of tune and tried to sing. They saw the heavy, awkward Lucrezia pulled by main force from her knees by a Gennaro who might have been, not her son, but her grandson; and they did not say, "It is time to send her off—but let the last time be with flowers." Some there were who only saw and heard the past, but these were few—and how could the rest care for what their fathers and mothers have heard? And so the ex-queen departed from among us in hisses and laughter, and there was a sorry end of her—before she died. Clari was not yet in sight of this pass, but her inmost heart knew that there were new stars with voices not equal to what hers once had been, but at least as pleasant to the new ears of new men as hers was now. When men mortgage their souls, according to the legends, a time is always specified for foreclosure. It had not been specified when Noëmi Barne sold herself on the Corso; but that was because time is of the essence of such a contract as hers had been. Youth was leaving her, beauty was following, voice was hardening; and how was Clari, of all women, to bear the doom of a dethroned queen? She might indeed retire with her glory still upon her. So people say—but only people who do not know. Those who know need not be told why; those who say it could not be made to understand. A retired soprano is as much a contradiction in terms as a retired statesman. And how was she to make a bed of laurels for herself on Lago Maggiore when she had not even the remembrance of love to make up for being absolutely alone? She had not so much as a niece to wait for her shoes.

No wonder that she put up with a protégée; no wonder that, after her fashion, she tried to impress her personality upon the world. It might not have been the best or wisest way, but it was hers. She could alternately spoil and trample upon Mademoiselle Krasinska according to her mood, and she could assert herself to the

end, and so long as a shred or patch of voice was left her. Even when the world would no longer listen, it could be made to stare. She could take at least the world's eyes—with which, for the most part, men hear and listen—and concentrate them upon the most singular of prime donne. Nothing of all this was in her mind. But it was somewhere, and the spirit, or demon, of wasted womanhood drove her on, from shore to shore, and from whim to whim.

Of late, things had not been going quite as she would have had them. There was that "canaglia" episode, in which her presence of mind had only saved her from a musical fiasco, by turning it into a triumph of notoriety. A new woman from New York was going to do wonderful things, according to the New York papers. There had been a cabal against her in Berlin. She had conquered, but she might not conquer a second time. Her caprices had cost her more money than would have bought twenty villas on Lake Como. It was becoming as needful to sing for money as for glory. And so it was with a sort of vague foreboding that she set her face towards the London season—even towards that faithful city which will bear with ruins till they absolutely tumble down, and will pay not for what it enjoys so much as for what it is told, on the best authority, other people used to enjoy. She did not go with a light heart to victory.

And so, when, all ill from the sea, wet, and utterly out of temper, the vinaigrette fell, it was no common omen to her Ghetto-trained mind. England, last year, had been full of strange experience for her—what was the England of this year to prove? She was not alone in feeling that prescience of fatality which says, *Fly*. And it is not in the Ghetto or on the stage that one learns to take a sensible view of such things. It was a warning, and she was warned.

Back came Ilma, followed by Thérèse and the luggage.

"There is no boat till to-morrow morning," said Mademoiselle Krasinska.

"Then I shall stay here till to-morrow morning. And the bouillon?"

"It will come."

"Ah, and so will the rain, *mon Dieu!*"

said Thérèse, looking up to the sky. "I feel a drop on my nose."

"Ah!" sighed Clari, not without satisfaction in thinking how uncomfortable everybody was going to be. She was craving for sympathy, and this was the readiest road she could find.

"Prosper will say you dared not come to London," said Ilma, fixing her eyes on one particular star.

"Prosper!" cried Clari, starting up and flushing.

"Yes, Giulia; that is what he will say."

"Prosper! That I do not dare! *Corpo d'un Cane!* He thinks I cannot do without him. That he is my voice—he, the humbug, the impostor, the charlatan! Ah, but he shall see, Thérèse!"

"Madame!"

"Have the luggage back to the hotel. I go to London by the first train."

"Madame!"

"Yes; I dare. And he shall see. I will sing him into little pieces. Ilma, give me my vinaigrette, if you please, and your arm. I go to the hotel."

"The vinaigrette? But you can take mine."

"Ah!" exclaimed Clari again, in another tone. "I remember. *Per Bacco!* what is to be done?"

"Giulia, how can you think so much of a bit of broken glass, when——"

"Ilma—it is not for nothing that I broken something for the third time, with Prosper for my enemy. I felt it all without the breaking. There are women in the—in Rome who would know. But Prosper shall not say I do not dare. But no——"

She stopped suddenly; one foot seemed to advance, the other to draw her back, against, or rather without, her will. Ilma looked at Thérèse in despair, which was reflected to the full.

"Ah, bestia that I am!" said Clari. "As if to break a glass were not the happiest omen in the world! It should be a wine-glass; but the vinaigrette was glass, and why should the shape matter? It was a plate and a fan that I broke before. *Dio mercè!*"

"Then—we go on to London?"

"For what else are we come? Does one come to England to go to Moscow? As for Prosper, he shall see!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXXVI. POPENJOY IS POPENJOY.

THEN came Lady Brabazon's party. Lord George said nothing further to his wife about Jack De Baron for some days after that storm in Berkeley Square—nor did she to him. She was quite contented that matters should remain as they now were. She had vindicated herself, and if he made no further accusation, she was willing to be appeased. He was by no means contented; but, as a day had been fixed for them to leave London, and that day was now but a month absent, he hardly knew how to insist upon an alteration of their plans. If he did so he must declare war against the dean, and, for a time, against his wife also. He postponed, therefore, any decision, and allowed matters to go on as they were. Mary was no doubt triumphant in her spirit. She had conquered him for a time, and felt that it was so. But she was, on that account, more tender and observant to him than ever. She even offered to give up Lady Brabazon's party altogether. She did not much care for Lady Brabazon's party, and was willing to make a sacrifice that was perhaps no sacrifice. But to this he did not assent. He declared himself to be quite ready for Lady Brabazon's party, and to Lady Brabazon's party they went. As she was on the staircase she asked him a question. "Do you mind my having a waltz to-night?" He could not bring himself for the moment to be stern enough to refuse. He knew that the pernicious man would not be there. He was quite sure that the question was not asked in reference to the pernicious

man. He did not understand, as he should have done, that a claim was being made for general emancipation, and he muttered something which was intended to imply assent. Soon afterwards she took two or three turns with a stout middle-aged gentleman, a Count somebody, who was connected with the German embassy. Nothing on earth could have been more harmless or apparently uninteresting. Then she signified to him that she had done her duty to Lady Brabazon and was quite ready to go home. "I'm not particularly bored," he said; "don't mind me." "But I am," she whispered, laughing, "and as I know you don't care about it, you might as well take me away." So he took her home. They were not there above half an hour, but she had carried her point about the waltzing.

On the next day the dean came to town to attend a meeting at Mr. Battle's chambers by appointment. Lord George met him there, of course, as they were at any rate supposed to act in strict concert; but on these days the dean did not stay in Munster Court when in London.

He would always visit his daughter, but would endeavour to do so in her husband's absence, and was unwilling even to dine there. "We shall be better friends down at Brotherton," he said to her. "He is always angry with me after discussing this affair of his brother's; and I am not quite sure that he likes seeing me here." This he had said on a previous occasion, and now the two men met in Lincoln's Inn Fields, not having even gone there together.

At this meeting the lawyer told them a strange story, and one which to the dean was most unsatisfactory—one which he absolutely determined to disbelieve. "The

marquis," said Mr. Battle, "had certainly gone through two marriage ceremonies with the Italian lady—one before the death, and one after the death, of her first reputed husband. And as certainly the so-called Popenjoy had been born before the second ceremony." So much the dean believed very easily, and the information tallied altogether with his own views. If this were so, the so-called Popenjoy could not be a real Popenjoy, and his daughter would be Marchioness of Brotherton when this wicked ape of a marquis should die; and her son, should she have one, would be the future marquis. But then there came the remainder of the lawyer's story. Mr. Battle was inclined, from all that he had learned, to believe that the marchioness had never really been married at all to the man whose name she had first borne, and that the second marriage had been celebrated merely to save appearances.

"What appearances!" exclaimed the dean. Mr. Battle shrugged his shoulders. Lord George sat in gloomy silence. "I don't believe a word of it," said the dean.

Then the lawyer went on with his story. This lady had been betrothed early in life to the Marchese Luigi; but the man had become insane—partially insane, and by fits and starts. For some reason, which might probably never be understood, the lady's family had thought it expedient that the lady should bear the name of the man to whom she was to be married. She had done so for some years, and had been in possession of some income belonging to him. But Mr. Battle was of opinion that she had never been Luigi's wife. Further enquiries might possibly be made, and might add to further results. But they would be very expensive. A good deal of money had already been spent. "What did Lord George wish?"

"I think we have done enough," said Lord George slowly, thinking also that he had been already constrained to do much too much.

"It must be followed out to the end," said the dean. "What! Here is a woman who professed for years to be a man's wife, who bore his name, who was believed by everybody to have been his wife——"

"I did not say that, Mr. Dean," interrupted the lawyer.

"Who lived on the man's revenues as his wife, and even bore his title, and now in such an emergency as this we are to take a cock-and-bull story as gospel. Remember, Mr. Battle, what is at stake."

"Very much is at stake, Mr. Dean, and therefore these enquiries have been made at a very great expense. But our own evidence, as far as it goes, is all against us. The Luigi family say that there was no marriage. Her family say that there was, but cannot prove it. The child may die, you know."

"Why should he die?" asked Lord George.

"I am trying the matter all round, you know. I am told the poor child is in ill-health. One has got to look at probabilities. Of course you do not abandon a right by not prosecuting it now."

"It would be a cruelty to the boy to let him be brought up as Lord Popenjoy, and afterwards dispossessed," said the dean.

"You, gentlemen, must decide," said the lawyer. "I only say that I do not recommend further steps."

"I will do nothing further," said Lord George. "In the first place, I cannot afford it."

"We will manage that between us," said the dean. "We need not trouble Mr. Battle with that. Mr. Battle will not fear but that all expenses will be paid."

"Not in the least," said Mr. Battle, smiling.

"I do not at all believe the story," said the dean. "It does not sound like truth. If I spent my last shilling in sifting the matter to the bottom, I would go on with it. Though I were obliged to leave England for twelve months myself, I would do it. A man is bound to ascertain his own rights."

"I will have nothing more to do with it," said Lord George, rising from his chair. "As much has been done as duty required; perhaps more. Mr. Battle, good morning. If we could know as soon as possible what this unfortunate affair has cost, I shall be obliged." He asked his father-in-law to accompany him, but the dean said that he would speak a word or two further to Mr. Battle, and remained.

At his club Lord George was much surprised to find a note from his brother. The note was as follows:

"Would you mind coming to me here to-morrow or the next day, at three? B.

"Scumberg's Hotel, Tuesday."

This to Lord George was very strange indeed. He could not but remember all the circumstances of his former visit to his brother—how he had been insulted, how his wife had been vilified, how his brother had heaped scorn on him. At first thought that he was bound to refuse to

as he was asked. But why should his brother ask him? And his brother was his brother—the head of his family. He decided at last that he would go, and left a note himself at Scumberg's Hotel that evening, saying that he would be there on the morrow.

He was very much perplexed in spirit as he thought of the coming interview. He went to the dean's club and to the dean's hotel, hoping to find the dean, and thinking that, as he had consented to act with the dean against his brother, he was bound in honour to let the dean know of the new phase in the affair. But he did not find his father-in-law. The dean returned to Brotherton on the following morning, and therefore knew nothing of this meeting till some days after it had taken place. The language which the marquis had used to his brother, when they were last together, had been such as to render any friendly intercourse almost impossible. And then the mingled bitterness, frivolity, and wickedness of his brother, made every tone of the man's voice and every glance of his eye distasteful to Lord George. Lord George was always honest, was generally serious, and never malicious. There could be no greater contrast than that which had been produced between the brothers, either by difference of disposition from their birth, or by the varied circumstances of a residence on an Italian lake and one at Manor Cross. The marquis thought his brother to be a fool, and did not scruple to say so on all occasions. Lord George felt that his brother was a knave, but would not have so called him on any consideration. The marquis, in sending for his brother, hoped that, even after all that had passed, he might make use of Lord George. Lord George, in going to his brother, hoped that, even after all that had passed, he might be of use to the marquis.

When he was shown into the sitting-room at the hotel, the marchioness was again there. She, no doubt, had been tutored. She got up at once and shook hands with her brother-in-law, smiling graciously. It must have been a comfort to both of them that they spoke no common language, as they could hardly have had many thoughts to interchange with each other.

"I wonder why the deuce you never learned Italian!" said the marquis.

"We never were taught," said Lord George.

"No; nobody in England ever is taught

anything but Latin and Greek, with this singular result, that after ten or a dozen years of learning not one in twenty knows a word of either language. That is our English idea of education. In after life a little French may be picked up, from necessity; but it is French of the very worst kind. My wonder is that Englishmen can hold their own in the world at all."

"They do," said Lord George, to whom all this was ear-piercing blasphemy. The national conviction that Frenchmen, Italians, and Prussians must, in dealing with us, be filled with infinite disgust. They must ever be saying, 'Pig, pig, pig,' beneath their breath, at every turn."

"Yes; there is a ludicrous strength even in their pigheadedness. But I always think that Frenchmen, Italians, and Prussians must, in dealing with us, be filled with infinite disgust. They must ever be saying, 'Pig, pig, pig,' beneath their breath, at every turn."

"They don't dare to say it out loud," said Lord George.

"They are too courteous, my dear fellow." Then he said a few words to his wife in Italian, upon which she left the room, again shaking hands with her brother-in-law, and again smiling.

Then the marquis rushed at once into the middle of his affairs. "Don't you think, George, that you are an infernal fool to quarrel with me?"

"You have quarrelled with me. I haven't quarrelled with you."

"Oh no; not at all! When you send lawyer's clerks all over Italy to try to prove my boy to be a bastard—that is not quarrelling with me! When you accuse my wife of bigamy, that is not quarrelling with me! When you conspire to make my house in the country too hot to hold me, that is not quarrelling with me!"

"How have I conspired? With whom have I conspired?"

"When I explained my wishes about the house at Cross Hall, why did you encourage those foolish old maids to run counter to me? You must have understood pretty well that it would not suit either of us to be near the other, and yet you choose to stick up for legal rights."

"We thought it better for my mother."

"My mother would have consented to anything that I proposed. Do you think I don't know how the land lies? Well; what have you learned in Italy?" Lord George was silent. "Of course, I know. I'm not such a fool as not to keep my ears and eyes open. As far as your enquiries

have gone yet, are you justified in calling Popenjoy a bastard?"

"I have never called him so—never. I have always declared my belief and my wishes to be in his favour."

"Then why the deuce have you made all this rumpus?"

"Because it was necessary, to be sure. When a man marries the same wife twice over——"

"Have you never heard of that being done before? Are you so ignorant as not to know that there are a hundred little reasons which may make that expedient? You have made your enquiries now, and what is the result?"

Lord George paused a moment before he replied, and then answered with absolute honesty. "It is all very odd to me. That may be my English prejudice. But I do think that your boy is legitimate."

"You are satisfied as to that?"

He paused again, meditating his reply. He did not wish to be untrue to the dean, but then he was very anxious to be true to his brother. He remembered that in the dean's presence he had told the lawyer that he would have nothing to do with further enquiries. He had asked for the lawyer's bill, thereby withdrawing from the investigation. "Yes," he said slowly; "I am satisfied."

"And you mean to do nothing further?"

Again he was very slow, remembering how necessary it would be that he should tell all this to the dean, and how full of wrath the dean would be. "No; I do not mean to do anything further."

"I may take that as your settled purpose?"

There was another pause, and then he spoke. "Yes; you may."

"Then, George, let us try and forget what has passed. It cannot pay for you and me to quarrel. I shall not stay in England very long. I don't like it. It was necessary that the people about should know that I had a wife and son, and so I brought him and her to this comfortless country. I shall return before the winter, and for anything that I care you may all go back to Manor Cross."

"I don't think my mother would like that."

"Why shouldn't she like it? I suppose I was to be allowed to have my own house when I wanted it? I hope there was no offence in that, even to that dragon Sarah? At any rate, you may as well look after the property; and if they won't live there,

you can. But there's one question I want to ask you."

"Well?"

"What do you think of your precious father-in-law? and what do you think that I must think of him? Will you not admit that for a vulgar, impudent brute, he is about as bad as even England can supply?" Of course Lord George had nothing to say in answer to this. "He is going on with this tomfoolery, I believe?"

"You mean the enquiry?"

"Yes; I mean the enquiry whether my son and your nephew is a bastard. I know he put you up to it. Am I right in saying that he has not abandoned it?"

"I think you are right."

"Then by Heaven I'll ruin him. He may have a little money, but I don't think his purse is quite so long as mine. I'll lead him such a dance that he shall wish he had never heard the name of Germain. I'll make his deanery too hot to hold him. Now, George, as between you and me, this shall be all passed over. That poor child is not strong, and after all you may probably be my heir. I shall never live in England, and you are welcome to the house. I can be very bitter, but I can forgive; and as far as you are concerned, I do forgive. But I expect you to drop your precious father-in-law." Lord George was again silent. He could not say that he would drop the dean; but at this moment he was not sufficiently fond of the dean to rise up in his stirrups and fight a battle for him. "You understand me," continued the marquis, "I don't want any assurance from you. He is determined to prosecute an enquiry adverse to the honour of your family, and in opposition to your settled convictions. I don't think that after that you can doubt about your duty. Come and see me again before long; won't you?" Lord George said that he would come again before long, and then departed.

As he walked home his mind was sorely perplexed and divided. He had made up his mind to take no further share in the Popenjoy investigation, and must have been right to declare as much to his brother. His conscience was clear as to that. And then there were many reasons which induced him to feel coldly about the dean. His own wife had threatened him with her father. And the dean was always driving him. And he hated the dean's money. He felt that the dean was not quite all that a gentleman should be. But nevertheless, it behoved him above

things to be honest and straightforward with the dean.

There had been something in his interview with his brother to please him, but it had not been all delightful.

CHAPTER XXXVII. PREPARATIONS FOR THE BALL.

How was he to keep faith with the dean? This was Lord George's first trouble after his reconciliation with his brother. The dean was back at the Deanery, and Lord George mistrusted his own power of writing such a letter as would be satisfactory on so abstruse a matter. He knew that he should fail in making a good story, even face to face, and that his letter would be worse than spoken words. In intellect he was much inferior to the dean, and was only too conscious of his own inferiority. In this condition of mind he told his story to his wife. She had never even seen the marquis, and had never quite believed in those ogre qualities which had caused so many groans to Lady Sarah and Lady Susanna. When, therefore, her husband told her that he had made his peace with his brother, she was inclined to rejoice. "And Popenjoy is Popenjoy," she said, smiling.

"I believe he is, with all my heart."

"And that is to be an end of it, George? You know that I have never been eager for any grandeur."

"I know it. You have behaved beautifully all along."

"Oh, I won't boast. Perhaps I ought to have been more ambitious for you. But I hate quarrels, and I shouldn't like to have claimed anything which did not really belong to us. It is all over now."

"I can't answer for your father."

"But you and papa are all one."

"Your father is very steadfast. He does not know yet that I have seen my brother. I think you might write to him. He ought to know what has taken place. Perhaps he would come up again if he heard that I had been with my brother."

"Shall I ask him to come here?"

"Certainly. Why should he not come here? There is his room. He can always come if he pleases." So the matter was left, and Mary wrote her letter. It was not very lucid—but it could hardly have been lucid, the writer knowing so few of the details. "George has become friends with his brother," she said, "and wishes me to tell you. He says that Popenjoy is Popenjoy, and I am very glad. It was such a trouble. George thinks you will

come up to town when you hear, and begs you will come here. Do come, papa! It makes me quite wretched when you go to that horrid hotel. There is such a lot of quarrelling, and it almost seems as if you were going to quarrel with us when you don't come here. Pray, papa, never, never do that. If I thought you and George weren't friends it would break my heart. Your room is always ready for you, and if you'll say what day you'll be here I will get a few people to meet you." The letter was much more occupied with her desire to see her father, than with that momentous question on which her father was so zealously intent. Popenjoy is Popenjoy! It was very easy to assert so much. Lord George would no doubt give way readily, because he disliked the trouble of the contest. But it was not so with the dean. "He is no more Popenjoy than I am Popenjoy," said the dean to himself when he read the letter. Yes, he must go up to town again—he must know what had really taken place between the two brothers. That was essential, and he did not doubt but that he should get the exact truth from Lord George. But he would not go to Munster Court. There was already a difference of opinion between him and his son-in-law sufficient to make such a sojourn disagreeable—if not disagreeable to himself, he knew that it would be so to Lord George. He was sorry to vex Mary, but Mary's interests were more at his heart than her happiness. It was now the business of his life to make her a marchioness, and that business he would follow whether he made himself, her, and others happy or unhappy. He wrote to her, bidding her tell her husband that he would again be in London on a day which he named, but adding that for the present he would prefer going to the hotel. "I cannot help it," said Lord George moodily. "I have done all I could to make him welcome here. If he chooses to stand off and be stiff he must do so."

At this time Lord George had many things to vex him. Every day he received at his club a letter from Mrs. Houghton, and each letter was a little dagger. He was abused by every epithet, every innuendo, and every accusation familiar to the tongues and pens of the irritated female mind. A stranger reading them would have imagined that he had used all the arts of a Lothario to entrap the unguarded affections of the writer, and then, when successful, had first neglected the lady and

afterwards betrayed her. And with every stab so given, there was a command expressed that he should come instantly to Berkeley Square, in order that he might receive other and worse gashes at the better convenience of the assailant. But as Mrs. Bond's ducks would certainly not have come out of the pond had they fully understood the nature of that lady's invitation, so neither did Lord George go to Berkeley Square in obedience to these commands. Then there came a letter which to him was no longer a little dagger, but a great sword—a sword making a wound so wide that his life-blood seemed to flow. There was no accusation of betrayal in this letter; it was simply the heartbroken wailings of a woman whose love was too strong for her. Had he not taught her to regard him as the only man in the world whose presence was worth having? Had he not so wound himself into every recess of her heart as to make life without seeing him insupportable? Could it be possible that, after having done all this, he had no regard for her? Was he so hard, so cruel, such adamant as to deny her at least a farewell? As for herself, she was now beyond all fear of consequences. She was ready to die if it were necessary—ready to lose all the luxury of her husband's position, rather than never see him again. She had a heart! She was inclined to doubt whether any one among her acquaintances was so burdened. Why, oh why, had she thought so steadfastly of his material interests, when he used to kneel at her feet and ask her to be his bride, before he had ever seen Mary Lovelace? Then this long epistle was brought to an end. "Come to me to-morrow,—A. H. Destroy this the moment you have read it." The last behest he did obey. He would put no second letter from this woman in his wife's way. He tore the paper into minute fragments, and deposited the portions in different places. That was easily done; but what should be done as to the other behest? If he went to Berkeley Square again, would he be able to leave it triumphantly, as he had done on his last visit? That he did not wish to see her for his own sake he was quite certain; but he thought it incumbent on him to go yet once again. He did not altogether believe all that story as to her tortured heart. Looking back at what had passed between them since he had first thought himself to be in love with her, he could not remember such a depth

of love-making on his part as that which she described. In the ordinary way he had proposed to her, and had, in the ordinary way, been rejected. Since that, and since his marriage, surely the protestations of affection had come almost exclusively from the lady! He thought that it was so, and yet was hardly sure. If he had got such a hold on her affections as she described, certainly then he owed to her some reparation. But as he remembered her great head of false hair and her paint, and called to mind his wife's description of her, he almost protested to himself that she was deceiving him. He almost read her rightly. Nevertheless, he would go once more. He would go and tell her sternly that the thing must come to an end, and that no more letters were to be written.

He did go, and found Jack De Baron there, and heard Jack discourse enthusiastically about Mrs. Montacute Jones's ball, which was to be celebrated in two or three days from the present time. Then Mrs. Houghton was very careful to ask some question in Lord George's presence, as to some special figure-dance which was being got up for the occasion. It was a dance newly introduced from Moldavia, and was the most ravishing thing in the way of dancing that had ever yet found its way into our country. Nobody had yet seen it, and it was being kept a profound secret, to be displayed only at Mrs. Montacute Jones's party. It was practised in secret in her back drawing-room by the eight performers, with the assistance of a couple of the most trustworthy hired musicians, whom that liberal old lady, Mrs. Montacute Jones, supplied, so that these rehearsals might make the performers perfect for the grand night. This was the story as told with great interest by Mrs. Houghton, who seemed for the occasion almost to have recovered from her heart complaint. That, however, was necessarily kept in abeyance during Jack's presence. Jack, though he had been enthusiastic about Mrs. Jones and her ball before Lord George's arrival, and though he had continued to talk freely up to a certain point, suddenly became reticent as to the great Moldavian dance. But Mrs. Houghton would not be reticent. She declared the four couples who had been selected as performers to be the happy, fortunate ones of the season. Mrs. Montacute Jones was a nasty old woman for not having asked her. Of course there was a difficulty, but there might have

been two sets. "And Jack is such a false loon," she said to Lord George, "that he won't show me one of the figures."

"Are you going to dance it?" asked Lord George.

"I fancy I'm to be one of the team."

"He is to dance with Mary," said Mrs. Houghton. Then Lord George thought that he understood the young man's reticence, and he was once again very wretched. There came that cloud upon his brow which never set there without being visible to all who were in the company. No man told the tale of his own feelings so plainly as he did. And Mrs. Houghton, though declaring herself to be ignorant of the figure, had described the dance as a farrago of polkas, waltzes, and galops, so that the thing might be supposed to be a fast rapturous whirl from beginning to end. And his wife was going through this indecent exhibition at Mrs. Montacute Jones's ball with Captain De Baron, after all that he had said!

"You are quite wrong in your ideas about the dance," said Jack to his cousin. "It is the quietest thing out, almost as grave as a minuet. It's very pretty, but people here will find it too slow." It may be doubted whether he did much good by this explanation. Lord George thought that he was lying, though he had almost thought before that Mrs. Houghton was lying on the other side. But it was true, at any rate, that after all that had passed a special arrangement had been made for his wife to dance with Jack De Baron. And then his wife had been called by implication, "One of the team."

Jack got up to go, but before he left the room Aunt Ju was there, and then that sinful old woman, Mrs. Montacute Jones herself. "My dear," she said in answer to a question from Mrs. Houghton about the dance, "I am not going to tell anybody anything about it. I don't know why it should have been talked of. Four couples of good-looking young people are going to amuse themselves, and I have no doubt that those who look on will be very much gratified." Oh, that his wife, that lady Mary Germain, should be talked of as one of "four couples of good-looking young people," and that she should be about to dance with Jack De Baron, in order that strangers might be gratified by looking at her!

It was manifest that nothing special could be said to Mrs. Houghton on that occasion, as one person came after another.

She looked all the while perfectly embarrassed. Nobody could have imagined that she was in the presence of the man whose love was all the world to her. When he got up to take his leave she parted from him, as though he were no more to her than he ought to have been. And indeed he too had, for the time, been freed from the flurry of his affair with Mrs. Houghton by the other flurry occasioned by the Moldavian dance. The new dance was called, he had been told, the Kappa-kappa. There was something in the name suggestive of another dance of which he had heard, and he was very unhappy.

He found the dean in Munster Court when he reached his own house. The first word that his wife spoke to him was about the ball. "George, papa is going with me on Friday to Mrs. Montacute Jones's."

"I hope he will like it," said Lord George.

"I wish you would come."

"Why should I go? I have already said that I would not."

"As for the invitation, that does not signify in the least. Do come just about twelve o'clock. We've got up such a dance, and I should like you to come and see it."

"Who is 'we'?"

"Well; the parties are not quite arranged yet. I think I'm to dance with Count Costi. Something depends on colours of dress and other matters. The gentlemen are all to be in some kind of uniform. We have rehearsed it, and in rehearsing we have done it all round, one with the other."

"Why didn't you tell me before?"

"We weren't to tell till it was settled."

"I mean to go and see it," said the dean. "I delight in anything of that kind."

Mary was so perfectly easy in the matter, so free from doubt, so disembarrassed, that he was for the moment tranquillised. She had said that she was to dance, not with that pernicious captain, but with a foreign count. He did not like foreign counts, but at the present moment he preferred anyone to Jack De Baron. He did not for a moment doubt her truth. And she had been true, though Jack De Baron and Mrs. Houghton had been true also. When Mary had been last at Mrs. Jones's house the matter had not been quite settled; and in her absence Jack had foolishly, if not wrongly, carried his point with the old lady. It had been decided that the performers were to go through their work in the fashion that might best achieve the desired effect;

that they were not to dance exactly with whom they pleased, but were to have their parts assigned them as actors on a stage. Jack, no doubt, had been led by his own private wishes in securing Mary as his partner, but of that contrivance on his part she had been ignorant when she gave her programme of the affair to her husband. "Won't you come in and see it?" she said again.

"I am not very fond of those things. Perhaps I may come in for a few minutes."

"I am fond of them," said the dean. "I think any innocent thing that makes life joyous and pretty is good."

"That is rather begging the question," said Lord George, as he left the room.

Mary had not known what her husband meant by begging the question, but the dean had of course understood him. "I hope he is not going to become ascetic," he said. "I hope at least that he will not insist that you shall be so."

"It is not his nature to be very gay," she answered.

On the next day, in the morning, was the last rehearsal, and then Mary learned what was her destiny. She regretted it, but could not remonstrate. Jack's uniform was red. The count's dress was blue and gold. Her dress was white, and she was told that the white and red must go together. There was nothing more to be said. She could not plead that her husband was afraid of Jack De Baron. Nor certainly would she admit to herself that she was in the least afraid of him herself. But for her husband's foolish jealousy she would infinitely have preferred the arrangement as now made, just as a little girl prefers as a playmate a handsome boy whom she has long known, to some ill-visaged stranger with whom she has never quarrelled and never again made friends. But when she saw her husband she found herself unable to tell him of the change which had been made. She was not actor enough to be able to mention Jack De Baron's name to him with tranquillity.

On the next morning—the morning of the important day—she heard casually from Mrs. Jones that Lord George had been at Mrs. Houghton's house. She had quite understood from her husband that he intended to see that evil woman again after the discovery and reading of the letter. He had himself told her that he intended it; and she, if she had not actually assented, had made no protest against his doing so. But that visit, repre-

sented as being one final necessary visit, had, she was well aware, been made some time since. She had not asked him what had taken place. She had been unwilling to show any doubt by such a question. The evil woman's name had never been on her tongue since the day on which the letter had been read. But now, when she heard that he was there again, so soon, as a friend joining in general conversation in the evil woman's house, the matter did touch her. Could it be that he was deceiving her after all, and that he loved the woman? Did he really like that helmet, that paint, and that affected laugh? And had he lied to her, deceived her with a premeditated story which must have been full of lies? She could hardly bring herself to believe this; and yet, why, why, why should he be there? The visit of which he had spoken had been one intended to put an end to all close friendship—one in which he was to tell the woman that, though the scandal of an outward quarrel might be avoided, he and she were to meet no more. And yet he was there. For aught she knew, he might be there every day! She did know that Mrs. Montacute Jones had found him there. Then he would come home to her, and talk of the impropriety of dancing! He could do such things as this, and yet be angry with her because she liked the society of Captain De Baron!

Certainly she would dance with Captain De Baron. Let him come and see her dancing with him; and then, if he dared to upbraid her, she would ask him why he continued his intimacy in Berkeley Square. In her anger she almost began to think that a quarrel was necessary. Was it not manifest that he was deceiving her about that woman? The more she thought of it the more wretched she became; but on that day she said nothing of it to him. They dined together, the dean dining with them. He was perturbed and gloomy, the dean having assured them that he did not mean to allow the Popenjoy question to rest. "I stand in no awe of your brother," the dean had said to him. This had angered Lord George, and he had refused to discuss the matter any further.

At nine Lady George went up to dress, and at half-past ten she started with her father. At that time her husband had left the house, and had said not a word further as to his intention of going to Mrs. Jones's house. "Do you think he will come?" she said to the dean.

"Upon my word I don't know. He seems to me to be in an ill-humour with all the world."

"Don't quarrel with him, papa."

"I do not mean to do so. I never mean to quarrel with anyone, and least of all with him. But I must do what I conceive to be my duty, whether he likes it or not."

A "RAG" FOR THE RANKS.

SOMEWHERE about the year '40 it was, I think, that I travelled down from Brighton to Portsmouth on the box-seat of the last real four-horse coach of which I have any personal remembrance. I have sat behind four horses since then, of course. Behind eight, for the matter of that; and a very pretty piece of travelling the eight made of it, while one Malay in a mighty conical thatch, some nine feet in circumference, held the reins, and another Malay wielded in both hands a mighty salmon-rod of a bamboo, fitted with a thong about as long as a Pampas lasso, and flourished, and cracked, and touched-up now the lean flank of the near wheeler, now the restless little pointed ear of the off leader, as we scurried along full gallop over the springy "veldt," just marked with a wheel-track here and there, which passed in those days for a South African highway. But that was a 'bus, with only a "knife-board," a seat on which did not convey to its occupant any sense of personal dignity. There is no box-seat, when the team takes two coachmen to drive it, and Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark omitted, is a complete and perfect work of art, by the side of a coach without a box-seat. As I rattled homewards over the frost-bound Sussex roads, on that last real coach journey some seven-and-thirty Christmases ago, the holidays would have had but an inglorious beginning, had I failed in securing the place of honour by Jehu's side.

Whether my sense of dignity was enhanced or diminished by finding that my father had sent the coachman over from the Island to meet me, I cannot quite recall to mind. I am inclined, however, to think that at first the latter feeling predominated; and it was not until I had asserted my independence, by peremptorily rejecting Thomas's suggestion of "a chop and a cup of tea," and ordering instead, on my own account, a bit of fish and a steak, with a pint of ale and a glass of sherry, that I began to feel that our relative posi-

tions had been properly defined, and to regard "my servant's" blue coat and crested buttons from a satisfactory point of view. If a man doesn't begin to assert himself at seven years old, he may as well make up his mind to be trampled upon all his life.

It was a little embarrassing though, when the dinner made its appearance half an hour later, to find that, by some remarkable oversight, the waiter had managed to invert that part of the order which related to the liquids, and had brought me a glass of ale and a pint of sherry.

Perhaps some cunning psychologist will explain how it is that a waiter has always exercised such a peculiar influence over me. I am not a servants' victim, as a rule. The most magnificent butler that ever rejoiced in diamond brooch and gophered shirt-frill never yet awed me into accepting champagne when I wanted 'ock, nor the sauciest chambermaid into stretching myself on the feverish rack of a too easy featherbed. But your waiter is with me a chartered libertine. He sits upon me, and I am sat upon.

As it is now, so it was when on that memorable night I found myself confronted suddenly with a sturdy pint of fiery inn sherry. It would certainly have been a relief to my mind, could I have summoned up courage to have the little error set right. But—he was a waiter, and I collapsed. Even then, there might have been, perhaps, another alternative. If I had got the sherry, it was not absolutely necessary that I should drink it. But this, if easier, would have been still more inglorious. So, the steak finished, I attacked my decanter like a man, and—somewhat, I fear, to my friend the waiter's disappointment—very soon left in it nothing but the stopper and the smell. Ah me! I doubt if I have ever since enjoyed a play as I that night enjoyed *The Golden Farmer*, proudly seated in my private box, with Thomas, in his blue coat and silver buttons, respectfully stationed at the back. I was not a big boy of my years, and my head did not come very much above the ledge of the box-front; but, if I had been Prince Albert and the manager of Drury Lane rolled into one, my little presence couldn't have made a greater impression on the talented company than it did. They played right at me, every soul, and I only wonder now that I didn't send Thomas round to the stage-door and invite every one of them, from the lovely heroine to the side-splitting comic country-

man, to sup with me at The Fountain when the curtain fell.

Portsmouth, like the rest of us, has changed a little in those seven-and-thirty years. Southsea Common has bloomed into a fashionable watering-place. Landport has become a little town of itself. Portsea has pushed out its Ratcliff Highway to meet it on the one hand; and, on the other, has mingled its slums with those of Portsmouth proper, till the town-crier himself would hardly know which was which. The dear old fortifications, through which one used to zigzag submissively into the town, right under the muzzles of the mighty guns—only thirty-two pounders, but terrible fellows then—are dismantled; and moat, and drawbridge, and portcullis disestablished and disendowed. The four towns have run into one another like four drops of ink on a sheet of blotting-paper. But the old High Street is not so much changed, after all. A little duller, perhaps, as though what life there was in it has been sucked out by its new offshoots, but still with a look of the old place about it; and as Tom and I passed through it the other day on our way to the big white troop-ship, which a day or two later was to carry poor Tom off on his way back to the gay and salubrious station of Jungleabad, I could almost have fancied myself back on the old box-seat again, and kept a sharp look-out for the once familiar old landmarks.

But with remarkably little success.

"Theatre! Law bless you," replies a slightly inebriated marine, with his belt over his arm, and the upper buttons of his jacket disposed in a *déagé* fashion, which seriously disturbs the professional bile of friend Tom, softest-hearted of men and stiffest-necked of adjutants. "Theatre! law bless you; why it was pulled down years ago to make room for them big barracks. And as to The Fountain—Fountain be participated. There aren't no such pub in the place."

"A—astin' for The Fountain was you, sir?" chimes in an amphibious civilian in hobnailed boots, short moleskin trousers, a chimney-pot hat, a Guernsey frock, and a strong smell of fish. "Why there it be, right in front of you. Leastways, what was The Fountain. Sogers' Institute it is now."

"Sogers' Institute be participated," interjects the marine—not so much, I fancy, with the idea of any particular anathema, as by way of an abstract remark of a universally appropriate and encouraging character—and pursues his way, swearing discursively

as he goes. I am about to follow his example—at least, in the former respect—when a hand is laid on my arm, and I find myself drawn across the street. Tom has not forgotten the Sailors' Home, which made so profound an impression upon him on that memorable night when we cruised together down Ratcliffe Highway in search of Foreign Jack. And this seems likely to be something of the same kind.

"By Jove! old fellow," he says, as we reach the door, "if it should turn out to be anything of that sort for our fellows, I'd—I'd— Wish the doose I hadn't spent that last five-pound note."

And on enquiry the Soldiers' Institute does appear to be, with a difference, very much that sort of thing indeed. The entrance is the old entrance of the hotel, and at the end of the hall, beyond the staircase, which has been a good deal enlarged since the night when I made way up it after the theatre on my last visit, still stands the old glazed "bar;" with, however, as may be readily surmised, a considerable change in its appointments and appearance. Gone are all the bottles and glasses, the little squat casks that sat in a lordly row upon the shelf round the top, like so many fat little idols receiving the homage of the faithful; the nets of lemons, the basins of sugar, the gorgeous china bowls, the very sight of which seems to call up a cloud of fragrant steam around the appreciative nostrils. The only steam now—and it's a fragrant steam too in its way—comes from the spouts of a score or two of tea and coffee pots. On the counter—once sacred to the compiling of punch, eggflip, and other convivial compounds—a couple of dapper maidens are busily cutting and piling up huge wedges of cake and mighty slices of bread-and-butter. Tom and I try a cup of coffee; and capital coffee it is. The cake and bread-and-butter we are content to take upon trust; but were I once more of the age I was when I last stood at that bar-window, I think, judging from the look of them, I could have found it in my heart to experimentalise in that direction too.

Passing the bar we find ourselves in a long, rather narrow room, the coffee-room of the institute. Not the old coffee-room of the inn, our guide informs us, as I vainly endeavour to recognise the scene of my memorable dinner. The new establishment has outgrown the old accommodation, and another house has been taken in, which supplies both this room and the two large

and airy billiard-rooms beyond it: one for the use of Private Atkins and his comrades; the other, somewhat more sumptuously fitted up, being for the use of sergeants, who pay a trifle more for the more dignified accommodation—a penny a game, if I remember rightly, in the one room, and three halfpence in the other. Pool, our conductor informs us, is not permitted at either table, being held to savour too much of gambling, which is strictly prohibited throughout the building; as, too, is the use of all intoxicating liquors—a feature in which this institute differs both from the Sailors' Home in Wells Street and from that at Portsea hard by—where, by the way, a somewhat lively controversy is just now being carried on upon the subject. As originally stated, the Portsea home also was conducted on strict teetotal principles. Gradually, however, the conviction grew among the majority of the governing body that the cause of sobriety was, after all, but indifferently served by a strict adhesion to it. It was all very well to say that Jack should have nothing to drink but what he was wont to style "slops." Jack had made up his mind that slops didn't suit him, and, as more congenial beverages were to be had in any number of gallons next door, and round the corner, and over the way, Jack would just step next door, or round the corner, or over the way, and take his fill of them, with the result sometimes of not coming back; sometimes of coming back with considerably more vitriol, and cocculus indicus, and fusel-oil on board than was at all good either for Jack himself, or for the peace and discipline of the establishment. So the majority of the governing body came to the same conclusion as that arrived at from similar premises by the governing body of the Wells Street Home, and provided Jack with sound and wholesome beer on their own premises. The result, as is stated in both cases, is that Jack stays now in the home to drink his malt and hops, instead of going in search of vitriol and cocculus indicus and fusel-oil elsewhere, and, now that he is no longer compelled to drink slops, has found out that slops are, after all, very good drinking, and has gone in for gingerbeer to a quite astonishing extent. A minority of the original patrons of the home look upon this concession to Jack's bibulous proclivities as a grave dereliction of principle, and the authorities of the Soldiers' Institute maintain, so far, a similar opinion.

Returning from the billiard-rooms, our guide leads us across the hall once more to what is called the reception-room. And here a little surprise awaits us. Just as we reach the door it opens, and out walks—a dashing young artilleryman, with a remarkably good-looking young woman upon his arm.

Tom opens his eyes, and murmurs an involuntary, "By Jove!"

"Walk in, gentlemen, walk in," says our conductor; and the next moment we find ourselves in the old coffee-room of The Fountain, now occupied by a dozen or so of soldiers of the various arms of The service, and about the same number of women, mostly young, working, laughing, chatting—I had almost said flirting, but that would be a libel, no doubt—but at all events enjoying themselves in highly sociable fashion, and as much at home as any party of ladies and gentlemen in the drawing-room of a country house.

And then, as we make our way upstairs, our conductor informs us that the institute is equally open to both sexes. Not indiscriminately, of course. But soldiers' wives and families are as welcome there as the soldiers themselves. And really, when the first surprise is over, and one comes to think of the thing, it does not seem that Private Atkins is likely to be much injured by having his wife and children comfortably sheltered for a night or two on their way to or from the big white transports, while Mrs. Atkins and the juvenile Atkinses must surely be rather benefited than otherwise. As our guide expatiates upon the hardships often endured by the women of a regiment on the march for want of proper accommodation, and the relief afforded by the provision here made, I observe an abstracted expression, half-stolid, half-anxious, steal over Tom's ingenuous countenance; and note that he is fumbling furtively, now in one, now in another, of the capacious pockets with which his travelling-suit is liberally furnished. The most capacious pockets, however, are apt to lose a good deal of their lining in the course of a long leave, and the anxious expression increases. Suddenly it disappears. A light breaks over Tom's face once more as the furtive fumbling ends in one vigorous dig into a distant corner, and I know that Tom has run a stray sovereign fairly to earth at last.

"By Jove! old fellow," he breaks out eagerly. "It's a splendid notion. I re-

member our chief telling me how our fellows landed here once from Canada, and the women had to sit all night in a row along the kerbstone, because there was nowhere else for them to go to. Splendid notion, by Jove!"

Equally enthusiastic is honest Tom's appreciation of the reading-room on the first-floor—a really handsome apartment, occupying the whole width of the house, and comfortably furnished with leather-seated chairs, sofas, &c., with a long table down the centre thickly strewn with papers and magazines of every kind.

"Good as the 'Rag,' by Jove!" he exclaims. "Not so much gold and looking-glass, and bosh of the kind, you know—but the comfort! I say, though, old fellow, the ladies don't seem to care much about reading, do they?"

Whereon we are informed that the reading-room is not open to the fair sex, who are only admitted to the reception-room below. Tom is at first inclined to think this rough on the ladies, but finally consoles himself with the reflection that women were made, not to study, but to be studied, and proceeds to the inspection of the dormitories. Beyond extreme cleanliness, and a degree of comfort, trenching, as a martinet of the ascetic school might be disposed to think, somewhat closely upon luxury, the majority of these offer no special feature for remark. A characteristic feature, however, is to be found in the large proportion of small rooms, making up, some six, some four, some two beds, and allotted under ordinary circumstances to separate married couples and families. Sometimes of course it will happen that a rush is made upon the sleeping accommodation of the institute, and the choice obviously lies between a tight pack under its friendly roof and a "prick for a soft place" on the kerbstone of Tom's old story. In that case delicacy has of course to be set aside, as it is habitually in the barracks under Her Majesty's regulations; and two, or three, or four married couples have to "pig together" in one room as best they may. But, as a rule, the Soldiers' Institute, differing in this respect rather strikingly from the Sailors' Home, is called in request rather as a club than as an hotel; and the smaller dormitories can be set aside each for the accommodation, if not of a single couple, at least of a single family. Two or three of these contain only one bed each; and better quarters, I venture to say, a

bachelor would find it hard to obtain within gunshot of the fortifications.

Then we wend our way downwards once more, and pass from the dormitories to what may be called the educational branch of the institute.

Here in one room we find a geography class busily studying the various parts of the globe to which father may be sent, the people he will have to meet there, the duties he will have to perform, and the services he may there render to the sovereign whose uniform he wears. Besika Bay and Gallipoli, the Bosphorus, the Balkans, and the Dardanelles, are very familiar phrases in that class nowadays. In another, a couple of dozen Jennies and Pollies are busily mastering, or mistressing, the mysteries of sewing, and hemming, and felling, "seam and gusset and band," and all the other subtleties of needle and thread, scissors and thimble, which shall enable them to keep father's wardrobe neat and tidy at Besika Bay or elsewhere. In a third, a score of chubby mites are pushing, at extra speed, through the orthographic mysteries of words in one syllable, that the room may be cleared for the use of a small battalion of drummer-boys, who have been specially invited to a feast this evening, and for whose peculiar benefit those mighty mounds of cake and huge heaps of bread and butter were being prepared, as we entered, in the bar downstairs.

And then our conductor throws open a door, and ushers us into yet another apartment, with the interesting announcement:

"There, gentlemen. This is the room which has cost us more than all the rest of the establishment put together."

We look around us, first with curiosity, then with surprise; then, if the truth must be confessed, with something of incredulity. The room is not large. The furniture is decidedly not sumptuous. Compared with the big reading-room on the first-floor, the general effect is, on the whole, disappointing—not to say meagre. "A five-pound note," as Tom tersely expresses it, "would buy up the whole blessed diggins," and after vainly searching in every corner, and under every table and chair, for a solution of the enigma, we give it up, and turn to our guide for explanation.

"This, gentlemen, is the bible-room."

"Is it?" says Tom, and looks vaguely round once more, in the dim hope that this oracular statement may have invested some feature of the apartment with the

faculty of explaining the mystery. But, so far as he or I can see, everything in the room wears as severely economical an aspect as before, and we look once more to our guide for aid.

"Well, gentlemen," says he, thus appealed to, "you see one of the principal items in our expenditure is, of course, rent. Another, not quite so obvious, perhaps, but none the less serious, is the increased cost of working, arising out of the necessity for adapting an old building, or rather, two old buildings, to purposes for which they were never intended. You see how much waste space there is, and how many unnecessary passages and stairs. If we were in a house of our own, built especially with a view to our own requirements, the work could be performed twice as well at half the cost."

"Then why the doose," asks Tom, "don't you get one?"

Our conductor pats the door-post with his right hand, motions with his left, as though formally introducing it to us, and proceeds:

"Because of this room, gentlemen. We are not wealthy, as you may suppose; and land is dear hereabouts. But some little time since we had the promise of a site from the War Office, and by this time had hoped to be working, rent free, in a building adapted to our wants. Then suddenly comes a letter, saying it was understood there was a room in the house where the men could go, if they wished it, to read their Bibles; and, unless this was done away with, the site could not be granted. They do say the Roman priest had gone to the War Office about it, but of course I can't say for that."

"Ah," says Tom, "I see. What they call proselytising, eh?"

"No, sir," replies our guide. "Not at all. The rules are strict, that no person about the establishment is even so much as to ask a man whether he'd like to read his Bible or not. Only if he does like it, there's this room, where he can go when he likes, and read it quietly. And so long as that is so, we're not to have our site."

Tom tugs at his moustache for a minute or more in silence. He has strong military instincts, has Tom, and is withal as little troubled with theological bias as most men of his age and calling, but he has his ideas on the subject of fair play.

However, the authorities have decided that, on Government ground at all events, Full-private Atkins shall not have a chance

of contaminating his mind with theology, even in its most primitive shape. So as the authorities of the institute are equally determined that, if he wishes for the opportunity of reading his Bible, he shall have it undisturbed on their premises at all events, the promised site has been withdrawn, and the institute has to carry on its operations as best it may in its present situation; the extra cost of which comes to a good deal more than the mere additional outlay in rent, rates, &c. The present building is, as we have seen, a makeshift contrivance; not so very unlike, by the way, the "fortuitous concourse" of tumble-down shanties in Pall Mall, with which it is at such serious issue on the great Bible question. Of course, no single room in it was constructed with a view to any occupation in the smallest degree resembling that to which it is now devoted, whilst the necessity for providing additional means of communication and so forth involves an immense waste of space. It is probably not overstating the case to say that a building of the same extent, constructed specially for the requirements of the institute, would give better accommodation for at least twenty per cent. more visitors, increasing, of course, the present cost per head to a proportionate extent. Still, even as it is, with all its waste of space in rambling passages and multiplied stairs and impossible rooms, in just the wrong place and of just the wrong size for the particular work it would be most desirable for them to perform, the institution gets through a tolerably fair amount of work, and affords Full-private Atkins and his friends a tolerably fair amount of accommodation. Close upon eight thousand persons—seven thousand eight hundred and fifty-five is the exact number—have been provided with beds during the past year alone. And as—unlike the Sailors' Homes, which is chiefly used by men on furlough or out of employ—the institute, whose clients must be in barracks when the bugles sound, is used comparatively little as a sleeping-place, it may be imagined that Full-private Atkins avails himself of its more distinctively club-accommodation pretty freely.

And so, having seen, as we suppose, the whole establishment from basement to attic, we are about to take our leave. Tom, whose right hand has stuck for the last half-hour in his pocket as persistently as though he were a midshipman on the watch, has already begun to hang

back, looking uneasily around for some friendly box with a slit in it, into which he can "drop something" unobserved; and I am directing my intellectual energies to the elaboration of a parting compliment of an equally neat and appropriate, though perhaps less practical description, when our guide turns suddenly to left instead of to right, ushers us through a narrow door, and speedily proves to us that we have not yet exhausted the resources of the establishment by any means.

We are now in what was, no doubt, in the old days of The Fountain, the stable-yard of the hotel. But there is not much trace now left of that Angean period. I wonder whether Full-private Atkins plays croquet with Mrs. and the Misses Atkins, or whether here, as elsewhere, lawn-tennis has displaced that ancient form of afternoon dissipation so dearly loved, once upon a time, by guileless maidens with neat ankles and unlimited boot-money. As we cross the broad expanse of carefully-rolled and shaven turf, smooth and level as a billiard-table, I suggest the point for the consideration of Tom, who, in reply, growls with alliterative laconicism :

"Bosh!—bowls."

And bowls it is. As also skittles in the long covered alley on the opposite side; from which comes, every half-minute or so, a low rolling grumble, as of theatrical thunder, followed now by peals of laughter, now by shouts of triumph or of derision, of a heartiness seemingly but little impaired by the ignoring, in the present instance, of the time-honoured connection between "skittles and beer."

What is the precise ground of the distinction our guide does not inform us, and I confess to not having been yet able to puzzle it out for myself; but the skittle-alley, unlike the billiard-room, is perfectly free. Indeed, billiards is the only game for the participation in which any charge whatever is made throughout the establishment; and the pennies accruing from it pay not only the expenses of the billiard-room itself but those of the skittle-alley and of all the other amusements of the place. All, that is to say, but one. And as our guide notes this exception, he throws open the door of a big building, at the lower end of the lawn, and ushers us into—a music-hall!

We rub our eyes, and Tom murmurs under his breath a brief "By Jove!" But a music-hall it is, and a large one withal, and handsome; capable, I should think,

of seating in all at least twelve or fifteen hundred persons, and with reserved seats, balcony, raised stage, and all, complete. And then our guide directs our attention to the concluding lines of the little hand-bill which sets forth the general programme of the institute, and where we find that "a first-rate musical entertainment will take place in the hall every Saturday night, at thirty minutes past seven. Admission, twopence; balcony, threepence; reserved seats, sixpence; soldiers and sailors, one penny. The chair taken by Miss Robinson."

"Yes, gentlemen," says our guide smiling pleasantly, in answer to our next interrogatory, "Miss Robinson's our right-hand man here. Started the whole concern, she did; and keeps it going too. Here you are, gentlemen: 'Lady Superintendent, Miss Robinson; 'Address, Scripture Narrative, Miss Robinson, Sunday, three P.M.; 'Children's Band of Hope Meeting, Miss Robinson, Wednesday, thirty minutes past five P.M.; 'United Service Prayer Meeting, Miss Robinson, Saturday, six P.M.'—"

"Hallo!" interposes Tom, "I thought the music-hall business was Saturday?"

"Quite right, sir," replies our guide; "thirty minutes past seven that is."

"By Jove!" says Tom again. And says no more. Continues to devour his tawny moustache in the same absolute silence all the way back to our Southsea hotel; is not much more communicative during dinner. Then, when the waiter has finally withdrawn, and we are alone with our consciences and our claret, Tom heaves a big sigh, fills himself a mighty bumper, pushes the bottle across to me, and eyes me sternly through his glass as I fill mine—then :

"Jack!" he says, solemnly.

"Well, Tom?"

"Here's Miss Robinson's health."

Which we drink with all the honours.

URE.

GLINTING in her sunny shallows,
Rolling through the long green fallows,
Glittering under old grey bridges,
Fretting 'neath her willowed ridges;
Whispering to the mosses keeping
Vigil o'er the violets sleeping;
Flashing, laughing, dancing, gleaming,
With the sunshine o'er her streaming;
Rippling to the moonlight shining,
The spirit of her rays divining;
Giving back the glories given,
By rose dawn and golden even;
As age serene, as girlhood pure,
Softly seaward murmurs Ure.

From the moorland, fierce and strong,
 Bearing whirling logs along,
 Foam-flecks thick upon her breast,
 Rousing sleepers from their rest ;
 Swollen and brown with autumn showers,
 Roaring past the old grey towers,
 Rushing under great oak shadows,
 Swirling over flooded meadows,
 Tossing in her tiger play
 The harvest's garnered gain away :
 Calling through the woodlands sere
 How she must "have her life" each year ;
 Making her dread tribute sure,
 Angry seaward thunders Ure.

We, who by our river dwell,
 Know her changeful beauty well ;
 Love her, with a love allied
 Half to fear and half to pride.
 If Yorkshire lips triumphant claim
 Storied honours for her name,
 Many a saddened homestead knows
 The years her stream in "freshest" rose ;
 When strength and courage helpless stood,
 To watch the work of Ure in flood.
 So, glory of our northern dales,
 So, terror of our northern tales,
 Through rocky dell and purple moor,
 Fierce, bright, and lovely, flashes Ure.

MY FRIEND MALLAM.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

THE Priors had not long been with us. Tom Prior had been a fellow of Worcester, a noted scholar, an LL.D., one of the most rising dons of the day, and then had thrown up everything, married a poor woman, and retired to the obscurity of some country living by the sea, because she couldn't live away from it. Naturally, men called him a fool, and forgot him. Now, a dozen years later, the provostship of his old college had fallen vacant ; and because Simpson, who was hated by every man in it, would otherwise have stepped into the post, the fellows suddenly remembered Prior's learning and merits, and insisted on bestowing it on him as his due ; and I think I was the first of his ancient friends to call on him and his wife after their installation. They had no children, and she was still a confirmed invalid ; so as it was the long vacation when they came, I fancied they might be rather dull, and came in provided with a great bunch of late crimson roses to cheer the sick lady. She looked happy enough, however, without them.

They were sitting out on the stone terrace which runs round two sides of the quadrangle, she leaning back on a sort of lounge, and wrapped up in a big maize-coloured Indian shawl, and her husband reading the paper to her at her side. He jumped up when he saw me, and we shook hands for about ten minutes, after which I was introduced to his wife and put

into his chair, while he sat down beside me, and began asking all manner of questions about old foes and friends.

Not that Tom Prior ever had many foes. He was one of those kindly, sweet-tempered fellows who get loved even by men who laugh at them ; and his wife, smiling over her roses at us, said I needn't think that she considered herself in the least as a stranger, as she knew all about me and everyone else who had ever been at college with her Tom ; and had grown familiar with us from the first month of her married life. Presently, however, she began to fidget a little, and said :

"Tom dear, where's Cecil ? Mr. Gurney would like some tea."

And Tom, after two or three helpless glances round, answered :

"To be sure, so he would. Where is Cecil, I wonder ?"

"Who is Cecil ?" I wondered ; and as I do like my tea, and am in the habit of looking for it at some time in the afternoon, I rather hoped the owner of the name—probably Mrs. Prior's maid—would turn up. However, just then Tom appeared to catch sight of someone at a window, for he shouted out, "Hi, Cecily ! Tea ! Here's a visitor !" in a voice which might have been heard at the other end of the town. There was no reply audible ; but the call proved efficacious ; for in little more than five minutes a tidy little maid brought us out a tray which she deposited on a tiny round table ; and immediately afterwards a young lady came out, slipped quietly into a chair behind it, and proceeded to dispense tea and bread and butter with sufficient celerity and absence of fuss to show, first, that she was used to the duty ; and, secondly, that she thought more of those about her than of drawing attention to herself—a sufficiently rare thing in young ladies !

Indeed I don't remember noticing her at all at first. Prior and I went on talking, and the invalid lay back on her cushions, throwing in a word every now and then. It was a fine evening in September, and the sun getting low in the west reddened all the south front of the quadrangle, and burnt like a myriad of fiery sparkles in the yellowing foliage of the tall trees beyond. Above, the sky was a pale, soft blue, warming down into a haze all gold, and rose colour, and tender, delicate lilac. Even Mrs. Prior's pale face and Tom's grey whiskers were suffused with the pinky light. Cecil—she had

only been introduced by the hostess as "my cousin," so I did not know her other name—sat a little out of it in the shadow of the porch. She was arranging the roses in a china bowl; and now and then a slanting golden ray touched one of the blossoms, turning it into a jewel of crimson fire, or rested on her white fingers and the folds of her grey gown, nothing more. I sat there talking till after twilight had fallen, and when I went away I had hardly seen her face. Mrs. Prior was not allowed to stay out of doors after dusk; and her cousin went in with her, and did not again reappear.

I met her on the following day, however. It was Sunday, and I had been to morning service at Holywell, a quaint, simple little church, where a man can say his prayers without being disturbed by a lot of strangers and finely-dressed town-folk; and on coming out I found myself treading on the heels of Tom Prior. The young lady was with him; and as I took off my hat to her in the bright morning sunlight, I was almost struck dumb by discovering how beautiful she was.

For she was one of those women whom everyone would own to be beautiful. Tall and well-proportioned, with a skin like pearl, and dull gold hair, smooth as satin, and banded round one of the most perfectly-formed heads ever set on a woman's shoulders. Not a girl; she must have been eight or nine and twenty, and there was something in her face which made her look more; but still quite a young lady compared with a man over fifty like myself, and a very lovely young lady too.

We all walked back to Worcester together; and after I had got over the revelation of her looks we got on very pleasantly. There was a pretty mixture of cordiality to her cousins' old friend and high-bred reserve in her manner, which was very charming. You felt as if the cordiality was a special act of grace to you, and might not be shown to everybody; and yet the reserve stepped in just in time to prevent your presuming on it. Then she had travelled, and read books and thought about them afterwards, which, if you've passed the age when a pretty face is all-satisfying, is an additional merit in a woman and a rare one. By the time we had reached home and lunched, which I did with them, I should have pronounced her perfect but for two things—she smiled far too seldom; and

she was more sceptical, especially on the subjects of human nature and truth and goodness, than is to my mind becoming in a young woman.

I own that I like a girl to be bright and sunny and believing. A pretty mouth is always prettier with a smile on it.

We were out in the garden after lunch, talking. To those who don't know Oxford, I may mention that the gardens at Worcester, though not as beautiful as St. John's, or as interesting as New, are green and shady, with a large piece of water at the bottom overhung by fine old willows and alders, their leaves just turning to faint yellow and dusky red under the first night frosts of autumn. Swans float upon its clear brown surface, leaving long lines of silver light behind them, and come to the banks to be fed. We had brought some bread down with us; and as Miss Langton—I had found out her name by now—crumbled and scattered it, I said to her:

"I have told Mrs. Prior I am at her disposal for the whole of to-morrow morning. Do you know I am quite proud of acting cicerone to two ladies who are already familiar with Rome and Venice and Egypt? All the same, don't expect me to own to any inferiority in my own city. If you begin by picking holes at your first outing, I will never take you for a second."

"I don't think you need have any fear of that," she said courteously; and then, her face flushing a little, "but you will not be showing it to me for the first time. It is my cousin who has never been here before. This is my third visit."

"Your third? I am sorry to hear it," I answered; and I was. There would have been something pleasant in showing a place like Oxford to a woman like Cecil Langton. "Is it long since you were here?" She hesitated a little.

"Yes, it is nearly eight years since my first visit, and we only stayed four days; and did very little sight-seeing. I was travelling with my father; and he was taken ill here. As soon as he was able to move we went on again."

"That can hardly be called a visit at all then. Eight years ago, too! Why Keble was not built then. You have not seen the most gorgeous chapel in the university. Yes, you needn't glance back at dear old Worcester here. The provost and I swear by our own gods of course; but wait till you've seen—I forgot, though! You have been here since then, you say. How

long ago was that? and was it a real visit the second time?"

"It was—two years later. Yes, I was here for a fortnight. Is it possible to satisfy a swan's hunger, Mr. Gurney?"

It was then, in the abruptness with which she changed the conversation, that I noticed on her face the look I have mentioned; a strange, fixed expression, which aged and hardened it in a moment; a look which—how I do not know—gave me the idea of a proud nature terribly humbled at some period of its existence, and resenting it both inwardly and outwardly ever since. At the time, however, I did not understand it, and, like a fool, pressed the subject.

"Two years later? Why, that was '71, the year I came back here to live. And, upon my word, I believe I must have met you then. I fancied at lunch that I had seen your face before; and said to myself, 'That is the face which'—By-the-way, do you like compliments? No? Then I won't tell you what I said to myself. No, nor Mrs. Prior either; for she'd be sure to go straight and repeat it to you. Were you not here for Commemoration?"

"Yes, Mr. Gurney, I was." Her face had grown harder, and her manner suddenly brusque—almost, if I might say so, defiant. Mrs. Prior, leaning back in her bath-chair a few steps off, heard the question and answer, and bent forward, an anxious look on her pale, gentle face.

"Mr. Gurney," she said, pleasantly, "you are giving all your conversation to Cecil. Come and talk to me a little. I want to know where you are going to drag me and my chair to-morrow."

That evening, Prior came round to my chambers for a smoke. Something was said of Miss Langton. I believe I mentioned her, praising her beauty and asking if she lived with them.

"Yes," he said, "at least she came to us on a visit, when her brother was ordered to India eighteen months ago; and we have never let her go since. I don't believe Emily could do without her now, and since her father's death she has no regular home. Pretty? Well, some people say she's rather gone off; but she was awfully handsome a year or two ago. Emily says she never knew a girl who has had so many admirers."

"I don't wonder at it. How is it she has not made one of them happy before now?"

"Humph! It is a pity, isn't it? And

that reminds me, Emily told me to ask you not to refer to her last visit to Oxford. You don't mind my mentioning it, do you?"

"Oh dear no," but I suppose my face showed some surprise, for he added:

"I suppose you think it rather an odd thing to ask, and the story's an old one now; but my wife is awfully fond of Cecil, and can't bear her to be pained. I oughtn't to tell you about it, I suppose; but you're such an old friend, and——" and then of course Prior, being one of those men who can't keep a secret for five minutes if they try, did tell me all about it, and I learnt the meaning of that look in Miss Langton's face, and why she had turned so abruptly from the subject of Commemoration.

She had been staying with friends who had relations at Oxford; and of course not only the relations, but half the relations' friends at the different colleges, went wild about her beauty. Wherever she went she had a troop of admirers. Luncheons and picnics were got up in her honour, and all might have been very pleasant if one of the men had not fallen desperately in love with her, and succeeded in winning her heart. It was one of those cases so clear from the first, and she showed her preference so plainly, that other men drew off, feeling they hadn't a ghost of a chance; and her friends spoke to her on the subject, being afraid they would get into trouble, as she had money, or would have, and the young fellow wasn't rich.

"Well, and then?" I asked, when the story had got so far. I remembered her perfectly now, and of hearing about this very love affair; but I wanted to know his version of it.

"Oh, he was a blackguard," said Tom, impatiently, "and had only been playing with her. When her friends spoke to her she owned he hadn't proposed, but admitted frankly that she cared for him, and that she thought he did for her, and wanted to tell her so. It was only three days then before they were leaving; and, oddly enough, the very next day, though he had asked her leave to call, and she waited at home for him, he never turned up at all. The second day it was the same thing—no sign of him. Her friends thought there must have been some misunderstanding; and as they all liked him, and really believed that he cared for Cecil, they wrote to ask him and one or two others to lunch on the morrow,

mentioning that they were leaving next day. He sent back a note declining on some pretext or another, but hoping to call and say good-bye; and never came near them again. I believe they even saw him in the street, and he avoided them. Yes, it was a scoundrelly business; and they say it nearly killed Cecil. She was an awfully proud girl; and had never cared for anyone before. Emily says it was two years before she would even go out anywhere; and I don't believe she'll ever like or put faith in a man again."

"Hum! I've heard men say the same of women, and with a good cause. By the way, who was this fellow? I suppose you know his name."

"No, I don't. Emily may; but she's never mentioned it, so I don't think it likely"—Tom judged the rest of the world by himself; a good many of us do—"Cecil couldn't keep the affair altogether dark; but she made her friends promise not to mention the man's name; and somehow it never reached me or her brother either. If it had, its owner mightn't have got off so happily; for Charley Lucas adores his sister."

"Lucas! You mean Langton, don't you?"

"No; a stepbrother by a first husband. Her father hated the lad at one time; but she brought them together when he was ill here; and they made friends shortly afterwards. I say, I must be going. Of course you won't ever hint at my having told you of this affair." And he went.

I lit another pipe and meditated upon it. Prior would have been surprised if he had known I could have told him the name of the man, whose baseness had swept the sunshine out of Cecil Langton's heart six years ago; but surely there must be some mistake; and if so— That night, I sat down and wrote a note to a friend in London, asking him to take pity on my dulness and come down to me for a few days. After that I went to bed.

I had been calling on the Priors two or three days later, and was just saying "Good-bye," after promising to come in to afternoon tea on the morrow and bring Miss Langton a book on stained glass, when I remembered something, and turned back on the threshold.

"After all, I don't know that I can come. I had forgotten that I am expecting a friend to-day from town to stay with me; and unless I may bring him with me—"

"Oh, but do," cried Mrs. Prior, cordially.

"Tell him we shall be very glad to see him. Cecil would be miserable without her book and you to explain it to her." And Tom came after me to the door, calling out:

"I should think, old fellow, you knew that anyone you brought here would be welcome, if he were the King of the Cannibal Islands."

Certainly the Priors were among the pleasantest, most good-natured people I ever met.

I said something of the sort at lunch to Mallam on the following day. He was a clever, successful lawyer, six or seven years my junior; but our families had been intimate all their lives, and we had been at the same college. When he learnt from my note that business was keeping me in Oxford all through the solitude of the "long," he cut short a pleasant visit at Twickenham, and came down to me at once; and very jolly it was for me to have him. We had been talking all the morning.

"I don't think you remember Prior," I said to him. "He was before your time. A man of note though, and—"

"Is that the fellow who used to be called Mother Prior?" broke in Mallam. The worst of those London men is, they move and speak and live so quickly, they make no allowance for our pleasant, leisurely way of gathering up and giving out our ideas; and have a trick of cutting us short in rather an irritating manner. "Man who first flung thirty thousand pounds into a ditch, and then kicked overboard a fellowship and all his prospects to marry an old woman without a cent?"

"Exactly," said I, quietly. "The man who threw away a fortune because he was too honest to take a woman he didn't care about with it; and gave up his fellowship and honours to marry a girl to whom he had kept faithful for twelve years, and who had lost her youth and health and prettiness waiting for him, because her father wouldn't hear of it; and she wouldn't rebel against the old man while he lived. That's Prior."

"And Prior was a fool," said Mallam. "Well, what judgment has happened to him since?"

"None in particular; except that, with an invalid wife and a smallish income, he's been as happy as a king ever since; and that now he's been made provost of his old college, and is happier than ever."

"Curious dispensation of Providence that fools often are happy in their folly," said Mallam, cynically. He was a man

who had had a disappointment in early life, and had taken life with the bitter rind on ever since; but I didn't mind him, being perfectly aware that, in spite of his sneers, he had at one time lived hardily and fared plainly to keep two young step-sisters at an expensive school, and at another had sacrificed a Continental tour to save an old servant's son from prison, and set him going in a new country. He would have quarrelled with and cut me to a dead certainty, if I had even given him an inkling that I knew of these little weaknesses. Nevertheless they were facts.

"What about the Priors now?" he asked leisurely, and helping himself to another cutlet.

"Only that I've promised to go there this afternoon and take you with me. I should rather like you to be civil to them, Hugh. The wife is a dear little woman, who has managed to keep a smiling face through years of horrid bodily pain; and she has confided to me that a great thorn in her side was the fear that Prior had ruined himself by his marriage, and that his old friends are of that opinion. I want to show her she is mistaken."

"In other words, back him up in his past idiocies, and encourage other idiots to future ones," said Mallam, coolly. "All right, I'll go; it's nothing to me. Any children?"

"No, none. They have taken a distant cousin though, an orphan, to live with them; but—"

"People who have just enough to keep themselves always want to keep a dozen others," put in Mallam, in the aggravating way I have mentioned before; and so I did not get an opportunity of adding anything more about Cecil Langton.

It was about four o'clock when we got there. The sun was shining in at one window through a framework of leaves, green, and gold, and red, and flooding that end of the room with yellow light. Cecil sat just in the centre of it. You could see nothing of her face or person, only a tall dark figure in a blur of golden haze. I don't think Mallam even glanced at her, for Prior came forward, shaking hands with us both in his cordial way, and taking him across the room, to introduce him to the pale face gleaming pleasantly out of its background of red cushions in a warm corner. It was not till a minute or two had passed that he looked round and said:

"Cecil, are you there? Mr. Mallam, my wife's cousin, Miss Langton."

I had just shaken hands with Miss Langton, and I shall never forget the change which came over her face, as she looked up and her eyes met Mallam's. For a moment I thought it was that she had stepped out of the golden haze into the shadow, but she had not moved an inch; only her colour had faded quite away into a dead, ashen tint, which made her very lips grey; and her eyes opened wider and wider, and a sort of quiver passed over her mouth. She did not speak a word, only bowed; and Mallam, who had started and flushed all over his face, like a man struck a sudden, heavy blow, bowed too. Then he said, slowly and with some hesitation:

"I—I think I have met Miss Langton before." The dark colour deepened in his face, and he added, hurriedly, "Not that I can expect her to remember me."

Cecil looked at him full. There was something almost cruel in the hard stare of those beautiful eyes.

"No," she said coldly. "I do not remember you. You must be under a mistake." And then Mallam bowed again and asked her to excuse him for it. He was the coolest of men generally, with one of those stern, impassive faces which nothing moves. I had never seen him so discomposed before. She stepped back into her seat by the window, and he went and sat down by Mrs. Prior. But even here my introduction did not seem a success. Perhaps something in his manner reacted on hers, but the gentle lady was not half as bright and pleasant as usual. There was a nervous, flurried expression in her eyes, and her manner was decidedly constrained. If it had not been for Tom's irrepressible geniality I don't know what I should have done. Cecil, indeed, was talkative enough, and devoted herself to me and my Flemish book with an assiduity which was very flattering, seeing that there was a younger and handsomer man in the room. But I hardly think her mind was in the subject either, for she asked me the most irrelevant questions at the end of some of my most careful explanations; and laughed at points which did not seem to me to have any humour in them. I scarcely thought her as intelligent as usual.

Tea was brought in and put on the little table by Miss Langton. Tom had called me off at the moment; so Mallam rose, as in duty bound, to assist her with the cups. He did not speak; nor did

she, only gave them to him in silence. But her hand must have been less steady than usual; for presently, as she was handing him his own, either through her awkwardness or his, there was a sudden clatter, and the cups went over, part of the contents being spilt on her dress. Mallam stooped instantly, taking out his handkerchief to dry it, in spite of her exclaiming almost sharply that it was no matter, and giving an impatient jerk to her dress to free it or shake the drops off. Their hands came in contact for a moment by the action—only a touch, but I saw her tremble suddenly, and the colour rush into her face, making a dull red spot in either cheek. She slipped out into the garden almost immediately afterwards by the open French window, and did not return again. We could see her tall figure in its black dress passing to and fro between the upright stems and purple and scarlet blossoms of the dahlias. The low rays of the sun lit up the under side of the leaves, turning them into transparent golden flakes, and rested on her little shining head, as she went backwards and forwards, never once glancing at the house. We did not stay very long after she was gone.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER II. BLASÉE.

PEOPLE like Lady Quorne, who studied the advertised programmes of the coming operatic campaign with the same unconquerable faith and hope which others keep for queen's speeches, and with the same obstinate determination to find something in them, prophesied a brilliant season. The chapter of operatic history, of which these are the secret memoirs pour servir, is already half forgotten—but it once belonged to the future, as much as the half-forgotten season of yesteryear.

And it was to be exceptionally brilliant, not because of its printed promises, magnificent as they were—that went without saying—but because those who assumed to be behind the scenes knew on the best authority, and as an unquestionable fact, that there was to be a battle. The amateurs of harmony enjoy nothing so much as the prospect of a good quarrel, in which gold will be shed like water; and the most per-

sistent applause comes, not from admiration, but from an eager desire to prove, by the logic of noise, that all who admire somebody else are fools. It was on the eve of such a storm that Mademoiselle Clari arrived, once more, in London.

She herself, though conscious of a dead weight of cloud overhanging her future, knew infinitely less of what was in store for her than anybody. The most remarkable feature in all revolutions is, that everybody always knows what is coming except the person most immediately concerned—namely, the king; or, in this case, the queen. But then Clari notoriously never knew, or cared to know, what was going on even in the next room. All the curiosity about her had always been on one side, and that not on her own. She knew that Prosper was her enemy, and that compelled her, or at any rate made her suppose herself compelled, to sweep him away into nothingness, if he actively tried to harm her, with one fan-sweep; for even such midges as managers might mean mischief in these coming days of cloud. But for the complex ins and outs of musical politics, the great prima donna had an indifference too complete even to be contemptuous, just as a great statesman has for the little springs and wheels of the political engine. If they go smoothly, all the better for him; if they hitch and stick, so much the worse—for the wheels. He cannot waste time in greasing and grinding, and learning the names of things which he feels himself strong enough, in case of need, to break and throw away. In short, there was perhaps never a woman who knew so little of her profession as Clari. There had been a sort of magnanimity even about what she regarded as the practice of conscious imposture. That a certain amount of dirty work had to be done in her interest she knew, but she never allowed it to soil her own fingers. She had never slandered a dangerous rival, had never bought a newspaper puff, or a claque, or even one of the bouquets which are always so magically ready to be thrown with practised aim precisely at the right time. Of course all these things had to be bought by somebody, and, while Prosper was faithful, she never found herself a bouquet the poorer for want of knowing how they came. And, even since he had been faithless, she found no less warmth in the tone of the musical journals—for the simple reason that she never read them.

It was by a far more subtle instinct

that she had come of late to feel her power upon the wane, than by the gross experience from which Prosper had saved her. And she was right in the main; though a lessening command over her voice, and an increasing furrow between the eyebrows, might not be an immediate cause of dethronement, it was the cause most obvious to herself, and must in time become so to all the world. Only it was therefore, and just at this hour, that she needed the arts which are to fame in danger what rouge is to a fading complexion. She missed nothing yet but self-confidence; but Prosper's desertion had been uncomfortably like the conduct of the rats when a ship is growing unseaworthy. She did not fear him, but even a manager will show which way the wind blows. And so, like a queen who thinks to conquer a nation in revolt by stepping on to the balcony, and smiling upon a few noisy nobodies in the square below, she came to London, heedless of what was brewing. The despised little wheels will catch and rend even their master at times, after all, and great and strong as he may be.

Her bouillon had developed into a very satisfactory meal; and when that was eaten she was better. That mention of Prosper, whether designed, instinctive, or accidental, had given her an immediate purpose—that is to say, something to live for, for a little while. To conquer Prosper was not much wherewith to fill a hungry heart and an empty life; but it was better than nothing while it lasted—better, at all events, than an aimless chaos of whims. Both Ilma and Thérèse felt that morally, as well as bodily, they were off the sea. In the railway-carriage Clari had said:

“Ilma, you do look ill! There—I will make you a pillow with my cloak, and you shall sleep a little. No? Yes, but you shall; and if you do not I will throw my cloak from the window.”

Ilma closed her eyes obediently, and stopped the stare which had made Clari think she was going to be disobeyed. Ilma was young yet—perhaps in time she, too, would learn not to stare at an occasional longing to care for somebody besides herself, in the heart of a woman who begins to feel herself being left stranded with no one but herself to care for. Clari, satisfied with ostensible, which presently grew into real obedience, drew up both windows of the carriage, lay back in a corner, and looked at the girl whom she had wrapped up in her furs. There was

every reason why Clari should have made a protégée of Ilma, exactly because there was every reason why nobody else in the world would have done so. The Polish fiasco was of that perverse sort of prettiness which nobody ever admires, because it is made to express only one set emotion, and that disagreeable. Her eyes were large, her nose was straight, her complexion clear, and her mouth small, and all united in a settled look of sullen conceit; of sullenness, that is to say, so satisfied with itself as to be incapable of supposing any other frame of mind to be possible. She gave the impression of always being engaged in a fencing-match, and always on guard—except when she gave some little unexpected thrust, which stung, and made people feel that there was something more in her than appeared. To Clari she was a slave—and queens of Clari's type like having a slave or two on whom to vent their more trifling humours. But to like having a slave is not to like the slave; so that would not account for Clari's fancy for Ilma. Perhaps, when healthy instinct is balked, it is bound to run into eccentric and morbid grooves. Caprice apart, one can make a greater business of liking the unamiable than of liking those who make us like them, whether we will or no. Ilma had no apparent merits, no friends, and no likelihood of making any. Of all people in the world she seemed to need love most—of all people under heaven Clari most needed the sorriest chance of loving, and of being all to somebody if nobody could be anything to her. If this be not the reason, I know not what is—it is at least better than any that Clari had for most of her behaviour. And then, if a certain child had lived, she too would be just as old as Ilma. And then—Ilma could no more be Clari's rival than the moon can rival the sun. If the last was no cause for liking, it was becoming less and less a cause for disliking, every day.

The train was on the very point of starting, when the door was opened quickly and there entered, together with the salt English air which the prima donna had been so careful to exclude, a man who had been too nearly letting the train go without him to take heed of his fellow-passengers till the engine had whistled and started. The furrow between Clari's eyebrows grew yet deeper; she had intended to travel alone with her own thoughts as far as London. Ilma had at least the one charm of never intruding. But in a

moment the frown relaxed ; she put a few touches more languor into her half-reclining posture, and smiled graciously.

"You may smoke if you please, Monsieur Gordon."

"What—Mademoiselle Clari! Can we have been fellow-passengers from Calais, and not met till now?"

"I think people always meet afterwards. We were below, Mademoiselle Krasinska and I, till the last half-hour. It was a terrible voyage, but it is over now. Oh, of all things I hate the sea. It is ugly, and cold, and when it is calm it is dull; but last night it was a monster."

"I wish I had known you were on board. But—Mademoiselle Krasinska? Can it be the Mademoiselle Krasinska I used to know in Lindenheim?"

"Lindenheim?" Now, no German, or English, or French, or Russian, or American musician would believe it, but Clari had never heard of the musical metropolis; or, if she had, it was only as one hears by chance the name of some obscure village, which one forgets as soon as it is heard. "I daresay. People always have met before. But you must let her sleep now. It is good for people to sleep all they can, while they are young; they will have plenty of time for waking after, and it gets rid of some life a little. Are you sleepy?"

"Not the least."

"Nor am I. You shall smoke if you like, and I will talk, as it suits me. You have not finished my picture—no? I am sorry; I should like to look always as in last summer, among the cucumbers of my Lord Quoerne. We were good friends then. So you know Ilma? Well, it is a poor little world, and always the same. The same things to eat and to drink and to sing, the same things to do, the same places, the same people—every day, every day, every day. One changes one's clothes, Dieu merci! If not for that, one would change nothing. Yes; and at the end one changes them for a shroud—ah, but that will be worst of all. Lying still in a box, and every minute the same—it would make one mad of ennui. You have been en voyage?"

Omen the second. The name of Death had slipped out of her lips without cause; and everybody who has even a scrap of ignorance will know what that means. It was as bad as Bath-kol, of which Noëmi Baruc had heard in the Ghetto; the mystical relation of all things to all other things, which turns the most casual

words of a passer-by into prophecies—for those who keep their ears wide open. Butterflies are not given to speak of death, and Clari least of all butterflies. She cut her audible thought in two by a commonplace question, put as suddenly and defiantly as if she could not wait a moment for its answer.

"Yes," said Walter Gordon. "I think it is going to rain."

"Will you hand me my fan? Thank you. To rain? No; there is not a cloud. It is not like when we met in the auberge. No; and you are not the same."

"I? Why?"

"Because you say it is going to rain. You used always to say, it is going to be fine—last year. Yes; even when the dog and the cat fell down."

"But you are the same, mademoiselle—and that is the great thing."

"Yes," she said, raising her shoulders carelessly. "I am the same still—for a little. I eat, and drink, and sing. I rise and dress, and I undress and I lie down. It is delightful to be a great artist, monsieur. It is not being like the others. Ah, if I had been born a man!"

"Be thankful, as the world is, that you were born a woman."

"Thankful? I am thankful for nothing. I care for nothing. I want to go to sleep, like Ilma. Ah, how the young would sleep, if they only knew! We should not see much of them."

"You remind me of the way we used to talk at Lindenheim—where we were all eighteen and all as old as the hills."

"I am a year older than a year ago—and you—"

"Ten years older?"

"No; twenty. You have lived, my friend, since a year; and 'la Vie, c'est la Souffrance,' as poor Alphonse de Cauchemar used to say. He used to read me all his own verses till he died—so he ought to know. They were all written to Cynthia; I do not know who she was, but Victor Perrier said her real name was Absinthia, made short for rhyme. Did you ever meet Alphonse de Cauchemar? Ah, he was a great poet! He once wrote a poem that took him three weeks to read. He broke his heart all to pieces, and he sold the bits to keep him in gloves and cigars. Poor Alphonse—he was bien ganté to the end."

Since she was in a mood to be sentimental, no doubt poor Alphonse de Cauchemar was as good a peg for senti-

ment as any other. She sighed, fanned herself—it being a cool morning—and lapsed into reverie. Walter opened his newspaper, while Ilma still slept peacefully.

The train meanwhile rolled smoothly on. But suddenly Walter made a quick exclamation over some startling piece of news. Clari looked, and saw that he was reading hurriedly and intently.

"What is it, mon ami? Ah, it is good to be a man; one can care for the newspapers."

"The Cleopatra—it is announced; it is going to appear."

"The Cleopatra?"

"Yes."

"A new opera? I have not heard. But, after all, what does it matter? It shall not give me anything new to learn."

"You are going to sing, in London—and you have not heard of the Cleopatra?"

"Ah, it interests people, then?"

She used her fan in the way which Hinchford experience ought to have told him, was a symptom of possible heat on the part of the woman who cared for nothing. She was not used to hear that people were going to be interested in anything or anybody but Mademoiselle Clari. It was a peculiar wave of the fan, which might signify either the cooling of unwished-for warmth, or the blowing of a chance spark into a flame.

"It interests me," said Walter.

"Somebody is going to sing in it," said Clari, sharply. "Who?" Which meant, however it may be with other people, you, at least, ought not to interest yourself in anybody but Mademoiselle Clari.

"Oh, some—Good heavens!"

"Well?"

He folded up the paper and looked abstractedly at the hedges and trees as they whirled by. Clari began to fan the spark rapidly.

"Well?" she asked again, icily.

Walter faced her slowly. "Miss Celia March is going to be the Cleopatra."

"Oh, an Anglaise!" said Clari, snapping her fan together, raising her shoulders, and curling her lip with what would have been contempt, had contempt been worth while. "They do not count—the Anglaises; not in your country. I do not see why a young man should be ashamed to care about a pretty girl. I hope she will be a very nice Cleopatra—yes, very nice indeed!" she added, throwing open the fan again.

"You don't remember her?"

"Remember her? No. How can I remember what I have never seen?"

"You heard her at Hinchford—last year. She came with Gaveston, and sang to you and Lady Quorne."

"Ah! That girl? She is gone on the stage?"

"So it seems," said Walter, gloomily.

"And you object? Corpo d'un—! You have a great care for this Miss Cynthia, Miss Celia, whatever she is called, monsieur. You said, she is going to be Cleopatra, as if you would say, she goes to the guillotine."

"Care? I am simply at my wits' end."

"I believe it—per Bacco! I will lend you mine, if you will. What! is it strange for a girl to go on the stage? It is only strange if she succeeds. And she will fail! Yes; I remember her very well. Why are you at your wits' end?"

"I will tell you. You have heard me speak of my uncle, Andrew Gordon? He composed an opera called *Comus*; it was revived last year, last autumn, and made a furor, and no wonder. You were not in England, or you would have known. One evening I met Prosper at Lady Quorne's; he told me of his quarrel with you, and then he talked to me about the chance of my uncle's having left something behind him. There was nothing—absolutely nothing; but I joked about reviving him, or inventing a discovery, or something of that kind. The next day—if I was not mad—I saw with my own eyes the score of this Cleopatra, with my uncle's name, Andrew Gordon, signed at the end."

"You—saw—Andrew—Gordon's—Cleopatra?—With—your—eyes?"

There was a clear pause between each word. Noëmi Baruc felt the coming shadow of the third omen, and could hardly breathe.

"I need not tell you all the details. A great deal happened, that concerns me only. The end of it is, that I have been abroad—in Italy. I made it my business to look for every trace of my uncle. Short of his proved death, I found all that need be known. He disappeared so completely that he could only have died. And now—"

Clari laid back her head, closed her eyes, moved her fan slowly, and sang, sotto voce, as if thinking of nothing,

Portatemi il diadema—col mio sangue
Desij divini sorgono dal cuor;
Aria divengo e fuoco: appena langue
Sul labbro un bacio di terrestr' amor.
Antonio mi chiama—

"Mademoiselle—if I am not indeed gone

mad—you are singing the last scena in the Cleopatra; I saw it in the score! In Heaven's name, what does this mean?"

"It means," said Clari, half opening her eyes—"it means that Miss Cynthia, Miss Celia, will sing in the Cleopatra of Signor Andrew Gordon. Yes; of Andrew Gordon. And it means," she went on, with a note of triumph in her tone, "that she will fail. There is no living woman can sing that music. No; not one!"

So she spoke, and so she felt; but Noëmi Baruc had but one intense thought that flooded heart and brain.

"That girl whom Signor Walter loves is to be made to sing by Prosper, whom I come to crush, in the work of the man who slew my life and my child. Tooth for tooth, eye for eye. Thank God, that, dead though he is, he lives in his work, that I may slay his soul!"

"But—but the air," said Walter; "you know the Cleopatra? When—how?"

"How? I have learned that scena in Italy—perhaps in Milan, perhaps in Rome; who knows? It came back to me when you spoke of Cleopatra. Ah, and many things! But I am tired. I will sleep till we arrive."

"One moment—one! You do not know all that this means to me. You knew Andrew Gordon. Why have you never said so, when you knew——"

"Why should I speak of him? Yes; I have seen him—in Rome. A woman will not speak too much of times long ago. It is true. I was a child."

"Would you—would you know him if you saw him again?"

Clari paused. She was desiring vengeance, but as yet was planning none. She only felt, and the feeling was as yet but an outcome of the desire, that, in some unseen manner, her enemy was surely delivered into her hands. For that matter, all her enemies—for their three heads grew from the same stalk, the Cleopatra, just as Domitian wished that the heads of his foes might grow, so that one sharp stroke might suffice for all. Not that such small heads as those of Celia and Prosper counted for much any longer. The possible rival must be swept away, and Prosper crushed; but the grand revenge on her arch-enemy, living or dead, would imply

all. Life would have been worth living at last, if it had led her at last to one hour of full revenge. But meanwhile she only grasped a shadow. As yet she knew nothing, but that one hasty word or false step would ruin the whole vision of judgment, and bury herself in the ruins.

"No—yes," she said sleepily. "Who knows? Per Bacco, not I. How can I see a dead man?" She shuddered a little. Twice she had spoken of death in a single hour. "I wish I was a man. Perhaps I should not want to sleep when I am tired; and perhaps I should not want without getting my way."

She put up her feet on the seat before her, turned her shoulder to Walter, and lay silent and still. After all, he thought, what was it to her? He might as well deal with running water as with Clari of the thousand moods. He had come back from Italy, assured that the Cleopatra must needs be an impudent forgery, and that his Bohemian uncle had, beyond question, disappeared from the world of men. And now, beyond question, the Cleopatra was genuine, and the ex-organist of Deepweald, and Celia—— To think was impossible.

Was John March his uncle Andrew? No. He had denied Comus; and it was as natural to base a theory upon the possibility of Beethoven's denying Fidelio.

And "no" again; for his uncle had had every reason to assert himself, and none to lie concealed. A man does not bury himself from every chance of wealth and fame, or starve in a garret when gold is waiting to be poured into his hands.

Andrew Gordon had disappeared. Cleopatra was in the hands of John March; John March was starving, and Prosper needed Cleopatra. Men of the Bohemian type occasionally disappear in Rome, as well as in London. And, when an artist dies, his effects must fall into other hands than his own. Men have been murdered for their gold before now. Why not for the gold of their brains? John March was at any rate no common man—Prosper, no common rascal. The receiver makes the thief; and Celia——once more, to think was impossible. The trees and hedges reeled by faster and faster, and his brain with them.

Ilma, with a long yawn, opened her eyes.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. THE KAPPA-KAPPA.

MRS. MONTACUTE JONES'S house in Grosvenor Place was very large and very gorgeous. On this occasion it was very gorgeous indeed. The party had grown in dimensions. The new Moldavian dance had become the topic of general discourse. Everybody wanted to see the Kappa-kappa. Count Costi, Lord Giblet, young Sir Harry Tripletoe, and no doubt Jack de Baron also, had talked a good deal about it at the clubs. It had been intended to be a secret, and the ladies, probably, had been more reticent. Lady Florence Fitzfloreance had just mentioned it to her nineteen specially intimate friends. Madame Gigi, the young wife of the old Bohemian minister, had spoken of it only to the diplomatic set; Miss Patmore Green had been as silent as death, except to her own rather large family; and Lady George had hardly told anybody, except her father. But, nevertheless, the secret had escaped, and great efforts had been made to secure invitations. "I can get you to the Duchess of Albury's in July, if you can manage it for me," one young lady said to Jack De Baron.

"Utterly impossible!" said Jack, to whom the offered bribe was not especially attractive. "There won't be standing room in the cellars. I went down on my knees to Mrs. Montacute Jones for a very old friend, and she simply asked me whether I was mad." This was, of course, romance; but nevertheless the crowd was great, and the anxiety to see the Kappa-kappa universal.

By eleven the dancing had commenced. Everything had been arranged in the strictest manner. Whatever dance might be going on was to be brought to a summary close at twelve o'clock, and then the Kappa-kappa was to be commenced. It had been found that the dance occupied exactly forty minutes. When it was over the doors of the banqueting-hall would be opened. The Kappa-kappaites would then march in to supper, and the world at large would follow them.

Lady George, when she first entered the room, found a seat near the hostess, and sat herself down, meaning to wait for the important moment. She was a little flurried as she thought of various things. There was the evil woman before her, already dancing. The evil woman had nodded at her, and had then quickly turned away, determined not to see that her greeting was rejected; and there was Augusta Mildmay absolutely dancing with Jack De Baron, and looking as though she enjoyed the fun. But to Mary there was something terrible in it all. She had been so desirous to be happy—to be gay—to amuse herself, and yet to be innocent. Her father's somewhat epicurean doctrines had filled her mind completely. And what had hitherto come of it? Her husband mistrusted her; and she at this moment certainly mistrusted him most grievously. Could she fail to mistrust him? And she, absolutely conscious of purity, had been so grievously suspected! As she looked round on the dresses and diamonds, and heard the thick hum of voices, and saw on all sides the pretence of cordiality, as she watched the altogether unhidden flirtations of one girl, and the despondent frown of another, she began to ask herself whether

her father had not been wrong when he insisted that she should be taken to London. Would she not have been more safe, and therefore more happy, even down at Cross Hall, with her two virtuous sisters-in-law? What would become of her should she quarrel with her husband? and how should she not quarrel with him if he would suspect her, and would frequent the house of that evil woman?

Then Jack De Baron came up to her, talking to her father. The dean asked the young man, who had always something to say for himself, whose manners were lively, and who, to tell the truth, was more than ordinarily civil to Lady George's father. Whether Jack would have put himself out of the way to describe the Kappa-kappa to any other dignitary of the Church may be doubted, but he had explained it all very graciously to the dean. "So it seems that, after all, you are to dance with Captain De Baron," said the dean.

"Yes; isn't it hard upon me? I was to have stood up with a real French count, who has real diamond buttons, and now I am to be put off with a mere British captain, because my white frock is supposed to suit his red coat."

"And who has the count?"

"That odiously fortunate Lady Florence. And she has diamonds of her own. I think they should have divided the diamonds. Madame Gigi has the lord. Between ourselves, papa," and as she said this she whispered, and both her father and Jack bent over to hear her, "we are rather afraid of our lord; aren't we, Captain De Baron? There has been ever so much to manage, as we none of us quite wanted the lord. Madame Gigi talks very little English, so we were able to put him off upon her."

"And does the lord talk French?"

"That doesn't signify, as Giblett never talks at all," said Jack.

"Why did you have him?"

"To tell you the truth, among us all there is rather a hope that he will propose to Miss Patmore Green. Dear Mrs. Montacute Jones is very clever at these things, and saw at a glance that nothing would be so likely to make him do it as seeing Madeline Green dancing with Triplettee. No fellow ever did dance so well as Triplettee, or looked half so languishing. You see, dean, there are a good many ins and outs in these matters, and they have to be approached carefully." The dean was amused, and his daughter

would have been happy, but for the double care which sat heavy at her heart. Then Jack suggested to her that she might as well stand up for a square dance. All the other Kappa-kappaites had danced or were dancing. The one thing on which she was firmly determined was that she would not be afraid of Captain De Baron. Whatever she did now she did immediately under her father's eye. She made no reply, but got up and put her hand on the captain's arm without spoken assent, as a woman will do when she is intimate with a man.

"Upon my word, for a very young creature I never saw such impudence as that woman's," said a certain Miss Punter to Augusta Mildmay. Miss Punter was a great friend of Augusta Mildmay, and was watching her friend's broken heart with intense interest.

"It is disgusting," said Augusta.

"She doesn't seem to mind the least who sees it. She must mean to leave Lord George altogether, or she would never go on like that. De Baron wouldn't be such a fool as to go off with her?"

"Men are fools enough for anything," said the broken-hearted one.

While this was going on Mary danced her square dance complacently; and her proud father, looking on, thought that she was by far the prettiest woman in the room.

Before the quadrille was over a gong was struck, and the music stopped suddenly. It was twelve o'clock, and the Kappa-kappa was to be danced. It is hard in most amusements to compel men and women into disagreeable punctuality; but the stopping of music will bring a dance to a sudden end. There were some who grumbled, and one or two declared that they would not even stay to look at the Kappa-kappa. But Mrs. Montacute Jones was a great autocrat; and in five minutes' time the four couples were arranged, with ample space, in spite of the pressing crowd.

It must be acknowledged that Jack De Baron had given no correct idea of the dance when he said that it was like a minuet; but it must be remembered also that Lady George had not been a party to that deceit. The figure was certainly a lively figure. There was much waltzing to quick time, the glory of which seemed to consist in going backwards, and in the interweaving of the couples without striking each other, as is done in skating. They were all very perfect, except poor Lord

Giblet, who once or twice nearly fell into trouble. During the performance they all changed partners more than once, but each lady came back to her own after very short intervals. All those who were not envious declared it to be very pretty, and prophesied great future success for the Kappa-kappa. Those who were very wise and very discreet hinted that it might become a romp, when danced without all the preparation which had been given to it on the present occasion. It certainly became faster as it progressed, and it was evident that considerable skill and considerable physical power was necessary for its completion. "It would be a deal too stagey for my girls," said Mrs. Conway Smith, whose "girls" had, during the last ten years, gone through every phase of flirtation invented in these latter times. Perhaps it did savour a little too much of ballet practice; perhaps it was true that with less care there might have been inconveniences. Faster it grew and faster; but still they had all done it before, and done it with absolute accuracy. It was now near the end. Each lady had waltzed a turn with each gentleman. Lady George had been passed on from the count to Sir Harry, and from Sir Harry to Lord Giblet. After her turn it was his lordship's duty to deliver her up to her partner, with whom she would make a final turn round the dancing space; and then the Kappa-kappa would have been danced. But alas! as Lord Giblet was doing this he lost his head, and came against the count and Madame Gigi. Lady George was almost thrown to the ground, but was caught by the captain, who had just parted with Lady Florence to Sir Harry. But poor Mary had been almost on the floor, and could hardly have been saved without something approaching to the violence of an embrace.

Lord George had come into the room very shortly after the Kappa-kappa had been commenced, but had not at once been able to get near the dancers. Gradually he worked his way through the throng, and when he first saw the performers could not tell who was his wife's partner. She was then waltzing backwards with Count Costi; and he, though he hated waltzing, and considered the sin to be greatly aggravated by the backward movement, and though he hated counts, was still somewhat pacified. He had heard since he was in the room how the partners were arranged, and had thought that his

wife had deceived him. The first glance was reassuring. But Mary soon returned to her real partner; and he slowly ascertained that she was in very truth waltzing with Captain De Baron. He stood there, a little behind the first row of spectators, never for a moment seen by his wife, but able himself to see everything, with a brow becoming every moment blacker and blacker. To him the exhibition was in every respect objectionable. The brightness of the apparel of the dancers was in itself offensive to him. The approach that had been made to the garishness of a theatrical performance made the whole thing, in his eyes, unfit for modest society. But that his wife should be one of the performers, that she should be gazed at by a crowd as she tripped about, and that, after all that had been said, she should be tripping in the arms of Captain De Baron, was almost more than he could endure. Close to him, but a little behind, stood the dean, thoroughly enjoying all that he saw. It was to him a delight that there should be such a dance to be seen in a lady's drawing-room, and that he should be there to see it. It was to him an additional delight that his daughter should have been selected as one of the dancers. These people were all persons of rank and fashion, and his girl was among them quite as their equal—his girl, who some day should be Marchioness of Brotherton. And it gratified him thoroughly to think that she enjoyed it—that she did it well—that she could dance so that standers-by took pleasure in seeing her dancing. His mind in the matter was altogether antagonistic to that of his son-in-law.

Then came the little accident. The dean, with a momentary impulse, put up his hand, and then smiled well pleased when he saw how ably the matter had been rectified by the captain's activity. But it was not so with Lord George. He pressed forward into the circle with so determined a movement, that nothing could arrest him till he had his wife by the arm. Everybody, of course, was staring at him. The dancers were astounded. Mary apparently thought less of it than the others, for she spoke to him with a smile. "It is all right, George; I was not in the least hurt."

"It is disgraceful!" said he in a loud voice; "come away."

"Oh yes," she said; "I think we had finished. It was nobody's fault."

"Come away; I will have no more of this."

"Is there anything wrong?" asked the dean, with an air of innocent surprise.

The offended husband was almost beside himself with passion. Though he knew that he was surrounded by those who would mock him, he could not restrain himself. Though he was conscious at the moment that it was his special duty to shield his wife, he could not restrain his feelings. The outrage was too much for him. "There is very much the matter," he said, aloud; "let her come away with me." Then he took her under his arm, and attempted to lead her away to the door.

Mrs. Montacute Jones had, of course, seen it all, and was soon with him. "Pray, do not take her away, Lord George," she said.

"Madam, I must be allowed to do so," he replied, still pressing on. "I would prefer to do so."

"Wait till her carriage is here."

"We will wait below. Good-night, good-night." And so he went out of the room with his wife on his arm, followed by the dean. Since she had perceived that he was angry with her, and that he had displayed his anger in public, Mary had not spoken a word. She had pressed him to come and see the dance, not without a purpose in her mind. She meant to get rid of the thralldom to which he had subjected her when desiring her not to waltz, and had done so in part when she obtained his direct sanction at Lady Brabazon's. No doubt she had felt that as he took liberties as to his own life, as he received love-letters from an odious woman, he was less entitled to unqualified obedience than he might have been had his hands been perfectly clean. There had been a little spirit of rebellion engendered in her by his misconduct; but she had determined to do nothing in secret. She had asked his leave to waltz at Lady Brabazon's, and had herself persuaded him to come to Mrs. Montacute Jones's. Perhaps she would hardly have dared to do so, had she known that Captain De Baron was to be her partner. While dancing she had been unaware of her husband's presence, and had not thought of him. When he had first come to her, she had in truth imagined that he had been frightened by her narrow escape from falling. But when he bade her come away, with that frown on his face, and with that awful voice, then she knew it all. She had no alternative but to take his arm, and to "come away." She had

not courage enough—I had better perhaps say impudence enough—to pretend to speak to him, or to anyone near him, with ease. All eyes were upon her, and she felt them; all tongues would be talking of her, and she already heard the ill-natured words. Her own husband had brought all this upon her—her own husband, whose love-letter from another woman she had so lately seen, and so readily forgiven! It was her own husband who had so cruelly, so causelessly subjected her to shame in public, which could never be washed out or forgotten! And who would sympathise with her? There was no one now but her father. He would stand by her; he would be good to her; but her husband, by his own doing, had wilfully disgraced her.

Not a word was spoken till they were in the cloak-room, and then Lord George stalked out to find the brougham, or any cab that might take them away from the house. Then for the first time the dean whispered a word to her. "Say as little as you can to him to-night, but keep up your courage."

"Oh papa!"

"I understand it all. I will be with you immediately after breakfast."

"You will not leave me here alone?"

"Certainly not, nor till you are in your carriage. But listen to what I am telling you. Say as little as you can till I am with you. Tell him that you are unwell to-night, and that you must sleep before you talk to him."

"Ah! you don't know, papa."

"I know that I will have the thing put on a right footing." Then Lord George came back, having found a cab. He gave his arm to his wife and took her away, without saying a word to the dean. At the door of the cab the dean bade them both good-night. "God bless you, my child," he said.

"Good-night; you'll come to-morrow?"

"Certainly." Then the door was shut, and the husband and wife were driven away.

Of course this little episode contributed much to the amusement of Mrs. Montacute Jones's guests. The Kappa-kappa had been a very pretty exhibition, but it had not been nearly so exciting as that of the jealous husband. Captain De Baron, who remained, was, of course, a hero. As he could not take his partner in to supper, he was honoured by the hand of Mrs. Montacute Jones herself. "I wouldn't have had that happen for a thousand pounds," said the old lady.

"Nor I for ten," said Jack.

"Has there been any reason for it?"

"None in the least. I can't explain of what nature is my intimacy with Lady George, but it has been more like that of children than grown people."

"I know. When grown people play at being children, it is apt to be dangerous."

"But we had no idea of the kind. I may be wicked enough. I say nothing about that. But she is as pure as snow. Mrs. Jones, I could no more dare to press her hand than I would to fly at the sun. Of course I like her."

"And she likes you."

"I hope so—in that sort of way. But it is shocking that such a scene should come from such a cause."

"Some men, Captain De Baron, don't like having their handsome young wives liked by handsome young officers. It's very absurd, I grant."

Mrs. Jones and Captain De Baron did really grieve at what had been done, but to others, the tragedy coming after the comedy had not been painful. "What will be the end of it?" said Miss Patmore Green to Sir Harry.

"I am afraid they won't let her dance it any more," said Sir Harry, who was intent solely on the glories of the Kappakappe. "We shall hardly get anyone to do it so well."

"There'll be something worse than that, I'm afraid," said Miss Green.

Count Costi suggested to Lady Florence that there would certainly be a duel. "We never fight here in England, count."

"Ah! dat is bad. A gentleman come and make himself vera disagreeable. If he most fight perhaps he would hold his tong. I tink we do things better in Paris and Vienna." Lord Giblet volunteered his opinion to Madame Gigi that it was very disgraceful. Madame Gigi simply shrugged her shoulders, and opened her eyes. She was able to congratulate herself on being able to manage her own husband better than that.

CHAPTER XXXIX. REBELLION.

LADY GEORGE never forgot that slow journey home in the cab—for in truth it was very slow. It seemed to her that she would never reach her own house. "Mary," he said, as soon as they were seated, "you have made me a miserable man." The cab rumbled and growled frightfully, and he felt himself unable to attack her with dignity while they were progressing. "But

I will postpone what I have to say till we have reached home."

"I have done nothing wrong," said Mary, very stoutly.

"You had better say nothing more till we are at home." After that not a word more was said, but the journey was very long.

At the door of the house Lord George gave his hand to help her out of the cab, and then marched before her through the passage into the dining-room. It was evident that he was determined to make his harangue on that night. But she was the first to speak. "George," she said, "I have suffered very much, and am very tired. If you please, I will go to bed."

"You have disgraced me," he said.

"No; it is you that have disgraced me and put me to shame before everybody, for nothing, for nothing. I have done nothing of which I am ashamed." She looked up into his face, and he could see that she was full of passion, and by no means in a mood to submit to his reproaches. She, too, could frown, and was frowning now. Her nostrils were dilated, and her eyes were bright with anger. He could see how it was with her; and though he was determined to be master, he hardly knew how he was to make good his masterdom.

"You had better listen to me," he said.

"Not to-night. I am too ill, too thoroughly wretched. Anything you have got to say of course I will listen to, but not now." Then she walked to the door.

"Mary!" She paused with her hand on the lock. "I trust that you do not wish to contest the authority which I have over you?"

"I do not know; I cannot say. If your authority calls upon me to own that I have done anything wrong, I shall certainly contest it. And if I have not, I think—I think you will express your sorrow for the injury you have done me to-night." Then she left the room before he had made up his mind how he would continue his address. He was quite sure that he was right. Had he not desired her not to waltz? At that moment he quite forgot the casual permission he had barely given at Lady Brabazon's, and which had been intended to apply to that night only. Had he not specially warned her against this Captain De Baron, and told her that his name and hers were suffering from her intimacy with the man? And then, had she not deceived him directly by naming another person as her partner in that

odious dance? The very fact that she had so deceived him was proof to him that she had known that she ought not to dance with Captain De Baron, and that she had a vicious pleasure in doing so, which she had been determined to gratify even in opposition to his express orders. As he stalked up and down the room in his wrath, he forgot as much as he remembered. It had been represented to him that this odious romp had been no more than a minuet; but he did not bear in mind that his wife had been no party to that misrepresentation. And he forgot, too, that he himself had been present as a spectator at her express request. And, when his wrath was at the fullest, he almost forgot those letters from Adelaide Houghton! But he did not forget that all Mrs. Montacute Jones's world had seen him, as, in his offended marital majesty, he took his wife out from amidst the crowd, declaring his indignation and his jealousy to all who were there assembled. He might have been wrong there. As he thought of it all, he confessed to himself as much as that. But the injury done had been done to himself rather than to her. Of course they must leave London now, and leave it for ever. She must go with him whither he might choose to take her. Perhaps Manor Cross might serve for their lives' seclusion, as the marquis would not live there. But Manor Cross was near the Deanery, and he must sever his wife from her father. He was now very hostile to the dean, who had looked on and seen his abasement, and had smiled. But, through it all, there never came to him for a moment any idea of a permanent quarrel with his wife. It might, he thought, be long before there was permanent comfort between them. Obedience, absolute obedience, must come before that could be reached. But of the bond which bound them together he was far too sensible to dream of separation. Nor, in his heart, did he think her guilty of anything but foolish, headstrong indiscretion, of that and, latterly, of dissimulation. It was not that Cæsar had been wronged, but that his wife had enabled idle tongues to suggest a wrong to Cæsar.

He did not see her again that night, betaking himself at a very late hour to his own dressing-room. On the next morning at an early hour he was awake thinking. He must not allow her to suppose for a moment that he was afraid

of her. He went into her room a few minutes before their usual breakfast hour, and found her, nearly dressed, with her maid. "I shall be down directly, George," she said in her usual voice. As he could not bid the woman go away, he descended and waited for her in the parlour. When she entered the room she instantly rang the bell, and contrived to keep the man in the room while she was making the tea. But he would not sit down. How is a man to scold his wife properly with toast-and-butter on a plate before him? "Will you not have your tea?" she asked, oh, so gently.

"Put it down," he said. According to her custom, she got up and brought it round to his place. When they were alone she would kiss his forehead as she did so; but now the servant was just closing the door, and there was no kiss.

"Do come to your breakfast, George," she said.

"I cannot eat my breakfast while all this is on my mind. I must speak of it. We must leave London at once."

"In a week or two."

"At once. After last night, there must be no more going to parties." She lifted her cup to her lips, and sat quite silent. She would hear a little more before she answered him. "You must feel, yourself, that for some time to come, perhaps for some years, privacy will be the best for us."

"I feel nothing of the kind, George."

"Could you go and face those people after what happened last night?"

"Certainly I could, and should think it my duty to do so to-night, if it were possible. No doubt you have made it difficult, but I would do it."

"I was forced to make it difficult. There was nothing for me to do but to take you away."

"Because you were angry, you were satisfied to disgrace me before all the people there. What has been done cannot be helped. I must bear it. I cannot stop people from talking and thinking evil. But I will never say that I think evil of myself by hiding myself. I don't know what you mean by privacy. I want no privacy."

"Why did you dance with that man?"

"Because it was so arranged."

"You had told me it was someone else?"

"Do you mean to accuse me of a falsehood, George? First one arrangement had been made, and then another."

"I had been told before how it was to be."

"Who told you? I can only answer for myself."

"And why did you waltz?"

"Because you had withdrawn your foolish objection. Why should I not dance like other people? Papa does not think it wrong."

"Your father has nothing to do with it."

"If you ill-treat me, George, papa must have something to do with it. Do you think he will see me disgraced before a room full of people, as I was yesterday, and hold his tongue? Of course you are my husband, but he is still my father; and if I want protection he will protect me."

"I will protect you," said Lord George, stamping his foot upon the floor.

"Yes; by burying me somewhere. That is what you say you mean to do. And why? Because you get some silly nonsense into your head, and then make yourself and me ridiculous in public. If you think I am what you seem to suspect, you had better let papa have me back again, though that is so horrible that I can hardly bring myself to think of it. If you do not think so, surely you should beg my pardon for the affront you put on me last night."

This was a way in which he had certainly not looked at the matter. Beg her pardon! He, as a husband, beg a wife's pardon under any circumstances! And beg her pardon for having carried her away from a house in which she had manifestly disobeyed him. No, indeed. But then he was quite as strongly opposed to that other idea of sending her back to her father, as a man might send a wife who had disgraced herself. Anything would be better than that. If she would only acknowledge that she had been indiscreet, they would go down together into Brothershire, and all might be comfortable. Though she was angry with him, obstinate and rebellious, yet his heart was softened to her because she did not throw the woman's love-letter in his teeth. He had felt that here would be his great difficulty, but his difficulty now arose rather from the generosity which kept her silent on the subject. "What I did," he said, "I did to protect you."

"Such protection was an insult." Then she left the room before he had tasted his tea or his toast. She had heard her father's knock, and knew that she would find him in the drawing-room. She had made up her mind how she would tell the story to him; but when she was with him

he would have no story told at all. He declared that he knew everything, and spoke as though there could be no doubt as to the heinousness, or rather, absurdity, of Lord George's conduct. "It is very sad—very sad, indeed," he said; "one hardly knows what one ought to do."

"He wants to go down—to Cross Hall."

"That is out of the question. You must stay out your time here and then come to me, as you arranged. He must get out of it by saying that he was frightened by thinking that you had fallen."

"It was not that, papa."

"Of course it was not; but how else is he to escape from his own folly?"

"You do not think that I have been—wrong—with Captain De Baron?"

"I! God bless you, my child. I think that you have been wrong! He cannot think so either. Has he accused you?"

Then she told him, as nearly as she could, all that had passed between them, including the expression of his desire that she should not waltz, and his subsequent permission given at Lady Brabazon's. "Pish!" he ejaculated. "I hate these attempted restrictions. It is like a woman telling her husband not to smoke. What a fool a man must be not to see that he is preparing misery for himself, by laying embargoes on the recreations of his nearest companion!" Then he spoke of what he himself would do. "I must see him, and if he will not hear reason you must go with me to the Deanery without him."

"Don't separate us, papa."

"God forbid that there should be any permanent separation. If he be obstinate, it may be well that you should be away from him for a week or two. Why can't a man wash his dirty linen at home, if he has any to wash? His, at any rate, did not come to him with you."

Then there was a very stormy scene in the dining-room between the two men. The dean, whose words were infinitely more ready and available than those of his opponent, said very much the most, and by the fierce indignation of his disclaimers, almost prevented the husband from dwelling on the wife's indiscretion. "I did not think it possible that such a man as you could have behaved so cruelly to such a girl."

"I was not cruel; I acted for the best."

"You degraded yourself, and her too."

"I degraded no one," said Lord George.

"It is hard to think what may now best be done to cure the wound which she

has been made to suffer. I must insist on this—that she must not be taken from town before the day fixed for her departure.”

“I think of going to-morrow,” said Lord George, gloomily.

“Then you must go alone, and I must remain with her.”

“Certainly not; certainly not.”

“She will not go. She shall not be made to run away. Though everything have to be told in the public prints, I will not submit to that. I suppose you do not dare to tell me that you suspect her of any evil?”

“She has been indiscreet.”

“Suppose I granted that—which I don’t—is she to be ground into dust in this way for indiscretion? Have not you been indiscreet?” Lord George made no direct answer to this question, fearing that the dean had heard the story of the love-letter; but of that matter the dean had heard nothing. “In all your dealings with her, can you tax yourself with no deviation from wisdom?”

“What a man does is different. No conduct of mine can blemish her name.”

“But it may destroy her happiness—and if you go on in this way it will do so.”

During the whole of that day the matter was discussed. Lord George obstinately insisted on taking his wife down to Cross Hall, if not on the next day, then on the day after. But the dean, and with the dean the young wife, positively refused to accede to this arrangement. The dean had his things brought from the hotel to the house in Munster Court, and though he did not absolutely declare that he had come there for his daughter’s protection, it was clear that this was intended. In such an emergency Lord George knew not what to do. Though the quarrel was already very bitter, he could not quite tell his father-in-law to leave the house; and then there was always present to his mind a feeling that the dean had a right to be there, in accordance with the pecuniary arrangement made. The dean would have been welcome to the use of the house and all that was in it, if only Mary would have consented to be taken at once down to Cross Hall. But being under her father’s wing, she would not consent. She pleaded that by going at once, or running away as she called it, she would own that she had done something wrong, and she was earnest in declaring that nothing should bring such a confession from her. Every-

body, she said, knew that she was to stay in London to the end of June. Everybody knew that she was then to go to the Deanery. It was not to be borne that people should say that her plans had been altered, because she had danced the Kappakpa with Captain De Baron. She must see her friends before she went, or else her friends would know that she had been carried into banishment. In answer to this, Lord George declared that he, as husband, was paramount. This Mary did not deny, but, paramount as the authority was, she would not, in this instance, be governed by it.

It was a miserable day to them all. Many callers came, asking after Lady George, presuming that her speedy departure from the ball had been caused by her accident. No one was admitted, and all were told that she had not been much hurt. There were two or three stormy scenes between the dean and his son-in-law, in one of which Lord George asked the dean whether he conceived it to be compatible with his duty, as a clergyman of the Church of England, to induce a wife to disobey her husband. In answer to this, the dean said that in such a matter the duty of a Church dignitary was the same as that of any other gentleman, and that he, as a gentleman, and also as a dignitary, meant to stand by his daughter. She refused to pack up, or to have her things packed. When Lord George came to look into himself, he found that he had not power to bid the servants do it in opposition to their mistress. That the power of a husband was paramount he was well aware, but he did not exactly see his way to the exercise of it. At last he decided that he, at any rate, would go down to Cross Hall. If the dean chose to create a separation between his daughter and her husband, he must bear the responsibility.

On the following day he did go down to Cross Hall, leaving his wife and her father in Munster Court without any definite plans.

SCHOOL-BOARD JOURNALISM.

WHILST cabmen possess, or did possess, a newspaper, and dairymen are in the same position, and villa gardeners take in an organ christened after themselves, and The Pawnbrokers’ Gazette flourishes, and The Wine Trade Review is an aristocratic monthly, selling at the aristocratic price of two shillings; whilst brewers, whip-

makers, sewing-machine sellers, and a host of others,* all rise to periodic representation, it is not likely that school teachers would leave themselves outmarched on such an apparently easy journey. School teachers are a vast and growing army. They tread on and on; and whether they are in the grades of monitors, pupil-teachers, assistant-masters, assistant-mistresses, head-masters, head-mistresses, they represent a force not to be looked at with contempt, and in which an immensity of quite novel power is being placed. Their vitality is undeniable; their enterprise—as it could not help—matches it. Confining allusion to such of them as may be known under the broad and general title of elementary teachers, whose results are tested by Government examinations, whose incomes are assured, or bettered, by Government grants, they are in the enjoyment of from half a score to a score of journalistic organs, of new birth, or of new life and management, that would never have been born if they had not been born also, and that are devoted entirely to their interests. The School Board Chronicle may stand at the head of these; and running by the side of it, in about as full and active administration, are The Schoolmaster, The School Guardian, The Pupil Teacher, The Educational Guide, The Irish School Magazine, The Teachers' Assistant, The Scholastic Register, The National Schoolmaster, The Students' Magazine, The Educational News, The Journal of Education, and others. And this is not touching Sunday-school serials, let it be observed, even in the most shadowy manner. The absolute educational work of every day is rigidly adhered to; and when it was said that the body of teachers has surprising enterprise and vitality, does not the fact of this newspaper production and consumption give the statement ample justification?

Naturally a certain portion of these scholastic serials is taken up by advertisements; and in the department of these that relates to the schools that want teachers, and to the teachers that want schools, there is some very suggestive and agreeable matter. It is made clear, at the least, that some passing richness may be obtained, and some very enjoyable lives be spent, by school teachers amidst rural pleasures and pastimes, if they only take, with full hearts and souls, to scholarship and contentment. Thus: A cer-

tificated master for a mixed village school is advertised for, his salary ninety pounds, with house that is even partly furnished, firing, and large garden. Another master in a country school is to have one hundred and sixty pounds, with house; a third, one hundred pounds; a fourth, one hundred and twenty pounds; a fifth one hundred and thirty pounds to begin with, and to increase by five pounds per annum till he reaches one hundred and sixty pounds, with the additional bonus of seven-and-a-half per cent. on his salary if he passes eighty boys out of each hundred, or of ten per cent. if he passes ninety. Nor are matters less satisfactory and enticing—considering the different expenses incident to women and to men—when, instead of a master being wanted, it is a mistress. In one country town a mistress is guaranteed ninety pounds a year; another teacher, for Devonshire, is guaranteed fifty pounds, with half the Government grant and a furnished house; a third is to have sixty pounds, with residence and coals; a fourth, sixty pounds, with house partly furnished; a fifth, not less than eighty pounds; a sixth, ninety pounds, with one-third of grant received. Even an assistant-mistress, in a large seaport, is offered sixty pounds; another is coaxed to come by the announcement that the situation is pleasant, overlooking the Solent. And if competent mistresses will only go to South Africa, the salary offered is eighty pounds each, with board, lodging, and washing, and with passage paid. In the case of married masters with wives able to assist them, or of single masters having mother or sister—or, as it is comprehensively printed, female relative—competent to help, the incomes promised, and the surroundings, offer quite as many advantages. An approved couple of this kind, in an agricultural district, are to have one hundred pounds a year at least—which means that results may make it more—with house and garden; a second couple, in Warwickshire, are to have one hundred and forty pounds, a free residence, and a notified third of the resulting Government grant. A Rutlandshire School Board offers a similar couple one hundred and twenty pounds, with portion of grant, good school-house, and garden; another board, farther south, offers one hundred pounds a year, with house, garden, and coals; and salaries of eighty and ninety pounds a year, with additions from the grants paid for scholars who pass, are

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 19, p. 389, "The Press of the Trades."

abundant. Some of the committees the accepted masters and mistresses will have to encounter will be found full of grotchets, it is true. One of them, for instance, expects candidates to execute a little compound multiplication sum, at the very moment their eyes are running up and down the columns of the journal in which it advertises. The committee in question, being apparently mean at the outset over the salary, which is only thirty-four pounds, says: "Plus children's pence, plus Government grant (part), besides cottage (partly furnished), and garden"—partly dug, it might have been added, to complete it. Then another committee says: "Salary, sixty pounds, plus half grant, plus half pence, plus ten pounds for organ and choir; good house and garden (rent free)." Number Three touches a mistress. It reads: "For mixed village school. Healthy, bracing situation. Retired. Average attendance, thirty-five. Harmonium. Salary, fifty pounds. Good furnished house and garden." The vicar is to be addressed by the certificated mistress who is wanted for this, immediately; and it is quite easy to see the brisk, bustling gentleman, and to hear his sharp, short voice. There is to be nothing superfluous in his arrangements, it is clear; and the teacher to be subjected to his visiting and his questionings had better always have her answers prepared, very compact and concise. A vicar of precisely opposite nature, the owner of a magnificent, sonorous, and circumloentory style, introduces Number Four. This gentleman says a mistress "will be required to undertake the entire school charge of, and be responsible for, the instruction and education of forty to fifty girls; she should be a good needlewoman, and able to teach the girls to make their own clothes." On the same model is formed the clergyman who insinuates, "Salary, forty pounds a year, school pence (which average fifteen pounds a year), half the Government grant (worth say twenty pounds), and excellent furnished house and garden free." Also the agent, who suggests that, "After deducting amount paid to pupil-teachers, the income of the school, less one-third of Government grant, will be given as salary. Income last year was, from grant, one hundred and nine pounds; school fees, eighty pounds; yearly contribution, twenty pounds. House and garden. Master with wife and small family, and some musical qualifications, preferred." It

would be so much more conclusive if these gentlemen would say at once what the aggregate salary is likely to be; and they have excellent examples for this in the straightforward statements of other people. Says one, "Good disciplinarian. Harmonium, singing. Salary, sixty pounds." Say others: "Good church-people; small organ, choir, Sunday school. Salary, ninety pounds." "Salary, one hundred pounds; no residence." "Salary, seventy pounds, with school-house." "Salary last year over ninety pounds; extra salary to a good player on the organ, sixteen pounds."

Besides, if School Board secretaries, cleric or lay, want models of brief and decisive advertisements, let them search the teachers' newspapers, and note how the teachers describe themselves. "Trained, experienced, successful, open to engagement, August," stands out admirably. So does "Trained, certificated, experienced master. Divinity, drawing (D), sciences, drill." So does "School, organ, choir, parchment certificate, second-class. Boys or mixed. Good musician, experienced, married. Passed ninety-seven per cent. Age, thirty-six." It would be rather difficult to exceed this advertising compression power, not to say telegraphic terseness. It would be difficult to give better proof of how well elementary teachers remember that every word has to be paid for, and of how perfectly they are aware of the telling quality of good plump nouns. Nothing but good can be said, either, of "Permanent or temporary. Trained, certificated, married master. Boys or mixed. Excellent reports, testimonials, references;" or of "Harmonium, singing. Communicant. Excellent needlewoman. Mother resident with her;" or of "Good organist. Anglican or Gregorian services. Mezzo-soprano voice. Good disciplinarian and needlewoman;" or of "Battersea-trained. Parchment. Archbishop's certificate. Drawing (D). Three sciences;" or of "Board or British. Boys or mixed. Drawing, singing, drill. Single." Advancing a little farther into technicalities, too, there may be read this: "Ex-P. T., provisionally certificated, desirous assistantship. Disciplinarian, drawing, singing, music. And this: "Ex-P. T. Girls or infants; latter preferred. No Sunday work. Musical." And this: "A male ex-P. T. Trained in large suburban school." And this: "A P.-T. Needlework. Well recommended. Willing to sit."

But this is a mystification that enforces stoppage at last.

Willing to sit? And it is not a unique specimen. There is an uncertificated mistress willing to sit; there is a master who would sit at Christmas—if properly accommodated, evidently, otherwise he would refuse; there is a young man equally minded; there is a “transfer” who will sit, with nothing provisional about him, but a firm resolution. From which it is evident that sitting is a tolerably comprehensive operation; and then, when we come to a less economical teacher, prudish enough to say, and pay for, that she is willing to sit for certificate at Christmas, we get necessary explanation, that the act means the going up for examination, and the thing is clear. An ex-P. T. gets elucidated in time, too, after a similar fashion. P. T. is short for pupil-teacher, the ex-ness of him bearing its own meaning; and when this is comprehended, together with the facts that a mixed school means one where boys and girls are taught in the same classes, that drawing (D) means the drawing of the sort that can apply for Government grant or special payment, we may pass on to another subject, or, to use another elementary teacher’s technicality, we may pass on to another standard or section. Even at the moment the passing is being done, though, it shall just be jotted down that the other Government teachers, in setting out their claims, say that they have tonic sol-fa qualifications; views that are evangelical; five languages; six sciences; eight sciences; can teach mathematics, physiology, navigation, and, what sounds tame in comparison, geography; can take infants and harmonium; are pianists; are hard-working; are energetic; can claim their certificates—without the preliminary sitting, it is to be presumed—under Article Fifty-nine.

Look at the number of associations that have arisen, the institutes, unions, clubs, improvement societies, benevolent societies, and so on; all for teachers in some grade or another, all supported by teachers in some grade or another; each having rules, prospectus, officers, agenda, subscriptions; each having mention from time to time, in long report or short, in one or another of the teachers’ periodicals under observation. These societies, it appears, by notices in the proper columns, exist at such centres as Huddersfield, Tyneside, Manchester, Aberavon, Eastbourne, Daventry, Sherborne, Reigate,

Doncaster; in the metropolis, each district has its own. The agenda of one reads, in a clear advertisement: “First. New scheme for the higher instruction of P. T.’s. Secondly. Other business;” of another: “Business will include a discussion of the New Code regulations and a report of the late conference proceedings;” and it must be seen that work of this sort is not to be done without earnest feeling and considerable expenditure of time. These societies, also, have a recognised head, or leader, in the National Union of Elementary Teachers, appearing constantly in the teachers’ organs, under the abbreviated form of the N. U. E. T. This has an income of one thousand pounds a year, it can pay its secretary a salary of three hundred and fifty pounds; it appears, by a full report of its proceedings, to tackle manfully, in its annual conference, every resolution of the body above it—the members of the School Board—and every resolution of my lords, the body above them; it speaks of its own members and delegates, with the names of the places they come from after their own names, exactly as if they were representatives sitting, not in a scholastic sense, for some town or borough; it has so serious and just a sense of its own responsibility, it could applaud heartily when its president said, according to the report: “We are the practical workers of the educational machine, and, next to the Eastern question, the question of education is undoubtedly the question of the day.” And does this seem full of meaning? It must. Take a step in another direction, if further proof is wanted of it. Look at the school boards themselves, new-born in every direction, as new as the teachers they are to appoint and regulate, and being newly-born still, like them, to the right, to the left, in the north, south, east, west. The teachers’ newspapers report that these school boards are busy about fees, about prize essays, about corporal punishment, public reprimands, cookery classes, the new code of needlework, the election of visitors, the payment of them, the increase of salaries, the choice of sites, the erection of buildings, the arrangement of details, and greater and lesser matters which it would be wearisome to enumerate. Much comic business comes up in the midst. When a country board is discussing the Baroness Burdett Coutte’s prizes for essays on Cruelty to Animals, a member asks: “Are the essays purely unsectarian?” and he gets for answer: “As unsectarian as the animals.”

When another country board wants to frame byelaws that shall enable it to touch the donkey-boys of the neighbourhood, the mover calls out excitedly to the chairman: "Carry out the law, sir! Carry out the law!" When a third board is passing plans for a class-room for cookery, and hard opposition is offered to the outlay, the chairman cries: "Cookery is a most essential branch of education! I prefer a servant that can cook a mutton-chop, to one that can parse a sentence!" When a fourth board, Scotch, is arguing for six weeks' summer holiday, agricultural considerations having something to do with the length of it, a member rises and says he is startled, moved, appalled, by the fact that six weeks' holiday for two thousand five hundred scholars, is the loss of fifteen thousand weeks of instruction; is the loss, with thirty-eight weeks in a session, of three hundred and ninety-four sessions; is the further loss to the country of the instruction of seven thousand five hundred pupils for eight years, or something like sixty thousand lessons! When a fifth school board—in South Britain again, and pleasantly rural—is settling who is a tradesman and who is not; because tradesmen are to pay more than the usual fee of a penny for each child, and persons selling sweets are tradespeople, yet might be very poor; Mr. Somebody propounds coarsely that, in his opinion, Mr. So-and-so—a fellow-member present, opposite—is a tradesman proper; and Mr. So-and-so, the fellow-member, present there, spectator, auditor, answers humbly, Very well, then, he will pay the higher fee for his own little children faithfully. But all school-board work is not of this curious and cantankerous kind. At one, the members call the visitors who are to get the children together, persuaders; and they engage a man that he may persuade the little people to go inside the doors, instead of forcing them. At a second, the members placarded the district with the provisions of the Education Act, and discussed whether any further attempt should be made to enlighten parents. At a third, there is a lament recorded, that, within fifty yards, there are as many children lounging about the gutters, as there are within the schools. At others, the members have to consider whether the proprietors of some neighbouring mines are injuring their property by boring under it; whether parents are right in keeping their eldest children at home to carry dinners

and mind the babies; whether they shall let their playgrounds be open to the children at all hours, on all the days; whether they shall have a School-board ship to train up little School-board seamen; whether the children could not be coaxed into becoming cleaner, since the wretched condition of the heads of some of them is something frightful, their hair betokening symptoms of being very rarely combed; whether a blast-furnace about to be erected is too near their premises; whether it is allowable to collect two school-rates, the first to be expended in squabbling, the second to pay for a useless map of the parish. Says the chairman of one of these boards, a cheque must be signed for twenty-five pounds, the clerk's salary, already four months overdue; will three members sign it? But three members won't; without which the order would not be valid. One member says he never has signed a cheque, and never intends to; another member says he declines to sign any money-orders under existing circumstances; and the clerk remains salary-less, with the intimation that the board will have to be sued in the county court. Says the chairman of another of these boards: "The girls and infants in winter each bring a hat, a scarf, a shawl, a jacket, and, in many cases, an umbrella, and these will be thrown on the floor in a heap." A third chairman cries out rudely to the clerk, who suggests taking counsel's opinion: "Ah, you want it taken at other people's expense!" The point to be settled is, whether school-board members can no longer be school-board members, if their children receive salaries as teachers or monitors in board schools; and this would touch, deep home, in many thinly-populated country places. A fourth chairman, when asked who has charge of the money left by legacy to the parish for education, answers: "The rector and the churchwardens;" when asked again what the rector and the churchwardens do with the money, answers: "I don't know, I'm sure;" and suggests that the Charity Commissioners should be forthwith applied to for information. And when all these points have been gathered up together, it will be remarked that they traverse a wide space of ground; that they touch home interests, and parish interests, and personal interests; reach social economy, political economy, law, architecture, sanitary matters; reach, above all, the cultivation of parliamentary discipline and temper, of a judicial manner,

in the members of the boards themselves. And when it is remembered that these boards, in far-away rural places, must be composed of men who have not hitherto had much experience in self-command, it will be understood how significant is this movement on the question of the day, and how it extends, not only to the little untaught children first thought about, but to the teachers of these little children, and to the boards above the teachers, and to all concerned.

For the whole of this operates to an extent that could not have been calculated upon when there was first entrance into it. It is at once doubled, trebled, quadrupled, by the publicity given to it by, for one fact, the mere existence and circulation of the School Board journals now being observed. They report everything, they hear all discussions, they read all letters, they study all plans, they listen to all suggestions and cries. Is it argued that a good stimulus to cleanliness would be to select the most cleanly children to go with messages, since children like going messages, and would appreciate the selection; the journals print the argument, and all readers of them can adopt the idea or discard it as they think well. Does a woman harbour an escaped industrial scholar, and have four pounds to pay for the harbouring, or imprisonment in default; the journals report the case, and all schoolmasters and schoolmistresses may know the law, and give the warning from it. Does the school inspector of a (Welsh) district complain of the bad attendance of children, because there were no fewer than fourteen Sunday-school treats and excursions in one neighbourhood, all given on different days, not to mention various club processions preceded by powerful brass bands; it is all set down, and parochial magnates may see the disadvantage of such a state of things, and may counsel its discontinuance. Is a poor little girl killed by falling from a swing; record is made of it, and managers may see to their swings, and issue more stringent regulations. Are private adventure schools found some of them to be in small back kitchens or dark close rooms, with many of the teachers infirm and aged women, themselves imperfectly educated; it is put down, for everyone to be aware of it, and for the proper conclusions to be drawn. Is there a rumour that Irish tenants have been deprived of their privilege of turbary (or free turf-cutting for fuel) because their

children attended a particular school; it does not escape, but has a paragraph, that all persons have the benefit of the information. And it is the same about the insisting of education to children kept floating from town to town in canal-boats; about a handsome walnut writing-desk presented to Miss Jones, a work-basket to Miss Brown, a pair of vases to Miss Robinson, a marble timepiece to Mr. and Mrs. Blank, a purse of forty guineas to Mr. Dash—all as expressions of respect for work well understood and conscientiously carried out; about the bad policy of forcing parents to apply for the remission of their school fees to the guardians of the poor, one mother, as an example, having been heard to say: "Well, my husband is out of work, and I may as well ask for some relief at the same time;" about the propriety of inviting four or more ladies to join the Education Committee in Scotland, and the issuing of the invitation, and its acceptance, by five, immediately. There are paragraphs, also, saying that out of seven children who came to school on one occasion without boots or shoes, six returned booted when they had been sent home for the purpose; saying that elementary teachers ought to have the pension question settled, since out of the teachers known to one speaker, three or four were paralysed, three were objects of the cold charity of the world, one or two were recipients of the dole of the relieving-officer, others were existing they knew not how, and some had left teaching, not seeing much prospect in it. And there are paragraphs containing statistics of board schools, saying that out of five-and-a-half millions of children computed to be alive in Great Britain, four millions ought to attend elementary schools, that two-and-a-quarter millions did attend on a given day, the cost being two pounds one shilling and fourpence halfpenny for each child at the year's end; whilst the cost of Nonconformist children is one pound thirteen shillings and eightpence three farthings; of Church children a penny three farthings lower; and of Roman Catholic children two shillings and sixpence halfpenny lower still. It is, perhaps, quite to be expected, after all this wide-reaching matter—and it could reach out to double the distance if space allowed—that there is the popular query column in most of the teachers' newspapers. There is; and there has even been established—perfectly free from objection as it is in such a con-

nection—that other greater novelty, the column of exchange. When pupil-teachers, masculine and feminine, have sat, and have finished with the books that enabled them to do their sitting, it is quite allowable that they should be willing to part with these books, to try and get something more interesting or more useful in their place; and as for the apparently appetising game of queries, if pupil-teachers and others like to ask: Would someone kindly explain the nature and origin of those yellow-coloured spots which are found in almost all slates? Will some reader inform me what were the seven wonders of the world? How many equilateral triangles can be described on a given finite straight line? What is the Latin for The woman loves? and so on; it can only be said at the farthest that, if there be any amusement in it, the pupil-teachers and others are quite welcome to the amusement.

It must be said, in conclusion, or there would not be justice done to school-board journalism, that the aim of their journalism goes much farther in one direction than it has hitherto been indicated. To teach teachers how to teach is as much the reason for their existence, as to tell teachers who have been taught what has been said and done in reference to their teaching. To this end—as one means, the others must now be passed over—the examination-papers submitted to pupil-teachers at their sittings are published in detail, and some of the absolute answers, written by them, are given. This accustoms the young people to what they are to expect, and—as they would be constantly examining themselves by trying these papers over, and are constantly encouraged to be examining themselves by these very queries to which there has been allusion—it is the best preparation possible. The range of these examination-papers will surprise: “Suppose that a reduction of fifteen per cent. in a man’s wages causes him to lose one shilling and sixpence weekly, what were his weekly wages before the reduction?” is a question in arithmetic. “Where are Colombo, Point de Galle, Krishna, Lahore, Orange River, and the Great Karroo?” is a question in geography. “Which of our sovereigns has been called the English Justinian, and for what reasons?” is a question in history. As a test of knowledge in physical geography, there is: “Write out the source of the Thames, and the same of the Severn and the Humber, its length, its tribu-

aries on right and left bank—a sketch-map should be drawn; its area, character, and boundaries of its river-basin; the counties between which it flows, with chief towns on or very near it or its tributaries; and the chief particulars relating to its navigation.” Tests are applied also in respect of grammar, Euclid, algebra, music, mensuration, composition, of the same searching character. And when it is remembered that the young people expected to pass on these subjects come, speaking broadly and generally, from those masses of British society into which, until the last score of years or so, no over large quantity of education and science had ever penetrated, it opens a large field of hope and speculation. The mental plough is cutting into these masses now for the first time. Out of them, as furrow rises by the side of furrow, good inner grit and vigour may get flung up plentifully. At the least it is undoubted that the lower classes—by some unknown law of Nature, or by some freak in which it is Nature’s good pleasure to indulge—have ever and anon produced the most ardent geniuses; have ever and anon shown there is a potency in them, and a force and an efficacy that is always extricating them from the furnace of struggle and difficulty, with facilities still buoyant and unimpaired. And so school-board journalism shall be left here, with the hope that the outcome of it may be, to those most concerned, good, honest work, and an abundant harvest of satisfactory results.

MY FRIEND MALLAM.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

HUGH and I walked to the corner of Broad Street in silence. I was determined he should speak first, and presently he did, turning on me with sufficient abruptness and asking:

“Why did you not tell me Miss Langton was staying with the Priors, Gurney?”

“I did tell you, my dear fellow. Don’t you remember?”

“You said ‘a cousin.’ You never mentioned her name.”

“Didn’t I? Perhaps I knew young ladies’ names were not of much interest to a woman-hater like you. But I am very fond of Cecil Langton. She’s one of the nicest girls I ever came across; and, to judge by the Priors’ affection for her, one of the best. Poor thing! it seems strange that such a beautiful creature

should have no nearer relatives to cling to."

"She is beautiful, more beautiful than ever," Mallam said abruptly; and then after a pause, "I wonder that she has not married long ago."

"Not for want of asking," I answered a little sharply.

"No," he said; and then after a minute or two, during which we had turned into my parlour, "I suppose you saw that w—that I had met her before?"

"I daresay. She was here for Commemoration in '71; and before that again for—what's the matter, Hugh?" for he had winced, and his face grown as pale as a man stabbed by some sudden pain.

"Nothing," he said slowly, "except that there is no folly like an old folly; and no fool like a man who piques himself on his wisdom. I told you once, when you were urging me to marry, that my life had been spoilt by a woman years ago. Well, I met her again this evening for the first time since the event. She is Cecil Langton."

"And—Cecil Langton was engaged to you, and jilted you? So I guessed; and yet I wonder at it, too. It doesn't seem like her."

"No, she was not engaged to me. I never asked her. I found out in time."

"Found what out?"

"That she was not the angel I thought her, that's all. And yet," he added, with another short, bitter laugh, "I daresay she's not different to the rest of her sex; and if she had married me, and I had never known, I might have lived in a fool's paradise till now. By heaven, when I look at her, I wish I had never known! Don't think it was anything dreadful, however, only that I had made an ideal goddess of her; and I discovered one day that she was just a woman, as false and fickle, and far gone in flirtations as the rest."

"I never thought her anything but a woman," I answered, "and on the whole, I prefer women to goddesses. However, if she played with you, old man, she's been heavily punished since; so you've had your revenge."

"Punished! How do you mean?" and he turned on me with a fierceness which showed that any idea of pain to her was no pleasure to him.

"Only, that she was jilted herself by a man she cared for," I said quietly, "a man who made furious love to her, and then—left her. They say she's never been the same since. That sort of thing gets talked

about, you know, and the talking about it is almost worse than the pain and cruelty itself, to a delicate-minded woman. I shouldn't have mentioned it to you, but for what you said. Prior told me. That's why she's never married."

"That!" repeated Mallam. "When did this happen?"

"Oh, some years ago. By-the-way, Prior told me it was here, in Oxford, so her reminiscences of this place can't be altogether pleasant."

"In Oxford?" he repeated again. "Could that blackguard have done it? But she was writing to him afterwards; and she was light-hearted enough then. Gurney, do tell me one thing. It's not idle curiosity—was the man's name Lucas?"

"Don't know," I said quietly. "Prior never heard it; but Lucas—you don't mean that. You're thinking of some other name, aren't you? Lucas is her brother, you know."

"Her brother!" cried Mallam. It was more like a hoarse cry than intelligible speech. He turned on me suddenly as he uttered it, grasping my shoulder. "What do you mean? How could her brother's name be Lucas, when hers is Langton?"

"Easily enough; so let me go, will you, and sit down. Her father married a widow of the name of Lucas, with a small son by her first husband. Simplest thing possible, and—hallo! Hugh, old fellow, what's the matter?"

He had let go of me, and turned away to a distant window. I could see that his face was hidden in his hands. By-and-by, when he had got over it a little, and we were sitting by the fire, he said to me:

"Gurney, I want to tell you a story. I've been the most confounded fool and villain, without knowing it; and have injured another, even more than myself. The sooner I get away from here the better; but I'd like you to hear about it first. It is six years since I parted from Cecil Langton. I had only known her a fortnight, but I loved her with my whole heart from the first day we met. She was like a new revelation to me, and I believed in her. I daresay you'll call me an ass. I know I'm different to most men. I don't believe the generality care what a woman is in herself, so they are in love with her, and she with them. Passion covers everything with a beautiful face to back it; but, unluckily, it wasn't so with me. I suppose I'm insantly jealous by

nature; and I had a 'fad' about never marrying a woman with a 'story,' a woman who had had lovers or romances before. I wanted my wife to be all my own, with no memories even to come between her heart and mine. I think if I could have chosen, I would have had her locked up in a glass-case till the moment I saw her. There, laugh if you like! It was an idiotic craze, and I own it; but the worst of it was, that, not content with having this ideal in my mind, I applied it to Cecil, and I believed she came up to it. One thing I know, that though everyone was going wild about her beauty, it didn't seem to make any impression on her. She never showed a grain of favour to any of her numerous admirers; and one of her greatest charms to me was the sort of glad, free, heart-wholeness which she carried about with her. Even I, who loved her so well, couldn't tell if she knew it, or cared for me. Sometimes I thought she did—a little; but I think great love makes one humble; and oftener I feared I was mistaken. I have never known how it was in reality.

"The day before I was going to ask her the question, we were in the public drawing-room at the Rashleigh Hotel. She and her friends were staying there; and we had all come in together from the Bodleian. We were talking of a portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots, there—you know it—and she said something about not sympathising much with the sorrows of a woman of many loves. It was like my ideal of her, and I said so, observing:

"I don't think you would change easily if you cared for anyone.' And she answered:

"No, once ought to be enough for any real woman. Not,' she added quickly, 'that I can speak from experience.'

"Of changing?' I said, 'or caring?'

"I was looking into her eyes, and I was glad to see them soften and a lovely blush come into her face; yet she tried to keep her careless look and answered:

"People cannot change if they have never cared.'

"But they might care!' I said. Her friends were leaving the room to put their things away. I saw she wanted to follow them, and I had only time to add, 'May I come again to-morrow? I want to ask you—'

"She was gone before I said what; but though she hurried upstairs, there was no denial in her eyes, and she had not snatched

her hand from me. I think I should have held her by it and asked my question then; but a waiter passed the door at the moment and glanced in at us, and I let her go lest I might expose her to some remark. I was careful enough of her name. If only others had been as much so!

"There was an unused door at one side of the room. A table covered with books stood against it, and I was leaning over it, trying to find something in Bradshaw, when I heard talking going on on the other side of the door. I suppose there was a pantry there, for they were waiters' voices, so I paid no attention till I heard a name, and it flashed on me they were speaking of Cecil.

"Ah, well, she's a beautiful girl, is a Hundred-and-seven,' said one. 'We don't often get a stunner.' And then there came a grunt in answer.

"Ay, an' carryin' on as them stunning ones generally does. It's one o' the young college gents now, I see; but she was ere two years ago with her pa, an' then it were an officer. Ah, I remembers them! He were a Cap'en Lucas. Same name as my wife afore I married her.'

"Gurney, I can't repeat the words as I heard them. The gist of them was this, that while staying at the hotel she had telegraphed for this Captain Lucas to join her, and then affected great surprise when he walked up to her and her father in the coffee-room; that their mutual affection and whispered confidences were patent, even to the waiters, as was also the old gentleman's dislike to him; that the two men quarrelled violently on the second evening; and that, on the following day, this servant met her creeping downstairs in the early morning, before anyone was up, to bid Captain Lucas good-bye; and looking into the coffee-room, a minute or two later, saw him holding her in his arms and kissing her. I did not wait to hear any more. I should never have stood there so long only I seemed struck stupid. The moment I woke up to a sense of what I was hearing I hurried away. Gurney, I do believe I went half mad. I can remember pacing up and down my room all night; and next day I kept out of everyone's sight, and wandered about in a fever of misery and irresolution. Sometimes I felt as if I would rather never see her again; sometimes that I must speak to her and tell her what I had heard, if only that she might deny it. If she had ordered me

out of her sight at the same time, I shouldn't have minded. To have known that it was a lie, that it was not she who had met this confounded Captain Lucas, would have been worth more than my own life to me just then. And yet, how even to speak to her on the subject, I couldn't tell. At last I could bear it no longer, and went back to the hotel. A waiter told me that she was in; and as she and her friends had a private sitting-room I ran up to it, hoping I might find her, and alone. She was not there, however, the room was empty; but her little desk stood open on the table, and near it a letter addressed, in her large, bold hand, which I once told her laughingly I could read a mile off, to Captain Lucas, Royal Artillery Barracks, somewhere. I did not wait for a second glance, but turned and went out from the room and the hotel. I had learnt all I wanted to know. I never saw or spoke to her again. She left Oxford a day or two afterwards; and when the other fellows used to chaff me about her next term, most of them assuming that I had proposed to the beautiful Miss Langton and been refused, and some making rather merry at my expense, I never denied it. I would guard her name if I could, though she might peril it; and besides, I could not have spoken of her. My one hope was to forget her existence, and that was a vain one. Heaven only knows how she has haunted my memory, and now—now!"

"You find out that you were utterly unjust to her, that the Captain Lucas was her stepbrother, and that she sent for him to the Rashleigh in the hope of effecting a reconciliation between him and her father, who had not met him since her mother's death! Well, Hugh, you've certainly made a sad blunder of it; and it isn't your fault if you haven't broken outright as true a heart as ever beat. What are you going to do at present?"

"Go away," he said hoarsely; "that I mayn't insult her by a second sight of me. No wonder she looked at me with such aversion to-day. And to think she might once have cared for me! Well, well, I am punished enough."

And upon my word when I saw him sitting with his head bowed upon his hands, and his face as drawn and haggard as if years of pain had swept over it since the morning, I almost felt the same, and began to soften in the anger I had felt at his first condemnation of Cecil. He, how-

ever, would listen to no excuse for his conduct, and laughed to scorn my suggestion that she might yet forgive him.

"Would you have me insult her worse?" he asked me bitterly. "No, no, tell her some day, if you like, that I left her because I was utterly unworthy of her, but that I loved her with my whole heart, and was never faithless to her even for a day. Tell her that if you will, and then never mention me again. She will not care that you should." And it was altogether against his will that I insisted on giving his message in my own way, and before he left Oxford. In my heart I believed that Cecil still cared for him, and would never suffer him to go; but he checked me sternly when I even tried to hint at such an idea, and I left him packing his portmanteau when I started.

Mrs. Prior received me less cordially than usual. She looked worried and fretful, and told me she could not have seen any stranger.

"So I am glad you did not bring your friend with you," she said. "Is he a great friend? for to tell the truth I did not take a fancy to him. He has the same name as a person who—whom I would not receive on any account; and—and I did not care for his manner. Is he going to stay long with you?"

Cecil got up and laid her hand on the invalid's shoulder. Her beautiful face was looking very white this morning, but as calm as wax.

"Cousin Emily is not well," she said gently. "You are not to mind her, Mr. Gurney. It is a way of hers to take unreasonable likes and dislikes; and we have not been seeing many strangers of late. She would like your friend very well on one of her good days. Come out into the garden and look at my Japanese anemones." And I rose and went out with her gladly; but when we got to the flowers I turned my back on them and said:

"Thank you for taking Mallam's part, Miss Langton. He is a man I love dearly, and all the more that he has had a great trouble in his life—perhaps the greatest any man can have. It is very heavy on him now." Her face turned paler yet, her hands clasped each other in a tight hold, but she did not speak. I went on quite quietly. "He was unfortunate enough once to love a woman very dearly, and wrong her cruelly. It's quite a proper story, so you needn't mind my mentioning it. Lately, only last night, he found out his error, and it has

overwhelmed him. He saw the lady again and——”

“Thought her rather pretty perhaps,” Cecil interrupted scornfully, “and even that he might have done worse than have been faithful to her. Is that your friend’s trouble, Mr. Gurney? I compassionate him; though I don’t see a remedy for it.”

“No,” I said coolly, “for as it happens he never was faithless to her; only to his belief in her. And great as that fault was, Miss Langton, I have told him that if she ever cared for him she would forgive him, even though it were greater yet. He will not hear me; and declares that the very sight of him must be an offence to her. I wish you would let me tell you the story. A woman’s opinion is sometimes worth having on these matters, and I should like to hear yours.” And then I told it her all, without any glossing over or extenuating; she standing before me with the white anemones waving in the breeze about her feet, and the morning sunshine on her fair head, and the changing colour in her face. It was a very changing colour during my tale, shifting from hot crimson to pale more than one; but before the end the crimson had faded into a settled pallor, and when I was silent she lifted two very bright, proud eyes to mine, and said quite calmly and coldly:

“I think your friend is right, Mr. Gurney. He has insulted the lady—grossly; and his presence must be an offence to her. As to his love,” and there was a small, hard quiver of a smile about her mouth, “no man who loved a woman would be coward enough to desert her on so unworthy a suspicion. She is better without such love as his; and you may be sure she has long ago put away any she might ever have had for him.”

“You really think so?” I asked, looking at her.

“I am sure of it,” she said firmly, and there was so little sign of weakness in her face that I saw further words were useless, and went back to Mallam with a heavy heart. Poor fellow; he never asked me a question; but the look with which he met me, and the beaten-down expression which came over his face when I told him the result of my visit, showed me there had been more hope in his heart than he had owned. He left Oxford half an hour later, and his last words to me were:

“God bless you, dear old fellow. Try and be any service to her that you can,

and—and let me know if she marries. I hope she will! and a better man than I.”

It was nine months before I heard from him again. All that time he had not written to me, and now his letter was to say that he had accepted an appointment in India. He was weary of this country, and—and, in fact, he found he could not live down the memory of his folly while he remained in it. Would I come up to London to bid him good-bye, or should he run down to me?

I couldn’t go up to London. Though it was the long vacation again, I was detained in Oxford by business which required my constant presence; so I asked him to come down to me for a couple of days, adding that he need not be afraid of meeting Cecil, as she was away. To tell the truth, I was not sorry she was, for I was a little vexed with her. She had looked very pale and ill for a few days after Mallam’s departure last autumn, but after that she brightened up, got quite rosy, and went about with a younger and happier air than I had ever noticed in her. I thought her rather hard-hearted and unfeeling, but I couldn’t help liking her all the same. It is not easy to dislike a beautiful woman who is persistently kind and gracious to you, and meets even your surliness—and I was rather aurlly to her for a little while—with extra sweetness and gentleness. One would almost have thought that she liked me the better for being angry with her.

It was very pleasant seeing Mallam again, though I thought him looking ill and aged, and I did not like the idea of his going off to India. You see I loved the fellow, and it seemed like losing him for good. Besides, though he talked lightly enough of it himself, it was with the lightness of a man who, having lost everything, has nothing more to risk.

We were out walking on the following day, strolling about arm-in-arm for a last look, as Hugh said, at the dear old place, when we met Prior. He and his wife were just going off for a little tour on the Continent, and nothing would satisfy him but that we should walk round to Worcester with him and see her. Indeed, he was so cordial and pleasant to Mallam—having heard of his approaching exile—that it would have been churlish to refuse; and Hugh himself made no difficulty. I had told him Cecil was away, and perhaps he thought he would like to look again at his old college and the room where he had last seen her.

It was too late to draw back when, just as we were going up to the house, Prior said :

"Ah, there's Cecil at the window. I forgot to tell you, Gurney; she came back this morning. She's looking very seedy, too, poor girl—very; but she'll be glad to see you. Gurney is prime favourite with my womankind, you must know, Mr. Mallam."

Hugh made no answer, did not even seem to hear, and we went in. Mrs. Prior was on the sofa, but there was no sign of Cecil at the window or elsewhere. If she had been there, she must have seen us and made good her escape. Tom began to ask for her, of course, with masculine stupidity; but his wife snubbed him at once, with a decision which even he could not fail to understand. Mallam did, too. I could see it by the extra shadow on his handsome face; and I wasn't surprised when, after a few minutes, he got up and said, "Good-bye," adding that he wouldn't take me away, for he had a call to make on another old friend. I saw that he would rather be alone, and so I let him go.

He went out across the old college quad, and was just passing out through the entrance-porch, when he saw that the chapel was open, and something made him turn back and go into it. If any Worcester man reads this, he won't wonder perhaps. There are not many more beautiful chapels in England than this dimly-lit edifice of ours, with its floor of mosaic, its richly-stained windows, and gorgeous blending of gold and colour on walls and roof. There is one window particularly lovely, representing the three Marys at the tomb. An angel, with radiant wings of purple and ruby, is sending them away with the words, "He is not here; He is arisen"—and Magdalen, in her white gown and with a flood of yellow hair rolling down her back, leans in the sickness of disappointment on one of her companions. The sun was shining through this window in a broad rainbow-coloured stream, and smote upon the dark oaken carving of the opposite stalls with a gold and crimson lustre; smote, too, upon the brow of a woman standing by the lectern—a tall, fair-haired woman, in a white gown, too, and with a sadder look in her eyes than any pictured Magdalen. The amber glory fell upon her head and on the pearl-like outline of her cheek. All the rest of her was in shadow—a dim, white figure, with a bunch of yellow roses in her hand, against a dim background of gilding and colour

and costly marbles, mellowed into harmony by the obscurity. Then, all of a sudden, she moved, turned her head round, and saw Mallam standing looking at her.

He had been there five minutes at least, so he had had time to get over his surprise, yet his face was as pale as marble. She had not a moment to collect herself; and hers was just as usual, calm and grave—even the sadness in her eyes exchanged for their old look of resolute, defiant pride; but Hugh had a purpose in his mind and was not to be baffled by that.

"Miss Langton," he said, coming up to her, "I did not mean to intrude on you; but since I have done so by accident, will you let me speak to you? I am leaving England this month, and I will not keep you five minutes at most."

Cecil looked at him. Perhaps, the kind of repressed desperation in his voice showed her he would have his say, whether she said yea or nay. Anyhow, she just bowed her head in cold acquiescence, and stood still, one hand resting on the silver lectern, the other grasping her roses. He came a little nearer, and said very quietly :

"I am going to India, because I cannot forget you here. I don't know if I shall ever return, and I don't care; but before I go, I want to ask you one favour. I want you to forgive me, Miss Langton."

He could not see her face, she had turned it a little from him; but he saw her start, and one yellow rose fell with a little rustle on the marble pavement, snapped off in the unconscious clenching of her fingers. He went on quickly :

"Please do not mistake me. I only mean what I say. I wronged you shamefully and unjustly seven years ago; and I make no excuses for it. You were right to listen to none for me; right in every word you said. No man who ever really loved you, could have done as I did. I thought I loved you, but I was wrong in that too; and I deserve your scorn for my mistake. All the same, I ask you to forgive me to-day—and I don't think you will refuse me—not because I love you now, little as I may have done so before, but because you are a good, generous-hearted woman, and I do not believe you would refuse your pardon to anyone, even your worst enemy, if he were dying, and asked it of you as I do now. When I leave here, I shall be dead—to you. Will you give it me before I go?"

He was standing by her side trying to

read an answer in her downcast face; but she did not turn or speak, and after a minute he said, with a little quiver in his strong voice:

"Am I wrong to expect it? If I am, I won't plague you any more; but—you will shake hands with me, at least, won't you, Cecil?"

He put out his hand and touched hers. For a moment, still she did not move. Then—she lifted her head so suddenly, that the soft golden hair brushed his cheek. Their faces were quite close together, and her eyes were full of tears—tears which rolled down her cheek as she put up her lips to his, and said his name. Only that! but before it was uttered, he had put his arms round her, and was holding her to him, his face pressed upon hers. I don't think the forgiveness was ever spoken after all—neither was it needed—but before they left the chapel, she said to him:

"If you must go, you will take me with you. I have loved you so long, I cannot lose you now. Promise me, Hugh." And he answered:

"I will never leave you again as long as I live. Heaven bless you, my love."

They were married three weeks later; and I was best man, and went down to Southampton to see them sail; but how it had all come about, even I did not know till long afterwards. All the same, Hugh never writes to me but he says: "I am the happiest man in the world; and I owe it all to you."

And, upon my word, I fancy he is right!

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER III. CHI LO SA?

THE dream had indeed died out of Celia's life before it was born. It had been as if the most timid of all blossoms had dared to put its head above ground just a day before the winter came back again, in seven-fold force, to the world, after saying a farewell as delusive as a prima donna's. She knew that before the work, now changed back from a madman's vision into a stronger reality than ever, all else must shrivel up and be swept away. Celia's feelings can only be told for her, for she never had the chance to tell them to a father who was deaf, or to a

lover whom she never met but by fits and starts, and who, when she did meet him, talked instead of listening. We all know what the work had meant to her—what inexorable destiny means to life; a scythed car of the fates, bound to crush or cut down all that might come in its way. The cathedral had shadowed her earlier life, but the work had overshadowed and dwarfed even the cathedral. She did not even complain. It is usual for people to go through life without complaining of death, even though they know that death must come. Nor, as we have been told by him whose works the Reverend Reginald Gaveston introduced to Deepweald, did another fair woman complain of being sacrificed that her father might win a divine victory:

Moreover it is written that my race
Hewed Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth,

she sang, with glowing face, before she passed afar.

Something of her father's exaltation before the shadow of victory had infected Celia, even in the death-hour of her dream. It was no child of John March who could for an instant consciously question his right to demand all sacrifices for the artistic Juggernaut whose car he drove. He and she had been devoted by birth to the idol's service; that was her faith beyond even a thought of questioning. Mrs. Swann would as soon have thought of questioning whether to keep house respectably is the whole duty of woman. Had the question come before her, she might have answered No; but the No would have had no real meaning for her, and the question could never come. No; others might be born to buy, sell, eat, drink, and marry; but John March had been born to compose Cleopatra, and Celia to sing the part of the soprano. It was her creed, held, not with the loose hold of reason, but with the absolute grasp of the faith of some Spanish nun, who never hears of a doubt, and much less feels one. So far as she thought at all, girls like Bessie Gaveston had mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends—she had never known such things. She was of the score, not of the world.

But—Walter?

There was no help for it; not even for him—not even from him. An Indian woman might not even say "Thank you" to the misguided man who tried to save her from flames. Like the rest, he must

submit to be crushed and trampled over by the inevitable score. After all, she sighed—it was to be for the last time—it would not matter so much to him. He would still be in the world, and the world would still be round. Only she must try to keep on the opposite side. She did begin to wonder a little why the earth held so much happiness for others, and not a solitary grain out of all its profusion for her; but the answer was at hand—the score. People who were made to be happy had no score; people who had the score were not made to be happy. Perhaps the score was a higher end for human life, perhaps not; but in any case it was—the score; its existence was its reason. It was the horizon of her philosophy.

Why did he care so much for her? But why did he care about her at all? Why had he chosen her for his friend at Lindenheim, when there was Ilma, and Lotte, and fifty more, of whom not one was shy! But then that was an old question. The only possible answer to it was still almost too sweet even for a dying dream, and she sighed very deeply—it was to be really for the last time. If he cared for her so much—and whatever he said must be true—she could not help being a little sorry for him, for gratitude alone required that she should give all he asked for to one who had done, in truth, nothing for her, but a nothing so brilliant that it looked to her better than all the somethings under the sky. But she was not taking from him all possibilities of giving life a human heart as well as a score. Everything, every waif of thought or fancy, blew back to that inexorable, all-containing word. If acquiescence without knowledge be a merit, Celia March was a heroine; and so is the Sutte who will not be saved.

But she felt very unlike a heroine when, her father having gone out to compare coming triumph with present surroundings, and to walk off his exaltation round that neighbouring Abbey which has a right to sympathise with ambition, she picked out her father's very worst quill stump, which might be worth five guineas as a relic some day, found a sheet of straw paper, and felt very much as when she first tried to write her first letter home. Only there was no good-humoured Lotte to help her. She was alone with the score—torn, but triumphant in its tatters.

"Dear Herr Friend." "Dear Herr Walter," she began. "Dear Friend" ran

into its place; but, as she had but one possible sheet of paper, which prevented drafts and corrections, she was obliged to leave the compromise alone. And now how was she to go on? And yet go on she must, unless she intended to see Walter again on the morrow, and that must not be. "The score is to be brought out. It feels like a dream. It is a great thing for my father. You know how he has lived for it. It seems so strange. I am proud about it; I suppose I am glad; but one thing must be. I must make up my mind never to see you again. I never ought to have seen you after I first met you in Deepweald. It is not my fault, indeed, if you are sorry. I don't know what is going to be done, but I must do my part, whatever happens. I wish I could tell you all that I want to say, but I never have any words. If you think I am ungrateful to you for your goodness, it will make me more unhappy than you would like anybody to be. I don't want you to forget what you said to me to-day. Please let me know that there is somebody who cares for me a little. It will make things better. I shall never forget anything, and shall always know that I have the best friend, though I shall never see him. Please do not come here again. How can I say it to make you know that I mean what I say?" She wrote that sentence fast enough—for she meant it with all her strength, and Walter was just the man to be brought rather than kept away by such a letter. "I have no paper left. Please don't come here if you care for me at all. Good-bye, dear friend." There was no doubt about what to call him this time. "And thank you for everything. Thank you more than I can say.

CELIA MARCH."

This cold apology for a letter Walter Gordon had carried with him to Rome, and then back again from Rome to London. And if ever lover was puzzled by a letter, it was he. There was no use in trying to read between the lines, however much he tried. There was no space between them for secret writing, either literally or by metaphor. How could he, or any commonplace mortal, imagine or conceive that a girl, otherwise as sane as her fellows, would dismiss a lover, just as a matter of course, for ever, because her father was going to bring out an opera?

A lover leaps but to one conclusion in such cases. If she had cared for him enough to give him a hope—that is to say,

if she did not hate him, she would have kept her no for a second meeting, and not have forbidden a second meeting in words which, as he read them, were, not too strong, but too cold, to misunderstand. Good-bye was too frozen to mean anything more or less than good-bye. And her life felt cold enough indeed when she wrote it—but that he could not know. A better letter-writer could perhaps have made him feel that the frost of life was for her, and not for him.

But why should she hate him? What had he done? Nothing, he thought, with an immediate shame at feeling that "nothing" expressed only too accurately all that he had done. It seemed to him like bitter sarcasm that she should make gratitude the one tangible point of her letter—and, if it had been just, gratitude is the ne plus ultra of insult to a lover. Was it really sarcasm—or did it only seem so because the cap fitted? Certainly, to suspect Celia of sarcasm was as wild as to imagine her making a pun, or of indulging in any other form of what is called humour. No; the gratitude must be as genuine as the dismissal. So she could not hate him; and there must therefore be some other reason for her letter.

Suddenly it flashed upon him—her father was a madman, and she knew it; and that accounted for all.

It accounted for his strange and solitary life in Deepweald, for Celia's morbid shyness and seclusion, for the impenetrable secrecy that surrounded him, for the strangeness of his behaviour, for his keeping his daughter from every chance of love and marriage. The score might be the cause or the result of his lunacy. Probably the cause; but, in the result, the likeliest thing in the world was that a mad musician, with the glory of Comus and of Andrew Gordon filling the atmosphere about him, should invent one illusion the more—that he himself was the man of whom all were speaking, and that his mad work, beyond the reach of mortal voice to sing, was the chef-d'œuvre of a dead man instead of the craze of a living one. Walter had imagination enough to picture the lunatic, under some flow of midnight madness, signing his work "Andrew Gordon," and proclaiming to himself, "I am he"—to forget it in some lucid interval, or to deny his dream by daylight with a madman's cunning, only to revel in it the more when alone with the moon. He had read of such things,

in fiction, a hundred times. He had heard of the true story of the madman who only differed from so-called sane people in being saner than they until the conversation turned upon Waterloo; and then people, who had the mere commonplace delusion of thinking themselves wiser and better than their neighbours, found it a myth that Napoleon Bonaparte had died at St. Helena. Sane impostors have come to believe themselves honestly to be what they at first only pretended to be, or wished to be. And surely that a madman, and a musician—the alliteration counts for something—who heard his professional atmosphere filled with Andrew Gordon, Andrew Gordon, Andrew Gordon, should come to confuse his own identity, was the simplest thing in the world—and, to Walter Gordon, the most terrible.

But there was another question still.

Supposing that it was not John March who madly called himself Andrew Gordon, but Andrew Gordon who called himself John March? Granting madness, that too would account for all. None but a madman would have run away from the triumph of Comus, and have buried himself, under a feigned name, from fortune, fame, family, and friends. Had that sudden glory of a first work turned his brain, and exiled him under the consciousness of an awful doom? Did the difference between him and all the cotton-spinning Gordons consist, not in genius, but in madness, its twin-sister? In that case, concealment of his identity might have become his craze, and his true self only to be indulged in when there were no eyes to see; and his craze, by a law of lunacy—for anarchy has its laws—would inevitably be strongest when brought in contact with those of his own name and kin. Yes; Celia was in the power of a madman, and his blood was in her own veins. And John March knew it, and Celia knew it too.

Only one thing was left for him or for any man to do. Whatever might be the truth, whatever might happen, he must be master of the situation, and not allow himself to be tangled, like a blundering fly, in a web spun by a mad spider. It was strange enough that a professed lotus-eater should find his whole life thrown into chaos by webs of other men's spinning, and feel his whole fate depend upon the questions, whether a madman was or was not his uncle, and whether a girl loved him. But even to professed lotus-eaters such

complications do happen sometimes. And, when they do, the lotus-eater is apt to suffer more than common men, who are content to live among common things, and to take their share of daily burdens.

First of all he wrote two letters.

"Dearest Celia," began the first. "I only know one thing on earth—that I meant all I said to you yesterday, and far more, with all my heart and soul. Beyond that I know nothing, except that I deserve nothing. Of course I will not call to-morrow if it pains you; and I do know you well enough, I think, to know that what you say you mean. To-night I start for Italy. You will understand why I must not give myself a thought, before I know whether my uncle, Andrew Gordon, is dead or alive. If he lives, I hope I need not tell you that he has claims upon our family which, whether he urges them or no, my father would be the last man to disregard. If he is dead, you may trust me in all things; if I have as yet been of no service to you or yours, you may be sure that no harm shall come to you or yours through me. That, you will surely not, for one moment, imagine. Nor is there anything on earth, whatever it may be, except your will, which I will allow to prevent my having what means all life and all happiness to me. Read over the last sentence three times, and think of all that it can mean. By 'nothing on earth' I mean to leave out nothing; no misfortune, any more than I should omit crime or sin. I love you with all my heart and soul. Nothing can alter that; and I wish to have you for my wife more than I wish for all other things. It is all I wish for. Don't think that I have overlooked anything that could stand in the way. Only it is due to you, to your father, to mine, to all whom it may in any way concern, that there should be no mystery—that the truth may be known as soon as it can be found. I will not see you till either it is found, or till discovery is proved impossible. Then I will see you; and you will find me unchanged. Think, dearest Celia, of all that I have written, and either answer me as I would have you, or give me a better reason than the world contains for giving me such an answer as will kill every hope I have in the world. There is nothing you may not tell me; but I tell you beforehand, that your dislike shall be the only reason that I will accept for 'No.' If you write, direct 'Poste Restante, Rome.'

W. G."

"Dear Comrie," began the second, "I am just off for Italy—suddenly, and pour cause. You know that I am a stone of the rolling order; but this is really an urgent private affair. I should like to have seen you again before setting out, but I couldn't spare the time. Of course that's a *façon de parler*, as we used to say in Paris; a lie, as we used to say at Horchester; but never mind. I didn't want to see you, but I want to write to you; and so I do what I want, and don't do what I don't, as usual. When a fellow starts for foreign parts suddenly, and without preparing anything but what he can't get en route, he is sure to leave undone many things that he ought to have done. That is the major premiss; I am the minor. Now for the conclusion. Of course I want you to do something for me; and you will do it, just because you are a good fellow, and it is the fate of all good fellows to be put upon. In fact, I prefer to write my request so as to make it impossible for you to say 'No.'

"You know your neighbours, the Marches. You are a surgeon, and a Scotch surgeon; that is to say, a psychologist into the bargain. Find out for me if John March is a man whom you believe to be sane. I will tell you why, hereafter. Meanwhile, this is a very serious question for me, and concerns the business on which I am gone. Of course you will keep counsel. Sane or no, he has friends, and I am one of them. Of course, I don't give you any symptoms to go by. I am still physician enough to know that you will judge best with a mind that has not been written upon.

"Another thing. I am afraid the Marches are desperately poor. I must help them to live; but though it's easy to find the money, it's difficult to find a way to give it. Once more I look to you. I had thought of paying for a course of singing lessons for you—an hour a day wouldn't take up much of your time; but, from what I know of March, he would dismiss you after the first hour as a case of hopeless incapacity. I have heard your Scots wha hae, and I can imagine your attempt at a scale. Gifts and loans are not to be thought of for a moment. So please be a connoisseur in lace, or the agent for a connoisseur—anonymous, mind, for my name mustn't appear—and give a fancy price for a certain lace veil that Miss March wore at Lady Quorne's. Everybody saw it and raved about it, so

there would be nothing wonderful if somebody should wish to buy it. There could be no difficulty there; if there is, telegraph and let me know. Give March whatever he asks, but don't let him ask less than a hundred pounds. I enclose a cheque for it; only don't pay with the cheque, but in gold, so that my name mayn't come out in the transaction. If more is wanted, pay on account and telegraph again. I know all the trouble will be yours; but you must admit that all the ingenuity is mine.

"Don't take me for a madman, yet awhile. You know that that reason can be none the worse, and may be all the better, for not being given. Address, by telegraph, 'Poste Restante, Rome,' till further orders. I mean, I need not say, till further requests, if any; for I know what trouble you are going to take, and am yours, with thanks which, though paid beforehand, are not discounted,

"W. GORDON."

Having, as a matter of course, asked for telegrams from a man who was rich when he could spend the price of a foreign letter upon a meal, for time from one who had none to spare, and, in general, for careful attention to details from anybody but himself, he set off on that search for such possible footmarks of Andrew Gordon as a whole generation might have failed to wash away from the shifting soil of Italy, carrying in and over his heart Celia's first, last, and only letter, and reading it till he had misread it in a hundred ways. No letter from her lay at the post-office. Nor had he found one from Comrie till after many days, merely to tell him that the Marches had left Saragossa Row for an address known to Mrs. Swann, who also reported that they had gone away clear of debt, and, to her certain knowledge, were in no need of money. So that, at least, was well; and he had far too much to think of to notice that Comrie's note was both curt and cold. For that matter, male correspondence is not often criticised.

Enquire as he would, of hotel keepers, of musicians, of all possible people, official and unofficial, whose age or position made knowledge on their part possible, no traces could he find, save two. One was, that at such a date, an Englishman named Gordon had arrived, with passport in due

form, and had put up at such an hotel. Naturally, the hotel had changed its staff in the course of so many years. But there proved to be a *fille-de-chambre* there whose grandfather had been a *valet-de-place* in the old times, and was still alive. And he, by a stretch of memory so vivid as to be hardly distinguishable from an effort of imagination, distinctly recalled to mind that an Englishman had, that same year, left the hotel to see the carnival, and had never been seen again. Had he paid his bill? Ah, that the signor grandfather could not exactly remember; but he presumed no; why else should he disappear? Nor removed his luggage? No; his luggage remained at the hotel—perhaps yes; perhaps no. His name? It was an English name; but he was a little ugly man, young, and—in effect, as his excellency might know, young men, and old men too, disappeared not seldom if they stayed out after dark in Rome. What became of them? The signor grandfather only shrugged and said, *Chi lo sa?* Which meant, as plainly as a shrug and a tone could speak, they get stabbed in the back, and robbed, and left in the open road, or thrown in the river, and nobody knows but one man who will not speak except to his priest, and one who cannot, because he is dead, and there is an end.

And so, after all, Walter Gordon had come back to London only to learn that the Cleopatra of Andrew Gordon was announced by Prosper, and that Celia was to appear in the title-rôle. If John March was mad, there was more method in his madness than was pleasant to find. And Clari had bewildered him still more—not by her moods, which he had ceased to regard as any more significant than the caprices of a spoiled prima donna, but by her assertion that in any case the Cleopatra was the genuine work of a man whom she had known alive after the carnival. It all seemed an inextricable maze of deeds without motive, and consequence without cause, only accountable by the assumption that Walter Gordon himself was the only madman in the world, or else that all the world was mad except Walter Gordon. He was absolutely fighting with formless shadows; and he clung to his love for Celia as to the one pure steady lamp in a dance of phantoms. It was becoming the only real thing in the whole world.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XL. AS TO BLURBEARD.

WHEN Lord George left his own house alone he was very wretched, and his wife, whom he left behind him, was as wretched as himself. Of course the matter had not decided itself in this way without very much absolute quarrelling between them. Lord George had insisted, had stamped his foot, and had even talked of force. Mary, prompted by her father, had protested that she would not run away from the evil tongues of people, who would be much more bitter in her absence than they would dare to be if she remained among them. He, when he found that his threat of forcible abduction was altogether vain, had to make up his mind whether he also would remain. But both the dean and his wife had begged that he would do so, and he would not even seem to act in obedience to them. So he went, groaning much in spirit; puzzled to think what story he should tell to his mother and sisters; terribly anxious as to the future; and in spirit repentant for the rashness of his conduct at the ball. Before he was twenty miles out of London he was thinking with infinite regret of his love for his wife, already realising the misery of living without her, almost stirred to get out at the next station and return by the first train to Munster Court. In this hour of his sorrow there came upon him a feeling of great hatred for Mrs. Houghton. He almost believed that she had, for her own vile purposes, excited Captain De Barón to make love to his wife. And then, in regard to that woman, his wife had be-

haved so well! Surely something was due to so much generosity. And then, when she had been angry with him, she had been more beautiful than ever. What a change had those few months in London made in her! She had lost her childish little timidities, and had bloomed forth a beautiful woman. He had no doubt as to her increased loveliness, and had been proud to think that all had acknowledged it. But as to the childish timidity, perhaps he would have preferred that it should not have been so quickly, or so entirely, banished. Even at Brotherton he hankered to return to London; but, had he done so, the Brotherton world would have known it. He put himself into a carriage instead, and had himself driven through the park to Cross Hall.

All this occurred on the day but one subsequent to the ball, and he had by the previous post informed Lady Sarah that he was coming. But in that letter he had said that he would bring his wife with him, and on his immediate arrival had to answer questions as to her unexpected absence. "Her father was very unwilling that she should come," he said.

"But I thought he was at the hotel," said Lady Sarah.

"He is in Munster Court, now. To tell the truth, I am not best pleased that it should be so; but at the last moment I did not like to contradict her. I hate London and everything in it. She likes it, and as there was a kind of bargain made I could not well depart from it."

"And you have left her alone with her father, in London," said Lady Susanna, with a tone of pretended dismay.

"How can she be alone if her father is with her?" answered Lord George, who

did not stand in awe of Lady Susanna as he did of Lady Sarah. Nothing further at the moment was said, but all the sisters felt that there was something wrong.

"I don't think it at all right that Mary should be left with the dean," said the old lady to her second daughter. But the old lady was specially prejudiced against the dean, as being her eldest son's great enemy. Before the day was over Lord George wrote a long letter to his wife—full of affection indeed, but still more full of covert reproaches. He did not absolutely scold her; but he told her that there could be no happiness between a wife and a husband unless the wife would obey, and he implored her to come to him with as little delay as possible. If she would only come, all should be right between them.

Mary, when her husband was really gone, was much frightened at her own firmness. That doctrine of obedience to her husband had been accepted by her in full. When disposed to run counter to the ladies at Manor Cross, she always had declared to herself that they bore no authority delegated from "George," and that she would obey "George," and no one but George. She had told him more than once, half-playfully, that if he wanted anything done, he must tell her himself. And this, though he understood it to contain rebellion against the Germaines generally, had a pleasant flavour with him, as acknowledging so completely his own power. She had said to her father, and unfortunately to Mrs. Houghton when Mrs. Houghton was her friend, that she was not going to do what all the Germain women told her; but she had always spoken of her husband's wishes as absolutely imperative. Now she was in open mutiny against her husband, and, as she thought of it, it seemed to her to be almost impossible that peace should be restored between them.

"I think I will go down very soon," she said to her father, after she had received her husband's letter.

"What do you call very soon?"

"In a day or two."

"Do not do anything of the kind. Stay here till the appointed time comes. It is only a fortnight now. I have made arrangements at Brotherton, so that I can be with you till then. After that come down to me. Of course your husband will come over to you at the Deanery."

"But if he shouldn't come?"

"Then he would be behaving very

wickedly. But, of course, he will come. He is not a man to be obstinate in that fashion."

"I do not know that, papa."

"But I do. You had better take my advice in this matter. Of course I do not want to foster a quarrel between you and your husband."

"Pray—pray don't let there be a quarrel."

"Of course not. But the other night he lost his head, and treated you badly. You and I are quite willing to forgive and forget all that. Any man may do a foolish thing, and men are to be judged by general results rather than single acts."

"He is very kind to me—generally."

"Just so; and I am not angry with him in the least. But after what occurred it would be wrong that you should go away at once. You felt it yourself at the moment."

"But anything would be better than quarrelling, papa."

"Almost anything would be better than a lasting quarrel with your husband; but the best way to avoid that is to show him that you know how to be firm in such an emergency as this." She was, of course, compelled by her father's presence and her father's strength to remain in town, but she did so longing every hour to pack up and be off to Cross Hall. She had very often doubted whether she could love her husband as a husband ought to be loved, but now, in her present trouble, she felt sure of her own heart. She had never been really on bad terms with him before since their marriage, and the very fact of their separation increased her tenderness to him in a wonderful degree. She answered his letter with language full of love and promises and submission, loaded with little phrases of feminine worship, merely adding that papa thought she had better stay in town till the end of the month. There was not a word of reproach in it. She did not allude to his harsh conduct at the ball, nor did she write the name of Mrs. Houghton.

Her father was very urgent with her to see all her friends, to keep any engagements previously made, to be seen at the play, and to let all the world know by her conduct that she was not oppressed by what had taken place. There was some intention of having the Kappa-kappa danced again, as far as possible by the same people. Lord Giblet was to retire in favour of some more expert performer,

but the others were supposed to be all worthy of an encore. But of course there arose a question as to Lady George. There could be no doubt that Lord George had disapproved very strongly of the Kappa-kappa. The matter got to the dean's ears, and the dean counselled his daughter to join the party yet again. "What would he say, papa?" The dean was of opinion that, in such case, Lord George would say and do much less than he had said and done before. According to his views, Lord George must be taught that his wife had her privileges as well as he his. This fresh difficulty dissolved itself, because the second performance was fixed for a day after that on which it had been long known that Lady George was to leave London; and even the dean did not propose that she should remain in town after that date with a direct view to the Kappa-kappa.

She was astonished at the zeal with which he insisted she should go out into the gay world. He almost ridiculed her when she spoke of economy in her dress, and seemed to think that it was her duty to be a woman of fashion. He still spoke to her from time to time of the Popenjoy question, always asserting his conviction that, whatever the marquis might think, even if he were himself deceived through ignorance of the law, the child would be at last held to be illegitimate. "They tell me, too," he said, "that his life is not worth a year's purchase."

"Poor little boy!"

"Of course, if he had been born as the son of the Marquis of Brotherton ought to be born, nobody would wish him anything but good."

"I don't wish him anything but good," said Mary.

"But as it is," continued the dean, apparently not observing his daughter's remark, "everybody must feel that it would be better for the family that he should be out of the way. Nobody can think that such a child can live to do honour to the British peerage."

"He might be well brought up."

"He wouldn't be well brought up. He has an Italian mother and Italian belongings, and everything around him as bad as it can be. But the question at last is one of right. He was clearly born when his mother was reputed to be the wife, not of his father, but of another man. That cock-and-bull story which we have heard may be true. It is possible. But I could not rest in my bed if I did

not persevere in ascertaining the truth." The dean did persevere, and was very constant in his visits to Mr. Battle's office. At this time Miss Tallowax came up to town, and she also stayed for a day or two in Munster Court. What passed between the dean and his aunt on the subject, Mary, of course, did not hear; but she soon found that Miss Tallowax was as eager as her father, and she learned that Miss Tallowax had declared that the enquiry should not languish from want of funds. Miss Tallowax was quite alive to the glory of the Brotherton connection.

As the month drew to an end, Mary, of course, called on all her London friends. Her father was always eager to know whom she saw, and whether any allusion was made by any of them to the scene at the ball. But there was one person, who had been a friend, on whom she did not call, and this omission was observed by the dean. "Don't you ever see Mrs. Houghton now?" he asked.

"No, papa," said Mary, with prompt decision.

"Why not?"

"I don't like her."

"Why don't you like her? You used to be friends. Have you quarrelled?"

"Yes; I have quarrelled with her."

"What did she do?" Mary was silent. "Is it a secret?"

"Yes, papa; it is a secret. I would rather you would not ask. But she is a nasty, vile creature, and I will never speak to her again."

"That is strong language, Mary."

"It is. And now that I have said that, pray don't talk about her any more."

The dean was discreet, and did not talk about Mrs. Houghton any more; but he set his mind to work to guess, and guessed something near the truth. Of course he knew that his son-in-law had professed at one time to love this lady, when she had been Miss De Baron, and he had been able to see that subsequently to that they had been intimate friends. "I don't think, my dear," he said, laughing, "that you can be jealous of her attractions."

"I am not in the least jealous of her, papa. I don't know anyone that I think so ugly. She is a nasty, made-up thing. But pray don't talk about her any more." Then the dean almost knew that Mary had discovered something, and was too noble to tell a story against her husband.

The day but one before she was to leave town, Mrs. Montacute Jones came to her.

She had seen her kind old friend once or twice since the catastrophe at the ball, but always in the presence of other persons. Now they were alone together. "Well, my dear," said Mrs. Jones, "I hope you have enjoyed your short season. We have all been very fond of you."

"You have been very kind to me, Mrs. Jones."

"I do my best to make young people pleasant, my dear. You ought to have liked it all, for I don't know anybody who has been so much admired. His Royal Highness said the other night that you were the handsomest woman in London."

"His Royal Highness is an old fool," said Mary, laughing.

"He is generally thought to be a very good judge in that matter. You are going to keep the house, are you not?"

"Oh yes; I think there is a lease."

"I am glad of that. It is a nice little house, and I should be sorry to think that you are not coming back."

"We are always to live here half the year, I believe," said Mary. "That was agreed when we married, and that's why I go away now."

"Lord George, I suppose, likes the country best?"

"I think he does. I don't, Mrs. Jones."

"They are both very well in their way, my dear. I am a wicked old woman, who like to have everything gay. I never go out of town till everything is over, and I never come up till everything begins. We have a nice place down in Scotland, and you must come and see me there some autumn. And then we go to Rome. It's a pleasant way of living, though we have to move about so much."

"It must cost a great deal of money?"

"Well, yes. One can't drive four-in-hand so cheap as a pair. Mr. Jones has a large income." This was the first direct intimation Mary had ever received that there was a Mr. Jones. "But we weren't always rich. When I was your age I hadn't nearly so nice a house as you. Indeed, I hadn't a house at all, for I wasn't married, and was thinking whether I would take or reject a young barrister of the name of Smith, who had nothing a year to support me on. You see I never got among the aristocratic names, as you have done."

"I don't care a bit about that."

"But I do. I like Germaines, and Talbots, and Howards, and so does everybody else, only so many people tell lies about it. I like having lords in my drawing-room.

They look handsomer, and talk better, than other men. That's my experience. And you are pretty nearly sure with them that you won't find you have got somebody quite wrong."

"I know a lord," said Mary, "who isn't very right. That is, I don't know him, for I never saw him."

"You mean your wicked brother-in-law. I should like to know him of all things. He'd be quite an attraction. I suppose he knows how to behave like a gentleman?"

"I'm not so sure of that. He was very rough to papa."

"Ah—yes. I think we can understand that, my dear. Your father hasn't made himself exactly pleasant to the marquis. Not that I say he's wrong. I think it was a pity, because everybody says that the little Lord Popenjoy will die. You were talking of me and my glories, but long before you are my age you will be much more glorious. You will make a charming marchioness."

"I never think about it, Mrs. Jones; and I wish papa didn't. Why shouldn't the little boy live? I could be quite happy enough as I am, if people would only be good to me and let me alone."

"Have I distressed you?" asked the old woman.

"Oh dear no. Not you."

"You mean what happened at my house the other night?"

"I didn't mean anything particular, Mrs. Jones. But I do think that people sometimes are very ill-natured."

"I think, you know, that was Lord George's doing. He shouldn't have taken you off so suddenly. It wasn't your fault that the stupid man tripped. I suppose he doesn't like Captain De Baron?"

"Don't talk about it, Mrs. Jones."

"Only that I know the world so well that what I say might, perhaps, be of use. Of course I know that he has gone out of town."

"Yes; he has gone."

"I was so glad that you didn't go with him. People will talk, you know; and it did look as though he were a sort of Bluebeard. Bluebeards, my dear, must be put down. There may be most well-intentioned Bluebeards, who have no chambers of horrors, no secrets"—Mary thought of the letter from Mrs. Houghton, of which nobody knew but herself—"who never cut off anybody's heads, but still interfere dreadfully with the comfort of a house-

hold. Lord George is very nearly all that a man ought to be."

"He is the best man in the world," said Mary.

"I am sure you think so. But he shouldn't be jealous, and above all he shouldn't show that he's jealous. You were bound, I think, to stay behind and show the world that you had nothing to fear. I suppose the dean counselled it?"

"Yes; he did."

"Fathers of married daughters shouldn't often interfere, but there I think he was right. It is much better for Lord George himself that it should be so. There is nothing so damaging to a young woman, as to have it supposed she has had to be withdrawn from the influence of a young man."

"It would be wicked of anybody to think so," said Mary, sobbing.

"But they must have thought so if you hadn't remained. You may be sure, my dear, that your father was quite right. I am sorry that you cannot make one in the dance again, because we shall have changed Lord Gilet for Lord Augustus Grandison, and I am sure it will be done very well. But of course I couldn't ask you to stay for it. As your departure was fixed beforehand, you ought not to stay for it. But that is very different from being taken away in a jiffy, like some young man who is spending more than he ought to spend, and is hurried off suddenly nobody knows where."

Mary, when Mrs. Jones had left the house, found that upon the whole she was thankful to her friend for what had been said. It pained her to hear her husband described as a jealous Bluebeard; but the fact of his jealousy had been so apparent, that in any conversation on the matter intended to be useful so much had to be acknowledged. She, however, had taken the strong course of trusting to her father rather than to her husband, and she was glad to find that her conduct and her father's conduct were approved by so competent a judge as Mrs. Montacute Jones. And throughout the whole interview there had been an air of kindness which Mary had well understood. The old lady had intended to be useful, and her intentions were accepted.

On the next morning, soon after breakfast, the dean received a note which puzzled him much, and for an hour or two left him in doubt as to what he would do respecting it, whether he would comply

with, or refuse to comply with, the request made in it. At first he said nothing of the letter to his daughter. He had, as she was aware, intended to go to Lincoln's Inn early in the day, but he sat thinking over something, instead of leaving the house, till at last he went to Mary and put the letter into her hands. "That," said he, "is one of the most unexpected communications I ever had in my life, and one which it is most difficult to answer. Just read it." The letter, which was very short, was as follows:

"The Marquis of Brotherton presents his compliments to the Dean of Brotherton, and begs to say that he thinks that some good might now be done by a personal interview. Perhaps the dean will not object to call on the marquis here at some hour after two o'clock to-morrow.

"Scumberg's Hotel, Albemarle Street.

"29th June, 187—."

"But we go to-morrow," said Mary.

"Ah, he means to-day. The note was written last night. I have been thinking about it, and I think I shall go."

"Have you written to him?"

"There is no need. A man who sends to me a summons to come to him so immediately as that, has no right to expect an answer. He does not mean anything honest."

"Then why do you go?"

"I don't choose to appear to be afraid to meet him. Everything that I do is done aboveboard. I rather imagine that he doesn't expect me to come; but I will not let him have to say that he had asked me, and that I had refused. I shall go."

"Oh, papa, what will he say to you?"

"I don't think he can eat me, my dear; nor will he dare even to murder me. I daresay he would if he could."

And so it was decided; and at the hour appointed the dean sallied forth to keep the appointment.

CHAPTER XII. SCUMBERG'S.

THE dean, as he walked across the park towards Albemarle Street, had many misgivings. He did not at all believe that the marquis entertained friendly relations in regard to him, or even such neutral relations as would admit of the ordinary courtesies of civilised life. He made up his mind that he would be insulted, unless indeed he should be so cowed as to give way to the marquis. But that he himself thought to be impossible. The more he reflected about it, the more assured he

became that the marquis had not expected him to obey the summons. It was possible that something might be gained on the other side by his refusal to see the elder brother of his son-in-law. He might, by refusing, leave it open to his enemies to say that he had rejected an overture to peace, and he now regarded as his enemies almost the entire Germain family. His own son-in-law would in future, he thought, be as much opposed to him as the head of the family. The old marchioness, he knew, sincerely believed in Popenjoy. And the daughters, though they had at first been very strong in their aversion to the foreign mother and the foreign boy, were now averse to him also, on other grounds. Of course Lord George would complain of his wife at Cross Hall. Of course the story of the Kappa-kappa would be told in a manner that would horrify those three ladies. The husband would of course be indignant at his wife's disobedience in not having left London when ordered by him to do so. He had promised not to foster a quarrel between Mary and Lord George, but he thought it by no means improbable that circumstances would for a time render it expedient that his daughter should live at the Deanery, while Lord George remained at Cross Hall. As to nothing was he more fully resolved than this, that he would not allow the slightest blame to be attributed to his daughter, without repudiating and resenting the imputation. Any word against her conduct, should such word reach his ears even through herself, he would resent, and it would go hard with him, but he would exceed such accusations by re-primations. He would let them know, that if they intended to fight, he also could fight. He had never uttered a word as to his own liberality in regard to money, but he had thought of it much. Theirs was the rank, and the rank was a great thing in his eyes; but his was at present the wealth; and wealth, he thought, was as powerful as rank. He was determined that his daughter should be a marchioness, and in pursuit of that object he was willing to spend his money; but he intended to let those among whom he spent it know that he was not to be set on one side, as a mere parson out of the country, who happened to have a good income of his own.

It was in this spirit—a spirit of absolute pugnacity—that he asked for the marquis at Scumberg's Hotel. Yes; the marquis

was at home, and the servant would see if his master could be seen. "I fancy that I have an appointment with him," said the dean, as he gave his card. "I am rather hurried, and if he can't see me perhaps you'll let me know at once." The man soon returned, and with much condescension told the dean that his lordship would see him. "That is kind, as his lordship told me to come," said the dean to himself, but still loud enough for the servant to hear him. "His lordship will be with you in a few minutes," said the man, as he shut the door of the sitting-room.

"I shall be gone if he's not here in a very few minutes," said the dean, unable to restrain himself.

And he very nearly did go before the marquis came to him. He had already walked to the rug with the object of ringing the bell, and had then decided on giving the lord two minutes more, resolving also that he would speak his mind to the lord about this delay, should the lord make his appearance before the two minutes were over. The time had just expired when his lordship did make his appearance. He came shuffling into the room after a servant, who walked before him with the pretence of carrying books and a box of papers. It had all been arranged, the marquis knowing that he would secure the first word by having his own servant in the room. "I am very much obliged to you for coming, Mr. Dean," he said. "Pray sit down. I should have been here to receive you if you had sent me a line."

"I only got your note this morning," said the dean, angrily.

"I thought that perhaps you might have sent a message. It doesn't signify in the least. I never go out till after this, but had you named a time I should have been here to receive you. That will do, John—shut the door. Very cold—don't you think it?"

"I have walked, my lord, and am warm."

"I never walk—never could walk. I don't know why it is, but my legs won't walk."

"Perhaps you never tried."

"Yes; I have. They wanted to make me walk in Switzerland twenty years ago, but I broke down after the first mile. George used to walk like the very deuce. You see more of him now than I do. Does he go on walking?"

"He is an active man."

"Just that. He ought to have been a country letter-carrier. He would have been as punctual as the sun, and has quite all the necessary intellect."

"You sent for me, Lord Brotherton——"

"Yes; yes. I had something that I thought I might as well say to you, though, upon my word, I almost forget what it was."

"Then I may as well take my leave."

"Don't do that. You see, Mr. Dean, belonging to the church militant as you do, you are so heroically pugnacious! You must like fighting very much."

"When I have anything which I conceive it to be my duty to fight for, I think I do."

"Things are generally best got without fighting. You want to make your grandson Marquis of Brotherton."

"I want to ensure to my grandson anything that may be honestly and truly his own."

"You must first catch a grandson."

It was on his lips to say that certainly no heir should be caught on his side of the family, after the fashion that had been practised by his lordship in catching the present pseudo-Popenjoy; but he was restrained by a feeling of delicacy in regard to his own daughter. "My lord," he said, "I am not here to discuss any such contingency."

"But you don't scruple to discuss my contingency, and that in the most public manner. It has suited me, or at any rate it has been my chance, to marry a foreigner. Because you don't understand Italian fashions you don't scruple to say that she is not my wife."

"I have never said so."

"And to declare that my son is not my son."

"I have never said that."

"And to set a dozen attorneys to work to prove that my heir is a bastard."

"We heard of your marriage, my lord, as having been fixed for a certain date—a date long subsequent to that of the birth of your son. What were we to think?"

"As if that hadn't been explained to you, and to all the world, a dozen times over. Did you never hear of a second marriage being solemnised in England to satisfy certain scruples? You have sent out and made your enquiries, and what have they come to? I know all about it."

"As far as I am concerned you are quite welcome to know everything."

"I daresay; even though I should be

stung to death by the knowledge. Of course I understand. You think that I have no feeling at all."

"Not much as to do your duty to your family, certainly," said the dean, stoutly.

"Exactly. Because I stand a little in the way of your new ambition, I am the devil himself. And yet you, and those who have abetted you, think it odd that I haven't received you with open arms. My boy is as much to me as ever was your daughter to you."

"Perhaps so, my lord. The question is not whether he is beloved, but whether he is Lord Popenjoy."

"He is Lord Popenjoy. He is a poor weakling, and I doubt whether he may enjoy the triumph long; but he is Lord Popenjoy. You must know it yourself, dean."

"I know nothing of the kind," said the dean, furiously.

"Then you must be a very self-willed man. When this began, George was joined with you in this unnatural enquiry. He, at any rate, has been convinced."

"It may be he has submitted himself to his brother's influence."

"Not in the least. George is not very clever, but he has at any rate had wit enough to submit to the influence of his own legal adviser—or rather to the influence of your legal adviser. Your own man, Mr. Battle, is convinced. You are going on with this, in opposition even to him. What the devil is it you want? I am not dead, and may outlive at any rate you. Your girl hasn't got a child, and doesn't seem likely to have one. You happen to have married her into a noble family, and now, upon my word, it seems to me that you are a little off your head with downright pride."

"Was it for this you sent for me?"

"Well—yes; it was. I thought it might be as well to argue it out. It isn't likely that there should be much love between us, but we needn't cut each other's throats. It is costing us both a d——d lot of money; but I should think that my purse must be longer than yours."

"We will try it, my lord."

"You intend to go on with this persecution, then?"

"The Countess Luigi was presumably a married woman when she bore that name, and I look upon it as a sacred duty to ascertain whether she was so or not."

"Sacred!" said the marquis, with a sneer.

"Yes—sacred. There can be no more sacred duty than that which a father owes to his child."

"Ah!" Then the marquis paused, and looked at the dean, before he went on speaking. He looked so long that the dean was preparing to take his hat in his hand ready for a start. He showed that he was going to move, and then the marquis went on speaking. "Sacred! Ah, and such a child!"

"She is one of whom I am proud as a father, and you should be proud as a sister-in-law."

"Oh, of course. So I am. The Germaines were never so honoured before. As for her birth, I care nothing about that. Had she behaved herself, I should have thought nothing of the stable."

"What do you dare to say?" said the dean, jumping from his seat.

The marquis sat leaning back in his arm-chair, perfectly motionless. There was a smile, almost a pleasant smile, on his face; but there was a very devil in his eye, and the dean, who stood some six feet removed from him, saw the devil plainly. "I live a solitary life here, Mr. Dean," said the marquis, "but even I have heard of her."

"What have you heard?"

"All London has heard of her—this future marchioness, whose ambition is to drive my son from his title and estates. A sacred duty, Mr. Dean, to put a coronet on the head of that young——!" The word which we have not dared to print was distinctly spoken—more distinctly, more loudly, more incisively, than any word which had yet fallen from the man's lips. It was evident that the lord had prepared the word, and had sent for the father that the father might hear the word applied to his own daughter—unless, indeed, he should first acknowledge himself to have lost his case. So far the interview had been carried out very much in accordance with the preparations as arranged by the marquis; but as to what followed, the marquis had hardly made his calculations correctly.

A clergyman's coat used to save him from fighting in fighting days; and even in these days, in which broils and personal encounters are held to be generally disreputable, it saves the wearer from certain remote dangers to which other men are liable. And the reverse of this is also true. It would probably be hard to extract a first blow from a whole bench of bishops.

And deans, as a rule, are more sedentary, more quiescent, more given to sufferance even than bishops. The normal dean is a goodly, sleek, bookish man, who would hardly strike a blow under any provocation. The marquis, perhaps, had been aware of this. He had, perhaps, fancied that he was as good a man as the dean, who was at least ten years his senior. He had not, at any rate, anticipated such speedy violence as followed the utterance of the abominable word.

The dean, as I have said, had been standing about six feet from the easy-chair in which the marquis was lolling, when the word was spoken. He had already taken his hat in his hand, and had thought of some means of showing his indignation as he left the room. Now his first impulse was to rid himself of his hat, which he did by pitching it along the floor. And then in an instant he was at the lord's throat. The lord had expected it so little, that up to the last he made no preparation for defence. The dean had got him by his cravat and shirt-collar before he had begun to expect such usage as this. Then he simply gurgled out some ejaculated oath, uttered half in surprise and half in prayer. Prayer certainly was now of no use. Had five hundred feet of rock been there the marquis would have gone down it, though the dean had gone with him. Fire flashed from the clergyman's eyes, and his teeth were set fast, and his very nostrils were almost ablaze. His daughter! The holy spot of his life! The one being in whom he believed with all his heart and with all his strength!

The dean was fifty years of age, but no one had ever taken him for an old man. They who at home at Brotherton would watch his motions, how he walked and how he rode on horseback, how he would vault his gates when in the fields, and scamper across the country like a school-boy, were wont to say that he was unclerical. Perhaps Canons Pountner and Holdenough, with Mr. Groschut, the bishop's chaplain, envied him something of his juvenile elasticity. But I think that none of them had given him credit for such strength as he now displayed. The marquis, in spite of what feeble efforts he made, was dragged up out of his chair and made to stand, or rather to totter, on his legs. He made a clutch at the bell-rope, which to aid his luxurious ease had been brought close to his hand as he sat, but failed, as the dean shook him hither

and thither. Then he was dragged on to the middle of the rug, feeling by this time that he was going to be throttled. He attempted to throw himself down, and would have done so, but that the dean with his left hand prevented him from falling. He made one vigorous struggle to free himself, striving as he did so to call for assistance. But the dean, having got his victim's back to the fireplace, and having the poor wretch now fully at his command, threw the man with all his strength into the empty grate. The marquis fell like a heap into the fender, with his back against the top bar and his head driven farther back against the bricks and iron. There, for a second or two, he lay like a dead mass.

Less than a minute had done it all, and for so long a time the dean's ungoverned fury had held its fire. What were consequences to him, with that word as applied to his child ringing in his ears? How should he moderate his wrath under such outrage as that? Was it not as though beast had met beast in the forest, between whom nothing but internecine fight to the end was possible? But when that minute was over, and he saw what he had done—when the man, tumbled, dishevelled, all alump and already bloody, was lying before him—then he remembered who he was himself, and what it was that he had done. He was Dean Lovelace, who had already made for himself more than enough of clerical enmity; and this other man was the Marquis of Brotherton, whom he had perhaps killed in his wrath, with no witness by to say a word as to the provocation he had received.

The marquis groaned and impotently moved an arm, as though to raise himself. At any rate, he was not dead as yet. With a desire to do what was right now, the dean rang the bell violently, and then stooped down to extricate his foe. He had succeeded in raising the man and in seating him on the floor, with his head against the arm-chair, before the servant came. Had he wished to conceal anything, he could, without much increased effort, have dragged the marquis up into his chair; but he was anxious now simply that all the truth should be known. It seemed to him still, that no one knowing the real truth would think that he had done wrong. His child! His daughter! His sweetly-innocent daughter! The man soon rushed into the room, for the ringing of the bell had been very violent. "Send for a

doctor," said the dean; "and send the landlord up."

"Has my lord had a fit?" said the man, advancing into the room. He was the servant, not of the hotel, but of the marquis himself.

"Do as I bid you. Get a doctor, and send up the landlord immediately. It is not a fit, but his lordship has been much hurt. I knocked him down." The dean made the last statement slowly and firmly, under a feeling at the moment that it became him to leave nothing concealed, even with a servant.

"He has murdered me," groaned the marquis. The injured one could speak at last, and there was comfort in that. The servant rushed back to the regions below, and the tidings were soon spread through the house. Resident landlord there was none—there never are resident landlords in London hotels. Scumberg was a young family of joint heirs and heiresses, named Tomkins, who lived at Hastings, and the house was managed by Mrs. Walker. Mrs. Walker was soon in the room, with a German deputy-manager kept to maintain the foreign Scumberg connection, and with them sundry waiters and the head chambermaid. Mrs. Walker made a direct attack upon the dean, which was considerably weakened by accusations from the lips of the marquis himself. Had he remained speechless for awhile, the horrors of the dean's conduct would have been greatly aggravated. "My good woman," said the dean, "wait till some official is here. You cannot understand. And get a little warm water and wash his lordship's head."

"He has broken my back," said his lordship. "Oh, oh, oh!"

"I am glad to hear you speak, Lord Brotherton," said the dean. "I think you will repent having used such a word as that to my daughter." It would be necessary now that everybody should understand everything; but how terrible would it be for the father, even to say that such a name had been applied to his child!

First there came two policemen, then a surgeon, and then a sergeant. "I will do anything that you suggest, Mr. Constable," said the dean, "though I hope it may not be necessary that I should remain in custody. I am the Dean of Brotherton." The sergeant made a sign of putting his finger up to his cap. "This man, as you know, is the Marquis of Brotherton."

The sergeant bowed to the groaning nobleman. "My daughter is married to his brother. There have been family quarrels, and he just now applied a name to his own sister-in-law, to my child, which I will not utter because there are women here. Foulter slander never came from a man's mouth. I took him from his chair and threw him beneath the grate. Now you know it all. Were it to do again, I would do it again."

"She is a ——," said the imprudent prostrate marquis. The sergeant, the doctor who was now present, and Mrs. Walker suddenly became the dean's friends. The marquis was declared to be much shaken, to have a cut head, and to be very badly bruised about the muscles of the back. But a man who could so speak of his sister-in-law deserved to have his head cut and his muscles bruised. Nevertheless the matter was too serious to be passed over without notice. The doctor could not say that the unfortunate nobleman had received no permanent injury; and the sergeant had not an opportunity of dealing with deans and marquises every day of his life. The doctor remained with his august patient and had him put to bed, while the dean and the sergeant together went off in a cab to the police-office, which lies in the little crowded streets between the crooked part of Regent Street and Piccadilly. Here depositions were taken and forms filled, and the dean was allowed to depart, with an understanding that he was to be forthcoming immediately when wanted. He suggested that it had been his intention to go down to Brotherton on the following day, but the superintendent of police recommended him to abandon that idea. The superintendent thought that the dean had better make arrangements to stay in London till the end of the week.

NOTHING MORE!

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It is one of Lord Burleigh's pithy sayings, that if a man marry a fool, it shall, for the remainder of his days, "yirke him to hear her talk."

Now there are varieties of the fool feminine. A woman may be a fool "pure and simple," or she may be a "fond fool," and in either case, a loyal man and true may make the best of matters; but he who is yoked to a "vain fool," shall assuredly pay to the uttermost that penalty with

which Lord Burleigh so quaintly threatens him. Yet a vain fool may easily lead a man captive, and for this reason. Vanity, during the honeyed days of courtship, is ready to take the form and semblance of true love. The desire to shine in a man's eyes teaches a vain woman cunning; she adapts herself to his tastes, flatters his foibles, and then, after dreaming comes the waking, and he realises that it was not for himself, but for the adulation which he could give, that he was loved. She has won, but she has no longing to keep his love; the restfulness of assured affection, the quiet companionship of home life, have for her no charms; the only craving she has, is to outshine other fools like herself.

In saying all this, I have been telling the story of Keith Falconer's married life.

He had fallen madly in love with a beautiful woman; he had made her his wife in haste, and had repented himself of that rash act at leisure, and it "yirked him to hear her talk." He hated petty gossip, and its blacker sister, scandal; and yet in such despicable mental garbage did the soul of Blanche, his wife, delight. He disliked and disapproved of the friends she made, yet never would he permit that dislike to keep him absent from her side, or give the world a chance of saying that they "did not get on well together." Consequently, in spite of the overweening vanity that blighted her whole nature, never the faintest breath of scandal had gathered round Blanche Falconer's name. Whether she was grateful for this careful guardianship on Keith's part, may be doubted. Keith Falconer's mother was a woman both wise and loving. From the days of his childhood, in this mother Keith had found his best and truest friend; his closest sympathiser, his most loving comforter, but now——

Well, slowly but surely, as some lovely landscape is obscured by rising mist, and its beauties hidden from our eyes, this loving mother had drifted from him; not because he grew to love her less, but because, for the first time in their lives, something lay between them that neither could touch upon.

What anguish of soul Mrs. Falconer had endured in this severance, what prayers, what tears, what hours of lonely thought it had cost her, none but God and her own heart knew!

Yet how could she rightly still cling to her place in her boy's heart and life, when her woman's instinct told her that she dared

not trust herself to keep silence, when silence would be wisdom? Was it not then the nobler part to hold herself aloof? Keith was not one to fall into the meanness of taking his mother into his counsel against his wife. Silence therefore reigned between them on the things most present to the thoughts of each.

And rarely indeed was this silence broken. Between two noble natures an unspoken covenant may exist, and it was so with this mother and son. Only once was the full bitterness of Keith's unhappiness revealed to her. She had been paying a visit to them in their London home. It had been a time of mingled joy and pain, and now it was over. She was going back to Glenluna; to that lovely home among the heather-clad hills, where she best loved to be, and now, waiting for the north train, with Keith by her side, she paced slowly up and down the platform of Euston Station.

Poor mother! her heart was very full—it is so hard for all of us, when we have to leave one whom we love, to bear sorrow alone; and so, at last, "out of the fulness of her heart, her mouth spake."

She had noted the weariness on Keith's face; the deepened lines round the lips, the tired look in the grey eyes, the silver lines mingling all too soon in the dark locks that had been her pride in days gone by; and she thought, in her loving tenderness, that he sorely needed rest.

"When the session is over, do you think you and Blanche can come to me at Glenluna, dear?"

She spoke almost timidly, and unconsciously her fingers closed closer on his arm.

"I hardly think we can, mother," he answered quietly, as it was ever his wont to speak, but with a subtle ring of pain in his voice that hurt her cruelly. "My wife prefers Paris, or Florence, when I can get away; you remember, she does not like Glenluna——"

"Yes, yes; I remember," she put in hurriedly, with a catch in her breath that was almost a sob.

Not "like" Glenluna; not "like" that stately home on the lovely western coast; not "like" to watch the hills sleeping in the sunshine, and the cloud-shadows chasing each other over the ever-changeful sea! The very words sounded like treason to all the traditions of her life, and yet she knew they were true.

There was a stir upon the platform, a

bell rang loudly, and she knew that the time was short.

"Keith, Keith!" she said, losing for a moment the calmness that was so seldom ruffled. "Oh, my dear, how sorry I am that you and Blanche have no children; it might be better, it might make things so different. Do not be angry with me, my son; parting makes one weak, you know."

"I am not angry," he said very gently, "but you are mistaken; I thank Heaven that things are as they are."

She had given utterance to the thought of her heart, in an all-true womanly hope that little hands might draw two hearts together; and the look on Keith's face, as he answered her, struck home to her like the stab of a knife.

A kiss, a long hand-clasp, a longer look, and mother and son had parted.

If Keith Falconer had known that never again in this world should he see those sweet sad eyes look into his, that never again should he touch that frail white hand, until he kissed and clasped it with passionate tears as it lay dead and cold, and unresponsive to the pressure of his own—think you that he would have stood so quietly to watch the northern train gliding from his sight?

Ah me, it is well for us all that we know not what even the day that is coming may bring forth! When Keith Falconer, two short months after that parting at the station, returned home from his duties at the House, to find a telegram awaiting him, and read the few terse sentences that told him that his mother was dead, he laughed aloud. Such strange things are human nerves, and so passing strange the way that they are acted upon by the sudden stroke of joy or pain!

In a moment of despairing, overwhelming sorrow, weak humanity clings to the nearest stay; and Keith, stunned and dazed by grief, turned to his wife for comfort. He threw his arm about her shoulders, and hid his face against her breast, and Blanche, in a certain cold-blooded fashion of her own, was sorry for him; but all the same she looked upon his bowed head, and wondered uneasily if, perchance, the "burning tears of sorrow" might not mar and blur the delicately-tinted robe, that had been pronounced the triumph of a man-dressmaker's art. She also wondered if, now that Mrs. Falconer was dead, she and Keith would have to go and live at that dullest of all dull places—Glenluna.

Most wives would have pleaded to go with a husband on such a journey as that on which Keith had to start that night; but not so Blanche Falconer. In her creed, sickness and death were things to be avoided by every known means. And so it came about, that she was lying disconsolately on a lounge in her pretty morning-room, now decorously darkened, when her husband sought her to say good-bye.

Blanche was not alone. Her chosen friend, Mrs. Leslie Vernon, had flown to her side on hearing of the calamity that had befallen her, and just as Keith reached the velvet portières, and was about to enter the room, his wife was plaintively bemoaning herself to this sympathising listener. . .

"And just now, too; when I have a card for the royal ball, and had set my heart on going!"

Mrs. Vernon made a quick gesture of caution. She had chanced to look up, and in a mirror opposite the door, had seen Mr. Falconer come in. Even her world-hardened heart was touched with the grave, sad, reproachful face, the set white lips, that told of cruel pain; and with a few hurried words, she beat a hasty retreat, leaving the husband and wife together.

"Well, well, what matter, after all?" thought Keith bitterly, as ten minutes later he sprang into a hansom, and quitted the home that was to him but an empty name. "I knew it all before; why should I let her heartless word wound me—fool that I am!"

To travel over a familiar road, to pass by well-known landmarks, each of which once took you nearer to a loving greeting, and then to realise with a sickening pang that the feet that once hurried so gladly to meet you on the threshold of your home, will come to meet you never any more: what an ordeal of pain!

The sight of his mother's empty chair by the "ingle nook" was the first thing that seemed to give a reality to the thought of her loss in Keith's heart; he had been told she was dead, but he had not felt that she was gone until then. And in that moment the knowledge came upon him, that in losing her, he had lost all. He flung himself upon the couch, crushing his face against the pillow where her head had often lain. . .

He was not left quite without comforters in this abandonment of grief. Merlin, the old deer-hound, crawled to

his master's feet and laid his rough head upon his' knee, and a woman's hand, light as a snowflake, touched his shoulder, while a woman's voice said pityingly:

"You must not grieve too bitterly, Mr. Falconer; she told me to tell you this, and to say that you were her ceaseless thought; it was all so sudden; there was not much time——"

And here the sweet voice broke in tears.

CHAPTER II.

KEITH FALCONER's mother had been a woman of few friendships, but these from their very limitation had gathered strength. She had also been one of those women who possess the power of turning a lover into a staunch and loyal friend.

In the days of her youth, Laurence Temple had loved her vainly; had seen a man, less worthy of her love, win the jewel whose brightness he was incapable of appreciating, and then, sad and sore at heart, had joined his regiment in India, and thrown all his energies into the interest of his profession.

Years later these two meet again, and then Colonel Temple had given the woman whom he had once loved that sustaining, never-failing friendship, which a generous, pure-hearted man can so well give to a woman whom he holds in reverence.

Things looked very black indeed at Glenluna when Keith was a bonny, curly-pated lad of four years old, and if it had not been for an opportune visit "on leave" paid to his native land by Laurence Temple, that beautiful home might have been made desolate, and become the subject of conjecture to a curious world. But Allan Falconer and Laurence Temple had been lads together at the same public school, and fast friends in after life, until the love of a woman came between them; and now Laurence, ever the stronger character of the two, used his influence with his old comrade to good purpose, and saved the woman whom both had loved, though so differently, from still deeper sorrow than that which had already befallen her.

Mr. Falconer, to a certain extent, reformed his reckless life; at all events, he kept things smother on the surface; and some years after this visit of his old friend, he died.

Of course, it would have been a charmingly romantic ending to the story, had Laurence Temple now won the love of the beautiful widow; but he was already married; and even had this not been so, I

doubt if anything warmer than the old trusty friendship would have come about between them, for to Mary Falconer the world now held but one object of worship, and that was—Keith.

Shortly after Keith's marriage, Mrs. Falconer received a letter from her friend Laurence Temple, now once more in India. It was at once a behest and a farewell.

His young daughter Marion, long since motherless, was at school in England, and on the point of going out to join him in his Indian home; but now Colonel Temple was dying, and by the time that letter could reach Glenluna, Marion would be alone in the world. To the kindly care of the woman who had been first his love, and then his friend, he commended his child, until such time as her own relatives should claim her.

Keith had heard all this, and his mother had spoken in her letters of the girl being at Glenluna, and of her sweet and gentle ways; but it had so chanced that he had never seen her, never until, in the hour of his bitter grief, her voice fell upon him as the very balm of Gilead! He had felt so alone, so isolated in his sorrow, and lo! here at his side was one who had loved, and now mourned that mother, whose sympathy had been the one tender spot in his life. It seemed a strange thing that Marion had spent many holidays at Glenluna in times past, and yet that she and Keith had never met; but Blanche did not "like" that home among the hills and woods, and Mrs. Falconer would not broach the idea that her son should come without his wife.

Marion's young heart, sore from the loss of the father she so dearly loved, had turned for comfort to that father's friend; she had grown to love Mrs. Falconer with the love which can only exist between two really sympathetic natures. The power of companionship is a gift which some women possess in perfection, and few could be more richly dowered with such power than Marion Temple. There was no beauty in earth, or sea, or sky, that did not find an echo in her pure soul, a reflection in the clear mirror of her mind; no high and holy words ever penned by the master-minds of the world, that did not rouse her into admiration and sympathy. Happy indeed were the hours spent together by the two women, and great was Keith's comfort in listening to the old housekeeper's description of how happy "the mistress" had been with her dear companion.

Marion was not by any means a beauty; she had soft, clear hazel eyes, a mobile mouth, and was graceful and lithe as a young deer in every movement, but there was nothing brilliant about her, nothing to catch the eye of a casual observer. She did not startle you into admiration; she won upon you, stealing your heart away unawares.

When Keith took her back with him to London for awhile, Blanche, after one comprehensive glance at the sad, quiet face and timid eyes, took heart of grace, and was comforted. She was not jealous of her husband, she esteemed him too lightly for that; indeed, he held in her estimation very much the same position as another person's banker might have done in theirs; it was worth while to keep him in good humour, for Blanche had been a "penniless lass," and was wholly dependent upon him for supplies.

But she had had misgivings when Keith wrote to her from the north to say that Marion was coming to them as a guest, until such time as an escort should be found to be her travelling companion to Mauritius, whither she was bound; and these misgivings returned upon Mrs. Keith Falconer with redoubled force, in consequence of a letter which she received from old Mrs. Fairfax, the Glenluna housekeeper.

That worthy woman took it for granted that her master's wife must be ill, since she had not accompanied him to the house of mourning, and therefore she wrote sympathisingly to her, and at the same time spoke of "Miss Marion" as a "dear, sweet young creature."

Blanche was still young and fair enough to be generous to other women, but for all that, she was aware that eighteen possesses certain advantages over five-and-twenty, and she had no fancy for "going about" with a girl whose fresh young beauty might throw her own into the shade.

"A regular dowdy, my dear; big eyes, and a slip of a figure, and looks like a mute at a funeral." This was Mrs. Falconer's verdict upon Marion Temple, as confided to her friend, Belle Vernon.

"How long is she going to stay?" asked that light of fashion, trying the effect of a new attitude in the mirror opposite.

"I don't know; she's bound for Mauritius, where her father's sister, the widow of a rich planter, has offered her a home; and when a certain Mrs. Mayne, who is to be her escort, makes up her mind to start,

the girl is to go. For my part, I can't for the life of me imagine what women like Marion Temple want with a chaperon; no man born would ever turn round to look at her a second time!"

"My dear," said Mrs. Vernon solemnly, "if I were you, I would keep the girl here as long as you can. It is much more likely your husband will let you relax this absurd seduction, if you can make the excuse of wanting to cheer her up."

"Well, I really don't know," sighed the victim of a husband's tyranny, with her head plaintively on one side; "she isn't one bit simpatica to me, and I can't make her see how hard upon me this sort of dull life is; you know it destroys me, Bella—absolutely destroys me! Besides, the girl is a fool——"

But here Mrs. Vernon interrupted her. "You are mistaken there, Blanche; the girl's no fool. Did you notice how quick she was the other day, when Charley Durant quoted a line from some fusty old writer who lived before the flood, and how she followed it up? He looked quite startled, and his eyes followed her——"

"Pouf!" cried Mrs. Falconer, slipping her pretty white fingers together in a gesture of contempt. "Charley likes to be pedantic himself; but, as a rule, men hate that sort of thing! Fancy what our ingenue did the other evening. We had had our dinner in the usual festive manner, you know—the three of us together; and after dinner the girl disappeared. 'I hope you were not ill last night?' said I next morning. 'Oh no,' says she, sweetly smiling; 'but I thought you and Mr. Falconer would like to be left alone together sometimes in an evening.'"

Not even the sense of being in what was, or ought to have been, a house of mourning, could keep back the peal of ringing laughter with which Belle Vernon greeted this remarkable anecdote; a merriment in which Blanche joined right heartily, you may be sure; and the master of the house, passing by the door on his way to his own room, heard and—— Well, no man is immaculate, and now and again words will rise to the lips that it is well to stifle. Yet even the bitterest home trials had of late grown less bitter to Keith Falconer; less hard to bear with patience than they once had been. He was like a traveller toiling along a steep and uphill road, who hears far-off the first faint notes of a melody heaven-sweet; and listening to the exquisite harmony of the strain that comes ever

nearer and nearer as the day wears on, half forgets to note the weariness of the way and the desolation of the land through which his path lies. Something had come into the man's life that made all burdens easier to bear.

HE LOVED.

He loved me once—what words are those, "he loved!"

Past tense, past love, past joy, past hope, past dream—

All things that were and are not—how they seem
To crowd around, and mock the love disproved,
The former bliss, by ages long removed;
The light far off as farthest star's pale beam
That sheds through trackless space its fitful gleam,
Which once, our sun, we welcomed and approved.
How dear that was which lies here stark and dead,
While we sit watching in God's awful sight,
He knows, but hath no dew of healing shed,
Nor any grace doth proffer us—by night
And change and death who are discomfited—
No single hope to turn our dark to light!

ONE MINUTE WITH HER MAJESTY.

UNLESS Mrs. Bull have been born in the purple, and can trace her pedigree in an unbroken line from the Cadow or Chillingworth branch of the family, it is quite possible that she may not herself have had the honour of appearing at court until she is presented, "on her marriage," by old Lady Cowbury, the Duchess of Steerleigh, or that very pretty and sparkling young matron the Marchioness of Bellowby. Perhaps for the first time in her life she then makes acquaintance with the august nobleman, of whose existence she had previously been only dimly conscious. She discovers that the gold key which adheres, by some conjuring trick, to the hip of the Lord Chamberlain, means something, and something very serious. The Lord Chamberlain, on his own ground, is by no means to be laughed at. He is, in fact, the personification of that mysterious and ill-defined generality known as society. According to the strict letter of the social code, persons unknown to the Lord Chamberlain in his official capacity are not endowed with any recognised social status. They appertain to the undistinguished herd of millions who toil and spin, and are otherwise unlike those lilies of the field the gate of which is opened only by his golden key.

Before proceeding farther with this ineffable subject, it may be well for the benefit of such as have not undergone the rite of presentation, to prevent any confusion between the two chamberlains who rank among the great functionaries of

state. As the Lord Chamberlain proper rules at St. James's and other royal palaces, save one, so does the Lord Great Chamberlain reign at the Palace of Westminster, and perform sundry offices in connection with the High Court of Parliament there assembled. The office of Lord Great Chamberlain, like that of Grand Falconer of England, is hereditary. The latter important function is vested in the ducal family of St. Albans, but the post of Lord Great Chamberlain at present exhibits a curious instance of divided duty. It is held alternately, not year by year, but reign by reign, by the Marquis of Cholmondeley and Lord Willoughby de Eresby. The office, during the reign of her Majesty, fell by rotation to the barony of Willoughby de Eresby; but, since the last and twentieth baron died eight years ago, has been vested in a lady, the Dowager Lady Aveland, who is represented by a deputy, in the person of her son, Lord Aveland. This officer of state, like the Lord Chamberlain, takes a high rank in the table of precedence, but beyond performing that duty and appearing at the opening and the prorogation of Parliament, is not overwhelmed by the duties of his post. It is otherwise with the Lord Chamberlain, who is not an hereditary officer, but holds only during the tenancy of the Ministry. Lest, however, this mutability should lead to mistakes, by which the fabric of society might be loosened in texture, the office in St. James's Palace is strengthened by a permanent head, who is supposed to know everybody, and to have all questions of ceremony and precedence at his fingers'-ends. In addition to the hard-worked and invariably courteous and kindly gentleman who now fills this post, the Lord Chamberlain has another deputy, who exercises, generally with excellent discretion, the post of censor of the drama. By virtue of his position, the Lord Chamberlain is vested with ruling powers over all theatres situate in any city or town which boasts the presence of a royal palace. His word, or that of his representative, the Licensor of Plays, is law to theatrical managers. He may excise objectionable passages, put a stop to caricatures of living personages, insist on the dresses of ballet-girls being of proper length, and also that proper precautions be taken for protecting the audience against fire or sudden alarms of fire. It is not, however, on this department of the Lord Chamberlain's work that it is now proposed to dilate, but rather on his duties

as the guardian of society, and the use of his golden key in admitting English folk to the royal presence.

That this privilege is highly esteemed is evident from the large number of applications sent in before a levée or drawing-room is held. During the last few years, the increase in the number of those anxious to be presented has been very great. To the unsophisticated mind it may appear strange that otherwise inoffensive people, who have no particular connection with the court, the legislature, the army or navy, church or bar, should, after having once taken their social degree, as it were, insist on going to court at least once every season, and resent a paucity of levées and drawing-rooms as an injury. It is of course an advantage to have been presented at the English Court. It confers upon the presentee certain rights useful abroad. English ambassadors at foreign courts are obliged to recognize presentation here, as entitling their countrywomen and countrymen to a similar privilege at foreign courts. When Europe was studded with little countries, this species of recognition was useful as a passport to foreign society, and even now has its advantages. When Mr. Bull goes abroad with his family, to show inferior races how a Briton can behave himself upon occasion, he rarely forgets to carry with him a certain tin box containing his apparel as lieutenant in the Hawkhire Volunteers, as deputy-lieutenant for Clodshire, or, in default of holding either of these appointments, the court dress assigned to him in his capacity as a fine old English gentleman. Something in the way of reform has recently been attempted in male court dress. Mr. Bull, unattached to any service civil or military, is not compelled to array himself as one of his own footmen. If his legs be ill-shaped, he is not bound to display their natural hideousness in silk stockings. He may attire himself in claret-coloured cloth coat and trousers, and a white waistcoat of diplomatic cut—composing a costume like unto that which might be assigned to a deputy-vice-consul's assistant-doorkeeper. But he has still the option of wearing a footman's suit of black velvet, and if he be built like Apollo or Hercules, will do well to cling to the old-fashioned garb, and will then run Lord Guisarme's gorgeous myrmidons very hard in the race for the prize of beauty. Mr. Bull's court suit travels abroad with him,

and, bating the sword, which is an un-packable and troublesome weapon, does not materially increase his baggage. It is otherwise with Mrs. Bull's state raiment, of which more presently.

Appearance at court is regarded—like parish relief in the agricultural districts—rather as a right than as a concession. In England, there is no humbug about the sixteen quarterings which are, to the disgrace of human intelligence, still believed in in sundry nooks and corners of Germany. It is happily impossible in this country to draw any sharp line as to the degree of "honourability," which qualifies a subject to be presented to his or her sovereign. There is, in fact, no obstacle to the presentation of any person of fair character, but that of finding a sponsor, whose decision, however, is always subject to the approval of the Lord Chamberlain. This sublime functionary is not accustomed, except in suspicious cases, to look far beyond the presenter. Like the committee of a club, he looks in the case of an unknown person to the sponsor, and if Lord or Lady Guisarme be prepared to present an individual, it is generally taken for granted that they have previously assured themselves of the character of the presentee. Now and then a nice point will occur. There may be two or more claimants to a certain barony or baronetcy, and as all these may demand to appear before the Queen in the character which they assert to be theirs by right, it is needful to guard against awkward precedents being laid down. Presentations of this kind, under protest, as it were, give infinite trouble when peerages and other titles are under litigation. Certain persons are exempted from the difficulty of finding a sponsor, by having one ready made; the colonel of a regiment, for instance, being compelled to present his officers on demand. All others have only to find a sponsor to be accepted—that is, if nothing be known against them. Those whose character is, as the late Mr. Gilbert Abbott à Beckett said of the great Lord Bacon, "streaky," do well to avoid presentation altogether, for there is a dreadful process, known as "gazetting out." It is awkward for Mr. and Mrs. Bull, after reading the official notice of their presentation, to see, a week or two later, that it has been "cancelled." This is a blow from which there is no recovery, as it proclaims to the world that there is "something wrong" about the individual. In

mercy, the particular reasons for gazetting out are never given, but the official record is a blot not to be wiped out. It speaks well for the acuteness and industry of the Lord Chamberlain's office, and for the general honour and truthfulness of English folk, that gazettings out are exceedingly rare. One or two painful instances have occurred, but very few attempts are made to run the gauntlet of the Lord Chamberlain's office. The method of prevention is simple. Persons wishing to appear at court, must send in their cards a certain time before levée or drawing-room. If anything be known against them, their cards are not returned to them. There is no scandal, no open exposure. The cards do not come back, and the postulant is, as it were, quietly nonsuited.

A levée is a comparatively uninteresting affair. Only on rare occasions is one held by the Queen herself, who generally deposes this part of her duty to the Prince of Wales, who gets through it very graciously and pleasantly, never forgetting to shake hands with a man whom he has met before. This kind of memory is part of the *métier de prince*, and a very important part, as nearly affecting his personal popularity. It is therefore made a study by reigning families, and has been carried to such extraordinary perfection by the House of Hanover, that it appears to be almost hereditary. It is impossible to overrate its value. His late Majesty King George the Fourth was, to judge by the testimony of contemporaries, neither a very wise nor a very good king, but he was undoubtedly popular. During his long career as Prince Regent, he became acquainted with thousands of persons, and never forgot either a face or a name. Country gentlemen, ex-officers of the army and navy, doctors and divines, were all delighted with a sovereign who knew them, and called them by their right names at once. Each one naturally thought himself the especial object of royal regard, whereas, he was, as a matter of fact, only a unit in a vast dictionary of titles and features photographed on the royal brain. Squire, soldier, sailor, doctor, priest, and lawyer, all went home the better for looking upon Florizel, for he knew them and their belongings, and recalled events, which they, perhaps, had forgotten. They did not forget the royal recognition. They went home to their broad acres, their club, their consulting-room, or their parish, and bragged about the friendly reception they had received.

In the slang of the present day, it "fetch'd 'em," and it will continue to "fetch" people to the end of time. It is flattering to one's vanity to be recognised by great, and more especially by the greatest people. The immortal author of the Book of Snobs confessed that he liked dining with lords, especially the lords spiritual, and even the writer of this present dissertation never misses a chance of being recognised by a member of the royal family. It does not affect me, my dear madam—not a whit; I am not puffed up by a royal or serenely transparent nod. It does not make me eschew any reading but the works of Sir Bernard Burke for the next week. Not in the least. But I know its value. I know that Daggerleigh, who cut up my last book to rags and tatters in *The Tuft-hunting Magazine*, is turning green as he mutters: "What the devil business has that fellow here at all? Seems familiar and friendly too." I know that every word vouchsafed to me by royal lips will burn into the soul of Daggerleigh, who is clever and all that, but is—ha!—"not in it." I know, too, that General Crichton Chatmore, who relies on me for fashionable gossip for *The Boggleywallah Bungalow*, and is disporting himself in London for a season, will cease to doubt the astounding statements with which I regale his readers. He will go away a wiser and more appreciative employer, and I shall ask for an increase of salary forthwith.

All the male vanity excited by court festivities is but a small matter, compared with the ebullition of feminine bosoms on these great occasions. To young Mrs. Bull, or even to Miss Bull, a presentation is an awful and solemn ceremony. Having attained the age of sixteen, it is of course competent to Miss Bull to be presented by her mother. This is a simple affair, a matter of tradition, and easily got over. The presentation of a young married lady who has not previously figured at Buckingham Palace is more serious. She is of course anxious to secure the greatest lady she knows as a chaperon, and droll stories are told of the means by which that indispensable ally is retained. A son's gaming debts and a mother's milliner have before now been paid by the courtesy of chaperoning a wealthy nobody; perfectly unexceptionable in herself, but unknown to those having the entrée at court. They say that old Lady Dodgebury pays the expenses of her little house in Mayfair

every season, by presenting the wives and daughters of new men; but the story is probably invented by somebody who could not get the tough old dame to present her. The sponsor secured, the sacred cards are sent in, bearing on their face the names of the presentress and the presentee, and while these are scanned in the Lord Chamberlain's office, the neophyte prepares herself for the ordeal. It may be imagined that the heart of every true woman leaps at the thought of the dress she will wear. Now there is known, to those initiated in the ways of courts, a certain code of "ladies' rules," as they are called. They are not written in letters of gold in the office of the Lord Chamberlain, nor are they graven on tablets of lapis lazuli and built into the blue drawing-room at Buckingham Palace. They are too sacred to be committed to any viler body than the human form divine. They are the traditions, the precedents handed down by generations of the high priestesses of society, and may nowise be disobeyed. Some of the most severe may, so far as memory will serve, be enumerated. An unmarried lady must, "on her presentation," appear in white, as must a married lady when "presented on her marriage"—if that marriage be her first. It may here be noted that on the occasion of any accession of dignity, people are presented over again, whether that dignity be a title, an office, or simply that conferred by promotion to the rank of matron. On other occasions but those of "presentation," as a demoiselle or "on her marriage for the first time," an Englishwoman may wear what colours she pleases—albeit "young" unmarried ladies almost invariably wear white. As to form, the Lord Chamberlain will take care that Mrs. Bull does not outrage the proprieties. She may array herself in the blazing yellow known as mandarin, in cream-colour, in ruby, in garnet, in celadon, in blue, or in the deep red once called Prussian's blood, but now renamed Sultan. All this latitude, and more, is allowed in colour; and equal option is permitted in character, provided always that certain rules are complied with. The four angles of the courtly code are feathers, lappets, low body, and train of regulation length. As on the stage, the make of the dress and the style of dressing the hair generally follow the prevailing fashion. Now and then, a dame of artistic taste will have her costume made on the lines of an old pic-

ture; but even then the dress will be made according to the adhesive fashion now in vogue. Signs of rebellion in the capillary regions have recently been sternly repressed. Last year two or three venturesome young matrons had their hair cut short and curled, à la bébé, as it is called, and sent a thrill through Buckingham Palace from one end to the other. In one of these cases feathers were worn, but, by a skilful evasion, were tucked away behind the ears, so that they could not be "distinctly seen on approaching her Majesty." Modern taste has been fighting for a long while against the nodding plumes in which our grandmothers delighted. In their day it was not uncommon to wear a plume of feathers, like the crest of the Prince of Wales, towering over the female head, to which it gave a queer look, as of Pocahontas. By degrees the edifice has been cut down almost to the level of the head. Worse than this, the white plumage of the ostrich has been dyed to match the costume. All this reckless innovation has been put a stop to. Only white, or in cases of deep mourning, black plumes can be permitted; and they must no longer be smuggled away among a heap of curls, but must stand erect and Pocahontas-like, as of yore.

Difficulties, too, have occurred with lappets. These sacred emblems of court dress have been shirked more or less for several years. They have been suppressed or dissimulated, cut down or tucked up, until their presence was almost unheeded. Now this is a grave matter, for there are differences and distinctions of the most important kind marked by lappets. For instance, at the minor kind of drawing-room, called a "court," lappets are worn pinned up, and gentlemen appear in levée dress; while, at a drawing-room proper, gentlemen appear in full dress, and lappets are worn down. So the extinction, or rather the gradual atrophy, of these interesting pieces of point d'Alençon, or point gaze, could not be regarded with indifference. Had their gradual absorption been permitted to go on, they would soon have undergone the fate of these limbs, called by Mr. Darwin "potential," being the survival of something atrophied by disuse. They would have shrunk into a little bit of lace somewhere in the head-dress, and antiquarians would have wondered what they once were intended to represent. This dire result has happily been prevented by the command that not only

distinctly visible feathers, but lappets or veils, must be worn at all drawing-rooms.

The question of the corsage is one that has aroused much discussion of late years. It has been, and will continue to be, argued, that naked necks and shoulders should not be exhibited by daylight; that, except in the case of the very young and beautifully formed, they had better not be exhibited at all; that severe colds are caught by the ladies half-clothed in full dress as they sit shivering in their carriages on bitter March mornings, and so on. Sticklers for form and precedent reply that a low-cut corsage is part of an Englishwoman's full dress; that she is accustomed to wear it every day at dinner, and to go out in it nearly every night of her life. Apart from the festive view here taken of existence, there is something in this objection. If Clara Vere de Vere can wear a low body to a ball, as she can and will, without reference to the anatomical construction of her shoulders and arms, why should she object to wear it when making her annual obeisance to her sovereign? Clara loves to wear low bodies on all possible occasions; and even when well stricken in years, delights in loading her scraggy old neck with jewels. Why, then, should she object to a low body as a drawing-room regulation? Clara knows very well that, on a big opera-night, far more colds are caught than at the most crowded drawing-room. Why, then, does she object? In sober truth, she does nothing whatever of the kind, the whole uproar being made by comparative outsiders. The Vere de Veres incline to respect the opinion of their sovereign, and the Queen has more than once distinctly intimated that low bodies must be considered *de rigneur*, for the reason that they are really more decent than others. The ignorant outer world thinks her Majesty cruel in stripping the clothing from the shoulders of her female subjects, whereas the sole intent of the strict regulations on this point is to compel them to keep something on. This was proved only the other day by the case of a lady who, carried away by artistic yearnings, reduced the shoulder-strap of her dress to a bit of lace. Attempts in this direction have frequently been made, for the reason that the short sleeve, or rather broad shoulder-strap, establishes an inelegant solution of continuity between the shoulder and the arm, and destroys the sculpturesque line from the ear to the elbow. The difficulty

has been got over again and again by a piece of gold cord, or a string of pearls, as in the case of a French marchioness of the wicked Second Empire. No freaks of this kind are permitted at the English court, where the straight-out low body is held at once the most decent and most elegant corsage. It is most decent, insist its defenders, because, except in the matter of shoulder-straps, it is impossible for the most dashing of British matrons to outstrip certain well-defined limits. Some time ago it was attempted to introduce the so-called high or square neck, especially in the form called the corsage en cour. The heart-shaped body settled the fate of all irregular costumes at court. It was found by a few enterprising dames, or by their dressmakers, that although a dress might be classed as high, it was possible so to carve it down behind and scoop it out in front, that the lowest of conceivable low bodies was prudish in comparison with it, and the doom of the heart-shaped corsage was sealed. It has been advanced by well-meaning people that ladies after a certain age should be allowed to wear a genuine high dress, but this has been met admirably by a humorous courtier, who suggested that ladies over forty should be allowed to claim exemption from the ordinary rule; adding, with a smile, that he thought the number of applications would not trouble the Lord Chamberlain very seriously. It should, however, be mentioned that in case of actual ill-health, the Queen never refuses to permit a lady to come to court in a high dress.

One important item remains—the train, concerning which strict regulations exist. It must be four yards long, and proportionately wide. This is not, of course, the length on the ground, for the court train is a *manteau de cour*, and should begin at the nape of the neck, like the dresses of the *sacque* order. So many ladies, however, have complained of the weight of the train pulling at their shoulders, that the severity of the rule has been slightly relaxed, and the train may now flow from the waist only. By this modification, the entire meaning and artistic beauty of the train are lost; but it has the advantage of displaying the figure more perfectly, while destroying all the character of the costume. The whole of the dress is of rich material. The “petticoat,” as the dress itself is called, is often of satin, and the train of velvet, lined with silk and profusely decorated. It may be added that it requires

no small ingenuity to design a good court dress. The train is by no means of the same colour as the petticoat, being properly considered as an independent garment.

More trouble than that of construction is wrapped in a court train. For some weeks, if not months, before the day of presentation, the *débutante* must carefully rehearse the great scene to be gone through at Buckingham Palace. An eminent teacher of dancing and deportment advertises every season, that she is ready to teach ladies how to go through the trying ceremony without blundering. An old train is hitched on, and the part is practised over and over again. It is not so easy as it may seem.

On the great day itself, Mrs. Bull, who has received back her cards, undergoes an elaborate toilette, and enjoys the pleasure of being taken in the Marchioness of Bellowby's state carriage, with a state coachman and state footmen, with state bouquets, all in due form. Poor Mrs. Bull is a little fidgety, for her train has already shown signs of restiveness. She is rather chilly, too, about the shoulders, but does not like to put on wraps for fear of spoiling her head-dress, which, with its lappets and feathers and her own ruddy tresses, is altogether a wonderful, if not a fearful, edifice. As her carriage, or rather that of the Marchioness of Bellowby, falls into line, Mrs. Bull is a little abashed at the stares and rude remarks of the hobledehoy roughs who always muster strongly on drawing-room days. At last her turn arrives, and when the carriage has deposited her and her chaperon at the door of the palace, she finds herself suddenly in a great low-browed hall; and having left her wraps in a room which holds two cabinets fit to make a chinaman's mouth water, she makes her way upstairs into the first of a series of apartments, through which she has to pass on her way to the presence. Going on by degrees through door after door and barrier after barrier, she has ample leisure to admire the splendour of the blue drawing-room, and at last, after weary waiting, arrives in the white drawing-room, so-called because it is yellow. Here she is almost in the presence itself, for at the top right-hand corner is the door through which she will pass by the picture gallery into the throne-room, where the Queen, having already received the diplomatic corps, is standing at some distance in front of the throne, with the royal family and the ambassadors ranged in a semicircle

around her. Lady Bellowby has seen that Mrs. Bull has not forgotten her cards, and at last she finds that the moment has come. With her train thrown over her left arm, she follows her chaperon through the maze of beautiful women and sumptuous raiment which fills the white drawing-room, till she reaches the door, where, at the bidding of the royal pages, she lets her train fall to the ground. Very majestically she sweeps across the end of the magnificent picture gallery, and then she hears the name of her chaperon, and then her own, from the lips of the Lord Chamberlain himself. Now, Mrs. Bull, is your time to kiss your sovereign's hand, and to acquit yourself of that very deep curtsy you have been studying so long. You must not bend awkwardly over, Mrs. Bull, but perform a sudden genuflexion as perpendicularly and telescopically as you can, and then, bending your head forward, kiss hands gracefully. If instead of being plain Mrs. Bull you were a peeress, or the daughter of a peer above the rank of viscount, or the wife of the eldest son of a peer, the Queen would graciously kiss you, my dear madam, instead of permitting you to kiss her hand; but being only Mrs. Bull, you must kiss hands, and get away as best you can. Now this is the rub—the test of how much you have profited by the practice of the past few weeks. Above all things you may not turn your back on your sovereign, nor should you forget to salute the other members of the royal family as you make a well-ordered retreat. This should not be difficult. Every decently-taught man knows how to escape from the presence of ladies, without turning his back upon them. He works himself out crab-like, and finally vanishes without displaying the broad of his back, easily enough—that is, if he have no sword on. At such a moment a sword displays even more than its usual tendency to get between one's legs, but a sword is a trifle to a train. Mrs. Bull, as she works her way along, would infallibly step on her train and come to grief, were it not that delicate-handed, white-wanded pages "clear" her train, and thus permit her to make a majestic exit. She is rather flurried by this time, poor woman, and is vastly pleased to get safely out of the presence-chamber, and find that Old Man of the Sea, the court train, once more tucked over her arm. She gives a little sigh of relief, and then has time to look about her, and admire the superb jewels and gorgeous

dresses gleaming around her. Whether this exercise produces in her mind humility or envy, it is not within the province of this paper to discuss; but no sooner does she recover from the dazed feeling which oppressed her in the throne-room, than she discovers that she is very hungry, breakfast and luncheon having both been overlooked in the excitement of preparation. But it is another weary waiting before she can get to her carriage and be driven home, faint and weary, and "clemmed" withal, but yet sustained by a subtle joy, for she has, after weeks and months of preparation, enjoyed the honour of passing nearly sixty seconds with Her Majesty.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. H. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER IV. A REAL PRINCESS.

ONE disadvantage about having to wait upon Clari was, that no servant, though with all the experience of Thérèse, could discover a law by which to tell whether she would take coffee or chocolate, or neither, on any given morning, and if either, at what hour; while, if she were asked which she would have, or kept waiting half a minute, she was put out of temper for at least five, and would, ten to one, contradict her own choice if it came. It had been reserved for Ilma alone to hit upon the happy device of having both prepared and ready at all hours—a simple plan enough, but which, more, no doubt, than many a greater thing, had made life go more smoothly of late, and helped her largely to be indispensable to her patroness. Of course, it compelled Clari to find some grievance a little farther off when she wanted one for breakfast; but there, also, Ilma was serviceable.

It was in particularly ill-humour that Clari first woke and rose after her arrival in town. But, try as she would, there was no discomfort upon which she could lay a finger. No parched pea under her spring mattress had given her an excuse for having passed a sleepless night; and, indeed, that misfortune she never had a pretence for pretending. She must, being mortal, have had a few faults, but neither indigestion nor insomnia was among them. She had a particular wish for coffee: it was there, even before she had fairly opened her eyes. Her room was com-

fortable, and the sun was shining; nor had last night's wind given her the least cold. Ilma was in the room, waiting to serve her; and yet she was cross, and Ilma knew it while her eyes had still been closed.

The great prima donna, under these conditions, was not quite so imposing as between eight and eleven in the evening. Neither her white flannel jacket, nor the net in which her hair was bound up, helped to set her off, and her complexion was by no means improved by being left to nature. But, nevertheless, there were few, if any, of her rivals who bore these private conditions so well. The crow had scarcely touched her with his feet, and her unrouged skin was simply pale, and not leaden or sallow, as one might expect to see. Beyond question, a combination of impulsiveness with a sound liver is the grand receipt for keeping young. A woman who changes her emotions more often than she changes her gown, so that no impulse has time to turn one hair grey, will keep more fresh and alive even than a tortoise or an oyster, though she be from a country where young blood dries soon. Clari's grey hairs were very few indeed, and were lost among the gold. And then her eyes could never grow old, even if they tried.

"Ilma!"

"Yes, Giulia?"

"What did he say was the name of that woman?"

"Who said was the name of what woman, Giulia?"

"Corpo d'un—I think everybody is the stupidest in the world. One has to explain everything. One would think you had left all your wits out of your trunks; and you know, if there is one thing I hate, it is stupidity, and having to explain. How can I tell you what woman when I had to ask you for her name?"

"You mean about this Cleopatra?"

"If you like. It is all the same. I can live very well without knowing, and it is nothing to me. Only I hate to have stupid people about me, and it is the most stupid not to remember names."

"But I do remember, dear Giulia."

"Yes? But never mind. I do not want to know any more."

"It is Celia March. I knew her in Lindenheim."

"Ah, yes—Celia; the other name is too hard for me. Did she sing like that at Lindenheim?"

"Like what, Giulia?"

"In the name of Heaven, are you a fool?"

Like what I heard at Lady Quorne's; like—but how should you know? What was she at Lindenheim?"

"Monsieur Gordon could tell you that best."

"He? Bah! He hears with his eyes. I don't want to be told what he thinks of her. One does not go to a man to know what he thinks of a woman's singing, if she is not as old as the hills, nor so ugly as the devil's sister."

"Oh, she sang like anybody else, I suppose. But she got hold of the professors, like all those demure girls. She was sharp enough; she knew what she was about, very well," said Ilma, demurely.

"Tell me the name of every professor in Lindenheim," said Clari, suddenly.

Ilma was never surprised, though for Clari to take an interest in Lindenheim was as if she were to develop a sudden curiosity about the political constitution of Kamtchatka.

"There were Moschel, Schweifmann, Saul, Judex——"

"Diaminè, how stupid you are! What do I care for all those German fiddlers? Was there no Englishman?"

"Among the students?"

"Do you want to make me go mad and kill you?"

"Not among the professors—Gott bewahre!" said Ilma, piously. "The English don't teach; they learn."

"And this Miss Celia—she sang no differently from the others at Lindenheim?"

"Nobody thought anything of her—except the professors, and Gordon, and the students, who did not sing themselves, and so, of course, could not know anything. But I suppose a little goes far in England. No; she was a terrible coquette, but nobody could accuse her of singing."

"Ilma—you were jealous of her."

"I—jealous of her? Mon Dieu!"

"Yes—of Gordon."

"Giulia!"

"Well—perhaps not," said Clari, who leaped to conclusions, but never stayed there.

"But—you are sure that—that nobody named Gordon was at Lindenheim?"

"Of course there was, Giulia."

"Ah!—And——"

"Why, haven't we been talking about him? Of course, Herr Walter Gordon was at Lindenheim."

"Thank Heaven, I'm no saint, or I should be angry. Ilma, you are a fool. Ring for Thérèse. I am going to get up—I am going to call on Prosper."

"Giulia! On Prosper?"

"Why not? I have known him long enough," said Clari, lazily, as if it were the most natural thing to pay a friendly visit to one's bitterest enemy.

Ever since that memorable lunch at Hinchford, she had taken it into her head that Celia had learned her style from the arch-fiend in person, under his earthly name of Andrew Gordon, and from no meaner personage. And now it was plain to her, for many unconscious reasons, that this satanic instruction had taken place since Celia was at Lindenheim. Even Ilma must have been struck by that grand old style, if it had been there at all. She was excited by no special purpose—the instinct of revenge is eternally blind, and for the most part, even strikes blindly. That her enemy, the great art-demon, was falling somehow into her hands, was all that she knew.

Having said that she was going to get up at once, she of course lay watching the flies for another half-hour. Then she made an elaborate toilette with the help of Thérèse, sent for a cab, and drove at once to the Parnassus, that is to say, Prosper's, Theatre. The great man was busy. But he could not be denied to the yet greater lady—for such she was still, at least, before the event of the battle. She found him in his private room.

"Prosper," she said imperiously, and with no form of salutation, "I want the address of Andrew Gordon."

"Of your husband, madame?"

"Of Signor Andrew Gordon. He is alive, then."

"And you want his address, madame?"

"If you please."

"But I do not please, madame—not at all."

"Then since I please."

"And, may I ask madame why?"

"Because I please. A wife may ask where to find her husband—Diaminé!"

"But a husband may not always wish to see his wife, madame. And in this case, madame, it is not only may not—it is cannot, and will not, and shall not, madame."

"Shall not?"

"Madame mistakes. I am Prosper—I am not a slave. No woman who will devour oysters like madame shall dictate to me."

"Pazzie! I know your oysters. It is because you think I grow old—I!—and hoarse, and ugly, and am a ladder to be kicked away; and because you are ashamed

to be a traitor and a coward, but are not ashamed to be thought a fool. But you are a coward, and a traitor, and a fool, yes, all, and you are—in fine, you are Prosper. Yes; you are Prosper, and I am Clari; and if I am as old as Falerni, and as ugly as Stragocchia, and as hoarse as Ranzuzini, I shall have my way—with you."

When one has the art of abuse without loss of dignity, one also has the art of ruling very nearly as well as if one were altogether too dignified to abuse. Clari had spoken to Prosper as a washerwoman might to a pickpocket; but then a pickpocket is best met by the language best suited to him. Years of slavery to this woman's humours made his forehead grow damp at the names she had called him.

"It was the oysters. On the honour of a gentleman, it was the oysters, madame."

"Bah! I may be ugly, and old, and hoarse, and Miss Celia may be beautiful as day, but I am not a fool. You will give me the address, if you please."

"I would give it you with pleasure, madame. But in the first place——"

"Well?"

"I must know why."

"Ah, you think I would kill him?"

Prosper shrugged his shoulders. "It is possible."

"No. I do not think I shall kill him. He has not killed me. I wish to see my husband, since he is alive."

"In the second place—I do not know his address, madame."

"Prosper—you are a liar."

"Madame—parole d'hon——"

"No. I shall not kill him. But if you will not say, I will kill you—parole d'honneur."

"Gentlemen do not go out with ladies, madame."

"And ladies do not go out with cowards. They stab them in the back, or they poison them, or—in fine, they know what to do. But no—I will not do that till the Cleopatra has failed; and then you will kill yourself, and save me the trouble, my friend. I hate trouble."

"Have you not stayed here long enough, madame?"

"I have stood long enough, that is true. I will sit down. It is more easy to wait for twenty years in a chair. Ah, it is comfortable, this sofa. I will sit down here."

"Ah, you are terrible. There, chez Madame Snow, Saragossa Row, Lambeth."

"Write it down."

She took the note, and left the Par-

nassus, without a good-morning. For all her chance flashes of insight it was easy enough to lie to Olari, and especially easy for Prosper to lie, to her or to anyone.

She showed the note to the cabman whom the stage-manager called for the prima donna of the rival house, and drove to the terra incognita of the Row.

Comrie was still Mrs. Snow's favourite lodger.

Six months, nay, six years ago he had both worked and fared harder, for the benefit of his father's creditors, than most men can for their own. Indeed, when a man has reached a point of working eighteen hours out of every twenty-four, it is hard to see what point there is for him to reach farther. It is true that a German professor once laid it down that no man can be called a student who works less than twenty, or owns a hat or pair of boots; but then, he was a German professor. And yet, for the last few months, Comrie had turned his former self into a mere idler in comparison with what he was now. Loss of faith in their fellows makes two men in a hundred turn to faith in helping them; and he was one of the two. Having worked eighteen hours a day for the benefit of his creditors, he now, for his own, worked seven hours a day more—crowding twenty-five into the twenty-four. Happily, being a surgeon, self-help meant help for the world, so that this mad magic of arithmetic was not thrown away.

The fact is that he had woken up one morning, and found himself a fool. Nay, the next morning he had a terrible fear upon him that he was acquiring the natural result of being a fool—being a rogue. One guinea that, in his code of morals, belonged to a Manchester house which had forgotten the bad debt of Comrie senior years ago, he had spent in gloves for a strange woman, another five shillings in cab-hire for her, and another whole five pounds in hard cash; and all so much like a fool, that he had put it out of his power even to hear her say "Thank you." And if there was one thing he despised, it was letting a woman make either a fool or a rogue of a man. And now she had gone, and more sunlight went out of his life than he had ever guessed to be there.

And how gone? Well, after all, she was but a painter's model; and it was natural enough that, when a rich young man offered her a better home than Saragossa Row, she should take what came to

her in the way of trade. It could not be very pleasant to keep a deaf father, by sitting and getting a stiff neck at the rate of a few shillings a day. Comrie knew the poor too well to think much the worse of anybody, in the abstract, for yielding to such temptation; and the Thames, the great highway of suicides, was within a stone's throw. So when Mrs. Snow told her model lodger, with much parade, that she knew where Miss March had gone—if she chose to be indiscreet—and why, he ought to have shrugged his shoulders after the fashion he had learned in Paris, and dismissed the matter from his mind with an easy "One more." But Celia—and Walter Gordon! It seemed to come terribly home. And when Gordon wrote to him in that hypocritical fashion from Rome, to make him a go-between, that the pride of the father of his friend's mistress might be spared, he could only put on those extra seven hours, turn misogynist and misanthrope for ever, do all the good in his power, and recover for his creditors the six pounds six shillings of which he had defrauded them in a moment of weakness, of which he fancied himself healthily ashamed. But it was strange—the more brains and hours he put into his labours, the more heart went out of them.

The record of his days was exciting enough to a hospital surgeon, and he saw more romance in a week than the wildest reader of novels dreams of in a year. But one afternoon, while passing through the baker's shop on his way out, he saw a stranger sight than even a surgeon sees in a century—a fine lady, in the height of fashion, entering a baker's shop in Saragossa Row. She must have been formidably hungry indeed.

"No, ma'am," Mrs. Snow was saying from behind the counter, "I never lodged nobody of the name of Gordon. I may say I don't know the name. I should say I might say so, and for sure, only I've heard it; and though the party that owned it never was lodger of mine, them that he knew were, only they aren't, that's true."

"You will be so good, madame," said the lady, in a foreign voice, "to direct me to his apartments?"

"I'm very sorry, ma'am, if you're in want of lodgings, and if you've been recommended by Mr. Gordon, or anybody that knows me; but the room's been took these six weeks. But if you'd like to see them, as the gentleman's out—"

The lady clasped her hands impatiently.

It was clear that her English was not after the speech of Saragossa Row.

Comrie came to the rescue with his French of Paris.

"Can I be of any service to you, madame?"

"Ah, you speak with a tongue," said she, in her French of Rome. "Thank you, monsieur. I wish to see Monsieur Gordon. Is he at home?"

Comrie frowned. "I know him—I knew him, rather. But he does not live here. I believe he is abroad."

"Abroad?"

"In Italy. His address is, 'Walter Gordon, Poste Restante——'"

"Ah, you know him too? But it is not he; it is the musician——"

"I know of no other Gordon, at least, in London. A musician did live here."

"Ah—that is he!"

"But his name——"

"I know. Tell me what he was like, monsieur. So he is gone? Ah, Prosper shall pay for this—Diaminé! It is war."

"Perhaps I could serve you better, madame, if I knew why you wish to know," said Comrie, with the caution of his country.

"No—not at all. What was he like, if you please?"

Comrie did not like the look of the lady at all. But what did it matter to him? The Marches had gone out of his life, and he did not intend them to return.

"A little man——" he paused. Description is never easy, when one tries.

"Ah—little, very little; short, and lean, and black—he would be old now, and grey, with great brows, and deep, dead eyes, that cannot laugh, and a mouth—of iron, monsieur—that cannot smile; a man, fierce and cold, monsieur, but, per Bacco, a man! That is he?"

"You certainly have described him."

"And here—he lived here?"

"Yes."

"He must have been very poor."

"He was very poor."

"Ah! He was very poor. Yes, and old." She looked round the shop again, and at Mrs. Snow, and through the door. "Perhaps he had not bread?" she asked slowly.

"He lived, madame."

"It is worse than the Ghetto," she said absently. "But perhaps he had friends?"

"He never went out; and he had no friends."

"But you knew him?"

Comrie was growing impatient. He had lost full five minutes of his day.

"No."

"Did he not perform anywhere?"

"No. He was deaf, madame. Good-day."

"Deaf? Ah, Gran Dio! Deaf?"

"Stone deaf. Good——"

"Wait—one moment—one instant, monsieur! He is deaf—it is true—you know?"

"I am a surgeon, and in my judgment——"

"Yes——"

"He is not to be cured, but by miracle. You see, madame," he went on, forgetting himself in the surgeon, "I will not say that what people, the misguided bodies, call miracles, are not the commonest things; I should say that, on the average, ten or eleven miracles happen most days. But——"

"Then—he will never hear the Cleopatra?"

"I don't know what that will be, but if he's to hear it, it will have to be louder than anything I ever heard. Good-day, madame."

"Good-day, monsieur!" she held out her hand with a look of terrible triumph. "Good-day, madame!" she said to Mrs. Snow, who would have given her ears to have understood French for a quarter of an hour. "Poor—old—friendless—deaf!" she repeated to herself over and over again till the cab-wheels turned it into a psalm. "He starves in a den, and will never hear the great work—the man that I hate too much to kill. Art! To crush women into a work that he will never hear! So much for Andrew Gordon."

It was something for the childless, loveless woman to have lived for, even if she never saw the fate's vengeance on her life's murderer with her own eyes. "Portatemi il diadema," she began to sing to the harmony of the wheels. "And now for Prosper." Vengeance was taking form—Andrew Gordon should be deaf, not to the triumph of the Cleopatra, but to its damnation. Surely Heaven had indeed delivered her enemies into her hands.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLII. "NOT GO!"

THE dean had a great deal to think of as he walked home a little too late for his daughter's usual dinner hour. What should he tell her—and what should he do as to communicating, or not communicating, tidings of the day's work to Lord George? Of course everybody must know what had been done sooner or later. He would have had no objection to that—providing the truth could be told accurately—except as to the mention of his daughter's name in the same sentence with that abominable word. But the word would surely be known, and the facts would not be told with accuracy unless he told them himself. His only, but his fully sufficient defence was in the word. But who would know the tone? Who would understand the look of the man's eye and the smile on his mouth? Who could be made to conceive, as the dean himself had conceived, the aggravated injury of the premeditated slander? He would certainly write and tell Lord George everything. But to his daughter he thought that he would tell as little as possible. Might God in his mercy save her ears, her sacred feelings, her pure heart from the wound of that word! He felt that she was dearer to him than ever she had been—that he would give up deanery and everything if he could save her by doing so. But he felt that if she were to be sacrificed in the contest, he would give up deanery and everything in avenging her.

But something must be told to her. He at any rate must remain in town, and it

would be very desirable that she should stay with him. If she went alone she would at once be taken to Cross Hall; and he could understand that the recent occurrence would not add to the serenity of her life there. The name that had been applied to her, together with the late folly of which her husband had been guilty, would give those Manor Cross dragons—as the dean was apt in his own thoughts to call the Ladies Germain—a tremendous hold over her. And should she be once at Cross Hall he would hardly be able to get her back to the Deanery.

He hurried up to dress as soon as he reached the house, with a word of apology as to being late, and then found her in the drawing-room. "Papa," she said, "I do like Mrs. Montacute Jones."

"So do I, my dear, because she is good-humoured."

"But she is so good-natured also! She has been here again to-day, and wants me and George to go down to Scotland in August. I should so like it."

"What will George say?"

"Of course he won't go; and of course I shan't. But that doesn't make it the less good-natured. She wishes all her set to think that what happened the other night doesn't mean anything."

"I'm afraid he won't consent."

"I know he won't. He wouldn't know what to do with himself. He hates a house full of people. And now tell me what the marquis said." But dinner was announced, and the dean was not forced to answer this question immediately.

"Now, papa," she said again, as soon as the coffee was brought and the servant was gone, "do tell me what my most noble brother-in-law wanted to say to you?"

That he certainly would not tell. "Your brother-in-law, my dear, behaved about as badly as a man could behave."

"Oh dear! I am so sorry!"

"We have to be sorry, both of us. And your husband will be sorry." He was so serious that she hardly knew how to speak to him. "I cannot tell you everything; but he insulted me, and I was forced to—strike him."

"Strike him! Oh, papa!"

"Bear with me, Mary. In all things I think well of you, and do you try to think well of me."

"Dear papa! I will. I do. I always did."

"Anything he might have said of myself I could have borne. He could have applied no epithet to me which, I think, could even have ruffled me. But he spoke evil of you." While he was sitting there he made up his mind that he would tell her as much as that, though he had before almost resolved that he would not speak to her of herself. But she must hear something of the truth, and better that she should hear it from his than from other lips. She turned very pale, but did not immediately make any reply. "Then I was full of wrath," he continued. "I did not even attempt to control myself; but I took him by the throat and flung him violently to the ground. He fell upon the grate, and it may be that he has been hurt. Had the fall killed him he would have deserved it. He had courage to wound a father in his tenderest part, only because that father was a clergyman. His belief in a black coat will, I think, be a little weakened by what occurred to-day."

"What will be done?" she asked, whispering.

"Heaven only knows. But I can't go out of town to-morrow. I shall write to George to-night and tell him everything that has occurred, and shall beg that you may be allowed to stay with me for the few days that will be necessary."

"Of course I will not leave you."

"It is not that. But I do not want you to go to Cross Hall quite at present. If you went without me they would not let you come to the Deanery. Of course there will be a great commotion at Cross Hall. Of course they will condemn me. Many will condemn me, as it will be impossible to make the world believe the exact truth."

"I will never condemn you," she said. Then she came over and threw herself on her knees at his feet, and embraced him.

"But, papa, what did the man say of me?"

"Not what he believed; but what he thought would give me the greatest anguish. Never mind. Do not ask any more questions.—You also had better write to your husband, and you can tell him fully all that I have told you. If you will write to-night I will do so also, and I will take care that they shall have our letters to-morrow afternoon. We must send a message to say that we shall not be at the Deanery to-morrow." The two letters to Lord George were both written that night, and were both very long. They told the same story, though in a different tone. The dean was by no means apologetic, but was very full and very true. When he came to the odious word he could not write it, but he made it very clear without writing. Would not the husband feel as he, the father, had felt in regard to his young wife, the sweet pure girl of whose love and possession he ought to be so proud? How would any brother be forgiven who had assailed such a treasure as this; much less such a brother as this marquis? Perhaps Lord George might think it right to come up. The dean would of course ask at the hotel on the following day, and would go to the police-office. He believed, he said, that no permanent injury had been done. Then came, perhaps, the pith of his letter. He trusted that Lord George would agree with him, in thinking that Mary had better remain with him in town during the two or three days of his necessarily prolonged sojourn. This was put in the form of a request; but was put in a manner intended to show that the request if not granted would be enforced. The dean was fully determined that Mary should not at once go down to Cross Hall.

Her letter was supplicatory, spasmodic, full of sorrow, and full of love. She was quite sure that her dear papa would have done nothing that he ought not to have done; but yet she was very sorry for the marquis, because of his mother and sisters, and because of her dear, dear George. Could he not run up to them and hear all about it from papa? If the marquis had said ill-natured things of her it was very cruel, because nobody loved her husband better than she loved her dear, dear George—and so on. The letters were then sent under cover to the housekeeper at the Deanery, with orders to send them on by private messenger to Cross Hall.

On the following day the dean went to Scumberg's, but could not learn much there. The marquis had been very bad, and had had one and another doctor with him almost continually; but Mrs. Walker could not take upon herself to say that "it was dangerous." She thought it was "in'ard." Mrs. Walkers always do think that it is "in'ard" when there is nothing palpable outward. At any rate his lordship had not been out of bed, and had taken nothing but tapioca and brandy. There was very little more than this to be learned at the police-office. The case might be serious, but the superintendent hoped otherwise. The superintendent did not think that the dean should go down quite to-morrow. The morrow was Friday; but he suggested Saturday as possible, Monday as almost certain. It may be as well to say here that the dean did not call at the police-office again, and heard nothing further from the officers of the law respecting the occurrence at Scumberg's. On the Friday he called again at Scumberg's, and the marquis was still in bed. His "in'ards" had not ceased to be matter of anxiety to Mrs. Walker; but the surgeon, whom the dean now saw, declared that the muscles of the nobleman's back were more deserving of sympathy. The surgeon, with a gravity that almost indicated offence, expressed his opinion that the marquis's back had received an injury which—which might be—very injurious.

Lord George, when he received the letters, was thrown into a state of mind that almost distracted him. During the last week or two the animosity felt at Cross Hall against the marquis had been greatly weakened. A feeling had come upon the family that, after all, Popenjoy was Popenjoy; and that, although the natal circumstances of such a Popenjoy were doubtless unfortunate for the family generally, still, as an injury had been done to the marquis by the suspicion, those circumstances ought now to be in a measure forgiven. The marquis was the head of the family, and a family will forgive much to its head when that head is a marquis. As we know, the dowager had been in his favour from the first, Lord George had lately given way, and had undergone a certain amount of reconciliation with his brother. Lady Amelia had seceded to her mother, as had also Mrs. Toff, the old housekeeper. Lady Susanna was wavering, having had her

mind biased by the objectionable conduct of the dean and his daughter. Lady Sarah was more staunch. Lady Sarah had never yet given way; she never did give way; and, in her very heart, she was the best friend that Mary had among the ladies of the family. But, when her brother gave up the contest, she felt that further immediate action was impossible. Things were in this state at Cross Hall when Lord George received the two letters. He did not wish to think well of the dean just at present, and was horrified at the idea of a clergyman knocking a marquis into a fireplace. But the word indicated was very plain, and that word had been applied to his own wife. Or, perhaps, no such word had really been used. Perhaps the dean had craftily saved himself from an absolute lie, and in his attempt to defend the violence of his conduct had brought an accusation against the marquis, which was, in its essence, untrue. Lord George was quite alive to the duty of defending his wife; but in doing so he was no longer anxious to maintain affectionate terms with his wife's father. She had been very foolish. All the world had admitted as much. He had seen it with his own eyes at that wretched ball. She had suffered her name to be joined with that of a stranger in a manner derogatory to her husband's honour. It was hardly surprising that his brother should have spoken of her conduct in disparaging terms; but he did not believe that his brother had used that special term. Personal violence, blows and struggling, and that on the part of a dean of the Church of England; and violence such as this seemed to have been, violence that might have killed the man attacked, seemed to him to be in any case unpardonable. He certainly could not live on terms of friendship with the dean immediately after such a deed. His wife must be taken away and secluded, and purified by a long course of Germain asceticism.

But what must he do now at once? He felt that it was his duty to hurry up to London, but he could not bring himself to live in the same house with the dean. His wife must be taken away from her father. However bad may have been the language used by the marquis, however indefensible, he could not allow himself even to seem to keep up affectionate relations with the man who had half slaughtered his brother. He too thought of what the world would say, he too felt

that such an affair, after having become known to the police, would be soon known to everyone else. But what must he do at once? He had not as yet made up his mind as to this, when he took his place at the Brotherton Railway Station on the morning after he had received the letters.

But on reaching the station in London, he had so far made up his mind as to have his portmanteau taken to the hotel close at hand, and then to go to Munster Court. He had hoped to find his wife alone; but on his arrival the dean was there also. "Oh, George," she said, "I am so glad you have come; where are your things?" He explained that he had no things, that he had come up only for a short time, and had left his luggage at the station. "But you will stay here to-night?" asked Mary, in despair.

Lord George hesitated, and the dean at once saw how it was. "You will not go back to Brotherton to-day," he said. Now, at this moment the dean had to settle in his mind the great question, whether it would be best for his girl that she should be separated from her husband or from her father. In giving him his due, it must be acknowledged that he considered only what might in truth be best for her. If she were now taken away from him there would be no prospect of recovery. After all that had passed, after Lord George's submission to his brother, the dean was sure that he would be held in abhorrence by the whole Germain family. Mary would be secluded and trodden on, and reduced to pale submission by all the dragons, till her life would be miserable. Lord George himself would be prone enough to domineer in such circumstances. And then that ill word which had been spoken, and which could only be effectually burned out of the thoughts of people by a front to the world at the same time innocent and bold, would stick to her for ever if she were carried away into obscurity.

The dean knew as well as others how great is the evil of a separation, and how specially detrimental such a step would be to a young wife. Than a permanent separation, anything would be better; better even that she should be secluded and maligned, and even, for awhile, trodden under foot. Were such separation to take place, his girl would have been altogether sacrificed, and her life's happiness brought to shipwreck. But then a permanent separation was not probable.

She had done nothing wrong. The husband and wife did, in truth, love each other dearly. The marquis would be soon gone, and then Lord George would return to his old habits of thought and his old allegiance. Upon the whole, the dean thought it best that his present influence should be used in taking his daughter to the Deanery.

"I should like to return quite early to-morrow," said Lord George, very gravely, "unless my brother's condition should make it impossible."

"I trust you won't find your brother much the worse for what has happened," said the dean.

"But you will sleep here to-night," repeated Mary.

"I will come for you the first thing in the morning," said Lord George, in the same funereal voice.

"But why; why?"

"I shall probably have to be a good deal with my brother during the afternoon. But I will be here again in the afternoon. You can be at home at five, and you can get your things ready for going to-morrow."

"Won't you dine here?"

"I think not."

Then there was silence for a minute. Mary was completely astounded. Lord George wished to say nothing further in the presence of his father-in-law. The dean was thinking how he would begin to use his influence. "I trust you will not take Mary away to-morrow."

"Oh; certainly."

"I trust not. I must ask you to hear me say a few words about this."

"I must insist on her coming with me to-morrow, even though I should have to return to London myself afterwards."

"Mary," said her father, "leave us for a moment." Then Mary retired, with a very saddened air. "Do you understand, George, what it was that your brother said to me?"

"I suppose so," he answered, hoarsely.

"Then, no doubt, I may take it for granted that you approve of the violence of my resentment? To me as a clergyman, and as a man past middle life, the position was very trying. But had I been an archbishop, tottering on the grave with years, I must have endeavoured to do the same." This he said with great energy. "Tell me, George, that you think that I was right."

But George had not heard the word,

had not seen the man's face. And then, though he would have gone to a desert island with his wife, had such exile been necessary for her protection, he did believe that she had misconducted herself. Had he not seen her whirling round the room with that man, after she had been warned against him? "It cannot be right to murder a man," he said at last.

"You do not thank me then for vindicating your honour and your wife's innocence?"

"I do not think that was the way. The way is to take her home."

"Yes; to her old home, to the Deanery, for awhile; so that the world, which will no doubt hear the malignant epithet applied to her by your wicked brother, may know that both her husband and her father support her. You had promised to come to the Deanery."

"We cannot do that now."

"Do you mean that after what has passed you will take your brother's part?"

"I will take my wife to Cross Hall," he said, leaving the room and following Mary up to her chamber.

"What am I to do, papa?" she said, when she came down about half-an-hour afterwards. Lord George had then started for Scumberg's, saying that he would come to Munster Court again before dinner, but telling her plainly that he would not sit down to dine with her father. "He has determined to quarrel with you."

"It will only be for a time, dearest."

"But what shall I do?"

Now came the peril of the answer. He was sure, almost sure, that she would in this emergency rely rather upon him than on her husband, if he were firm; but, should he be firm as against the husband, how great would be his responsibility! "I think, my dear," he said at last, "that you shall go with me to Brotherton."

"But he will not let me."

"I think that you should insist on his promise."

"Don't make us quarrel, papa."

"Certainly not. Anything would be better than a permanent quarrel. But, after what has been said, after the foul lies that have been told, I think that you should assert your purpose of staying for awhile with your father. Were you now to go to Cross Hall there would be no limit to their tyranny." He left her without a word more, and calling at Scumberg's Hotel was told that the marquis could not move.

At that moment Lord George was with his brother, and the marquis could talk though he could not move. "A precious family you've married into, George," he said, almost as soon as his brother was in the room. Then he gave his own version of the affair, leaving his brother in doubt as to the exact language that had been used. "He ought to have been a coal-heaver instead of a clergyman," said the marquis.

"Of course he would be angry," said Lord George.

"Nothing astonishes me so much," said the marquis, "as the way in which you fellows here think you may say whatever comes into your head about my wife, because she is an Italian, and you seem to be quite surprised if I object; yet you rage like wild beasts if the compliment is returned. Why am I to think better of your wife than you of mine?"

"I said nothing against your wife, Brotherton."

"By —, I think you have said a great deal, and with much less reason than I have. What did you do yourself, when you found her struggling in that fellow's arms at the old woman's party?" Some good-natured friend had told the marquis the whole story of the Kappa-kappa. "You can't be deaf to what all the world is saying of her." This was wormwood to the wretched husband, and yet he could not answer with angry, self-reliant indignation, while his brother was lying almost motionless before him.

Lord George found that he could do nothing at Scumberg's Hotel. He was assured that his brother was not in danger, and that the chief injury done was to the muscles of his back, which, bruised and lacerated as they were, would gradually recover such elasticity as they had ever possessed. But other words were said and other hints expressed, all of which tended to increase his animosity against the dean, and almost to engender anger against his wife. To himself, personally, except in regard to his wife, his brother had not been ungracious. The marquis intended to return to Italy as soon as he could. He hated England and everything in it. Manor Cross would very soon be at Lord George's disposal, "though I do hope," said the marquis, "that the lady who has condescended to make me her brother-in-law, will never reign paramount there." By degrees there crept on Lord George's mind a feeling that his

brother looked to a permanent separation—something like a repudiation. Over and over again he spoke of Mary as though she had disgraced herself utterly; and when Lord George defended his wife, the lord only smiled and sneered.

The effect upon Lord George was to make him very imperious as he walked back to Munster Court. He could not repudiate his wife, but he would take her away with a very high hand. Crossing the Green Park, at the back of Arlington Street, whom should he meet but Mrs. Houghton with her cousin Jack. He raised his hat, but could not stop a moment. Mrs. Houghton made an attempt to arrest him, but he escaped without a word and went on very quickly. His wife had behaved generously about Mrs. Houghton. The sight of the woman brought that truth to his mind. He was aware of that. But no generosity on the part of the wife, no love, no temper, no virtue, no piety can be accepted by Cæsar as weighing a grain in counterpoise against even suspicion.

He found his wife and asked her whether her things were being packed. "I cannot go to-morrow," she said.

"Not go?"

"No, George—not to Cross Hall. I will go to the Deanery. You promised to go to the Deanery."

"I will not go to the Deanery. I will go to Cross Hall." There was an hour of it, but during the entire hour, the young wife persisted obstinately that she would not be taken to Cross Hall. "She had," she said, "been very badly treated by her husband's family." "Not by me," shouted the husband. She went on to say that nothing could now really put her right but the joint love of her father and her husband. Were she at Cross Hall her father could do nothing for her. She would not go to Cross Hall. Nothing short of policemen should take her to Cross Hall to-morrow.

CHAPTER XLIII. REAL LOVE.

"He is looking awfully cut up," Mrs. Houghton said to her cousin.

"He is one of the most infernal fools that ever I came across in my life," said Jack.

"I don't see that he is a fool at all—any more than all men are fools. Not one among you is ever able to keep his little troubles to himself. You are not a bit wiser than the rest of them yourself."

"I haven't got any troubles—of that sort."

"You haven't a wife—but you'll be forced into having one before long. And when you like another man's wife you can't keep all the world from knowing it."

"All the world may know everything that has taken place between me and Lady George," said Jack. "Of course I like her."

"I should say, rather."

"And so do you."

"No, I don't, sir. I don't like her at all. She is a foolish, meaningless little creature, with nothing to recommend her but a pretty colour. And she has cut me, because her husband will come and pour out his sorrow into my ears. For his sake I used to be good to her."

"I think she is the sweetest human being I ever came across in my life," said Jack, enthusiastically.

"Everybody in London knows that you think so—and that you have told her your thoughts."

"Nobody in London knows anything of the kind. I never said a word to her that her husband mightn't have heard."

"Jack!"

"I never did."

"I wonder you are not ashamed to confess such simplicity, even to me."

"I am not a bit ashamed of that, though I am ashamed of having in some sort contributed to do her an injury. Of course I love her."

"Rather, as I said before."

"Of course you intended that I should."

"I intended that you should amuse yourself. As long as you are good to me, I shall be good to you."

"My dear Adelaide, nobody can be so grateful as I am. But in this matter the thing hasn't gone quite as you intended. You say that she is meaningless."

"Vapid, flabby, childish, and innocent as a baby."

"Innocent I am sure she is. Vapid and flabby she certainly is not. She is full of fun, and is quite as witty as a woman should be."

"You always liked fools, Jack."

"Then how did I come to be so very fond of you?" In answer to this she merely made a grimace at him. "I hadn't known her three days," continued he, "before I began to feel how impossible it would be to say anything to her that ought not to be said."

"That is just like the world all over,"

said Mrs. Houghton. "When a man really falls in love with a woman, he always makes her such a goddess that he doesn't dare to speak to her. The effect is that women are obliged to put up with men who are not in love with them—either that, or vouchsafe to tell their own little story—when, lo! they are goddesses no longer."

"I daresay it's very ridiculous," said Jack, in a moaning, despondent way. "I daresay I'm not the man I ought to be, after the advantages I have had in such friends as you and others."

"If you try to be severe to me, I'll quarrel with you."

"Not severe at all. I'm quite in earnest. A man, and a woman too, have to choose which kind of rôle shall be played. There is innocence and purity, combined with going to church and seeing that the children's faces are washed. The game is rather slow, but it lasts a long time, and leads to great capacity for digesting your dinner in old age. You and I haven't gone in for that."

"Do you mean to say that I am not innocent?"

"Then there is the devil with all his works—which I own are, for the most part, pleasant works to me. I have always had a liking for the devil."

"Jack!"

"It is pleasant to do as one likes, and enjoy the full liberty of a debauched conscience. But there are attendant evils. It costs money and wears out the constitution."

"I should have thought that you had never felt the latter evil."

"The money goes first, no doubt. This, however, must surely be clear. A man should make up his mind and not shilly-shally between the two."

"I should have thought you had made up your mind very absolutely."

"I thought so too, Adelaide, till I knew Lady George Germain. I'll tell you what I feel about her now. If I could have any hope that he would die, I would put myself into some reformatory to fit myself to be her second husband."

"Good heavens!"

"That is one idea that I have. Another is to cut his throat, and take my chance with the widow. She is simply the only woman I ever saw that I have liked all round."

"You come and tell me this, knowing what I think of her!"

"Why shouldn't I tell you? You don't want me to make love to you?"

"But a woman never cares to hear all these praises of another."

"It was you began it, and if I do speak of her I shall tell the truth. There is a freshness as of uncut flowers about her."

"Psha! Worms and grubs!"

"And when she laughs one dreams of a chaste Venus."

"My heavens, Jack! You should publish all that! Shall I tell you what you ought to do?"

"Hang myself."

"Just say to her all that you have said to me. You would soon find that she is not more holy than another."

"You think so."

"Of course I think so. The only thing that puzzles me is that you, Jack De Baron, should be led away to such idolatry. Why should she be different from others? Her father is a money-loving, selfish old reprobate, who was born in a stable. She married the first man that was brought to her, and has never cared for him because he does not laugh, and dance, and enjoy himself after her fashion. I don't suppose she is capable of caring very much for anybody, but she likes you better than anyone else. Have you seen her since the row at Mrs. Jones's?"

"No."

"You have not been, then?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I don't think she would wish to see me," said Jack. "All that affair must have troubled her."

"I don't know how that is. She has been in town ever since, and he certainly went down to Brotherton. He has come up, I suppose, in consequence of this row between the dean and his brother. I wonder what really did happen."

"They say that there was a scuffle, and that the parson had very much the best of it. The police were sent for, and all that kind of thing. I suppose the marquis said something very rough to him."

"Or he to the marquis, which is rather more likely. Well, good-day, Jack." They were now at the house-door in Berkeley Square. "Don't come in, because Houghton will be here." Then the door was opened. "But take my advice, and go and call in Munster Court at once. And, believe me, when you have found out what one woman is, you have found out what most women are. There are no such great differences."

It was then six o'clock, and he knew that in Munster Court they did not dine till near eight. There was still time with a friend so intimate as he was for what is styled a "morning" call. The words which his cousin had spoken had not turned him—had not convinced him. Were he again tempted to speak his real mind about this woman—as he had spoken in very truth his real mind—he would still express the same opinion. She was to him like a running stream to a man who had long bathed in stagnant waters. But the hideous doctrines which his cousin had preached to him were not without their effect. If she were as other women—meaning such women as Adelaide Houghton—or if she were not, why should he not find out the truth? He was well aware that she liked him. She had not scrupled to show him that by many signs. Why should he scruple to say a word that might show him how the wind blew? Then he remembered a few words which he had spoken, but which had been taken so innocently, that they, though they had been meant to be mischievous, had become innocent themselves. Even things impure became pure by contact with her. He was sure, quite sure, that his cousin was altogether wrong in her judgment. He knew that Adelaide Houghton could not recognise, and could not appreciate, a pure woman. But still, still it is so poor a thing to miss your plum because you do not dare to shake the tree. It is especially so if you are known as a professional stealer of plums.

When he got into Piccadilly he put himself into a cab, and had himself driven to the corner of Munster Court. It was a little street, gloomy to look at, with dingy doors and small houses, but with windows looking into St. James's Park. There was no way through it, so that he who entered it must either make his way into some house, or come back. He walked up to the door, and then taking out his watch, saw that it was half-past six. It was almost too late for calling. And then this thing that he intended to do required more thought than he had given it. Would it not be well for him that there should be something holy, even to him, in spite of that devil's advocate who had been so powerful with him? So he turned and, walking slowly back towards Parliament Street, got into another cab, and was taken to his club. "It has come out," said Major M'Mickmack to him, immediately on his entrance, "that

when the dean went to see Brotherton at the hotel, Brotherton called Lady George all the bad names he could put his tongue to."

"I daresay. He is blackguard enough for anything," said De Baron.

"Then the old dean took his lordship in his arms, and pitched him bang into the fireplace. I had it all from the police myself."

"I always liked the dean."

"They say he is as strong as Hercules," continued M'Mickmack. "But he is to lose his deanery."

"Gammon!"

"You just ask any of the fellows that know. Fancy a clergyman pitching a marquis into the fire!"

"Fancy a father not doing so if the marquis spoke ill of his daughter," said Jack De Baron.

OUR COUNTRY HOUSE IN HESSE.

It is now five years since I first went to spend the summer months on a large estate belonging to my husband in the Werrathal—a district probably as unknown to the ordinary British tourist as the high plateau of Central Africa itself. It lies in the very heart of North Germany, a little to the south of the Hartz Mountains, a little to the north of Thuringia, with its line of small Saxon duchies. Eisenach, with its pretty environs and its historic Wartburg, is within a four-hours' drive along a good and almost level road. Yet the place is quite out of the world, and, though the new railroad from Berlin to Metz, which is being rapidly made, will pass within a short distance of the village, it is likely still to remain unvisited. The country, pretty and well wooded as it is, presents no striking features to allure lovers of the picturesque; nor are the little old towns, which are scattered about the valley, rich enough in architectural quaintness or in historic interest to afford good gleanings for the artist or the archaeologist; while the manners and customs of the inhabitants, and the accommodation likely to be met with in the small inns, are so primitive—to use the mildest adjective which will convey my meaning—that I should advise no one to attempt the journey.

The village of Hausen, consisting of about fifty houses, is on the left bank of the Werra, a rapid stream which rises in

Thuringia, and which becomes navigable at the small post-town of Wanfried, just below the village, and flows eventually into the Weser. The valley is broad and tolerably fertile, enclosed by two ranges of swelling hills, from three to four hundred feet in height, mostly covered with wood, but diversified here and there by huge masses of basalt rock, which look like the ruins of Cyclopean walls and battlements. The largest of these, the Helder Stein, is a beautiful object when flushed by the purple glow of sunset, or silvered by the rays of the great harvest-moon. Hansen is on the frontier of Electoral Hesse at its junction with Prussia. A number of mossy stones which mark the old division of the two countries form for some distance the boundary of the estate itself. Like most German estates, this one is unenclosed, and only a practised eye can tell which patch of ground belongs to the baron, and which to the peasant who lives at his gate.

There cannot be, in all the world, a greater contrast than that between German and English life. To me it has been a puzzle for many years how two nations so closely allied by blood, by language, by the thousand influences which mould the early development of a people, should, even through the lapse of centuries, have fallen so completely asunder, that the deepest feelings and the noblest aspirations of the Englishman should be well-nigh incomprehensible to his Teuton cousin. The Englishwoman who settles in Germany must realise this, and strive to forget much to which she has been accustomed from her earliest days. It is not too much to say that the comfort of her home life depends in a measure on her power of doing this. The peace and privacy, the neatness and refinement, and all the thousand little courtesies of an English home, are to the German nothing but ridiculous affectations, if not sinful extravagances; and so deeply rooted is the national roughness in these matters that no attempt to produce even a moderate amount of civilisation is likely to yield any result. I am not going to relate my housekeeping experiences; that is a theme which lies very close to the heart of every mother of a family, and one on which the female tongue is apt to wax unduly loquacious. Suffice it to say that German housekeeping is a weariness and vexation of spirit, to anyone who likes to see things done decently and in order.

Our country-house stands in closest proximity to the village. There is scarcely a room where you can sit in peace, undisturbed by the laughing, quarrelling, singing, or swearing of the villagers; scarcely a window out of which you can look without seeing sights which must shock and distress anyone of refined feeling. It is the most curious dwelling that can be imagined; at a distance you would suppose it to be a number of separate tenements standing near each other, only on a closer inspection do you discern that it is but one building after all. Cows, horses, pigs, sheep, church, farm-servants, and "quality," all are under the same roof. Driving down the village street you pass under a great arched gateway, surmounted by warlike trophies carved in stone, and you find yourself in the midst of a large square farmyard, entirely surrounded by barns and stables. This in old days was the schloss itself—the Rothe Schloss, as it used to be called, for it was built of red sandstone, and all the carved timber in the upper stories was stained to a deep vermilion. In the Thirty Years' War it was burnt down, like most of its neighbours, and its owners were too poor or too frightened to build it up again; so they raised walls of wood and plaster on the strong stone foundations which had survived the conflagration, adding on a piece here or a piece there, as they required more accommodation, building the church in 1720, and half a century later throwing out a long wing towards the river, at right angles with the main building. This is the modern dwelling-house, the original schloss having long since been appropriated to farm purposes. A few old rooms on the upper floor have been retained for the use of the family, and are connected with the wing by two long wide passages or galleries, which form an invaluable playground for the children in rainy weather. A second and lower archway under the church-tower leads into the inner court, which the builder of the wing intended, perhaps, for a private court for the "Herrschaft." It is anything but private now. A clean dairy and an unclean hen-house occupy the side nearest the church; outhouses, large and small, stand at the other sides. One of them used to be a distillery, for a former proprietor used to make his own schnapps, and pay his labourers partly in the horrible beverage, which for generations has been destroying them morally and physically. Now these

buildings are used for the wheelwrights, wood-sawyers, &c. Occasionally the court is full of men cutting up the firewood, and village crones, with huge baskets on their backs, carrying it into the various storehouses. At these times the place swarms with shock-headed young savages, for the children consider they have a right to play about wherever their mothers are at work. Great vigilance is required to keep them from making raids into the lower story of the dwelling-house. There is neither porch nor hall, and the door, which stands open all day long, admits at once into a passage paved with red tiles, and leading from the kitchen at one end to the servants' bedrooms at the other. Sometimes a proud turkey with her young family may be met patrolling this passage; sometimes a funny little dachshund is discovered curled up inside the largest stew-pan; or a chicken, which prefers our kitchen to its own legitimate abode, is found roosting on the hot-plate. Yet, primitive as it is, the place has been the abode of grand folks in its day. At one time it belonged to the baronial family of the Geisos, and later, for many years, it was the home of the Princes of Hesse-Barchfeld, a branch of the royal family itself. Surely in those days grandees must have been easily satisfied!

There is a strange dearth of historical memories and traditions about the house, although some stirring scenes in the long drama of German history have been played in its neighbourhood, and its owners have possibly been among the actors. Human victims were sacrificed on the Helder Stein in the dark days of druidical superstition; the great monk of Netley passed through the valley on his noble mission, leaving his secular name of Winfred to the little town of Wanfried, and founding the small Gothic chapel on the knoll by the bridge that crosses the Werra at Kreuzburg. The billows of the Thirty Years' War swept hither and thither over the miserable land, engulfing noble and vassal in one common ruin, and leaving scarce a vestige of former days when the storm at last spent its fury and sunk to rest; French armies marched to the north and to the south of the valley, which had nothing to tempt them to a closer acquaintance with it; the people paid their taxes to Jerome when Cassel was the capital of Westphalia, and Hessian nobles vied with one another in seeking places about his court. Then the reaction set in, and a tablet in

the church records the names of fourteen Hanseners who were "out" in the years '14 and '15. A second tablet, recently erected, commemorates the fifteen village heroes of 1870. Private feuds in plenty have been fought out and left no trace; but at least one dark and gruesome deed took place in the large vaults now used as the farm cellars. Two years ago, in the course of some repairs, it was necessary to remove a flight of stone steps leading from one vault to the other. Under the first step was found a human skull, which, after being passed from hand to hand, giving rise to endless conjectures, was finally thrown into the Werra. A few hours later, when the rest of the stairs were removed, the entire skeleton was found. It appeared to be that of a young woman, and had evidently been roughly and hastily thrust out of sight. But when or how the poor creature perished no one could ever tell. The mystery remains, like many other dark deeds, to be revealed only when the sea itself shall be made to give up its dead.

Farming in Germany may be profitable, but it is not pretty. The cows, from fifty to sixty in number, all live in one large stable to the right of the great gateway. Each cow has her own stall and manger, and receives a bountiful portion of food and water; but there she stays all her life, never knowing the sweets of freshly-cropped grass, nor the freedom of the sunny meadow. The very pigs live in close confinement, and seldom get the chance of exercise; while the sheep, which are taken out every morning between eight and nine, are marched back at nightfall, and locked up in their stable. Now and then, when harvest is over, they are allowed to spend a few nights in the fields, where a curious wooden erection, looking like a grey coffin on wheels, serves as a bed for the shepherd, who never leaves them to themselves. In winter their daily exercise is curtailed, and, when the cold is intense, ceases altogether. The farm-servants live in the stables—that is, one man sleeps in each stable, with the horses, cows, and sheep. Wages are moderate, compared to other parts of Germany—very moderate compared to those in England—and the men all receive their board at the farm. Those who have families in the village are allowed to carry their portion away with them if they like.

The Hessians are not an interesting people; rough, hard-featured, with a keen

eye to their own interests, a very hazy idea about their neighbours' rights of property, a fatal penchant for spirituous liquors, and a strong desire to fight with everybody when they are not sober. Pitched battles between husbands and wives, mothers and sons, are not unfrequent; and it is well when they use only the weapons with which nature has provided them, for scythes and reaping-hooks are sometimes snatched up in family disputes. Among Germans they have the reputation of being stupid and obstinate. Our English annals have had many opportunities of testifying to their bravery; and they were loyal to their prince, as long as they had one, and still speak kindly of the last one, who, if he did little for them, let them alone, and neither worried them by interference in their domestic concerns nor exacted many taxes. Now King Stork has succeeded King Log; taxes are trebled, quadrupled; old laws, civil and religious, swept away; vexatious new ones introduced, and grumblings are proportionately bitter. Emigration has gone on for generations; there are few families which have not some near relatives in America, usually in a far superior position to those at home. I am inclined to think that the energetic and adventurous spirits have left their fatherland, and that only the dull and supine have remained in it. This is almost the only way to account for the difference between the German as he is supposed to be abroad, and the German as he really is at home.

A Hessian Dorf on a week-day is an unlovely sight; the dirt, the squalor, the general wretchedness, make one's very heart ache; yet Hausen is by no means a poor place. Each peasant has some property of his own—a house, a field, a cow or two, is the average wealth; but some of the villagers are quite rich people in their way, with fortunes of one thousand or even two thousand pounds, and lands which have come down from father to son for four or five hundred years. The houses stand sideways, with gable-ends towards the street, and unsavoury yards in front of their doors, where the pigs disport themselves at their own sweet will, sharing the midden with the barefooted children who are too young to go to school. The geese are taken out every morning by a tattered little boy or girl, who drives the whole flock along the road to its appointed pasture, keeps watch through the day, and brings it back in the evening. Each goose knows its own home, and drops out of the

procession at the right moment, waddling solemnly up to its stable to put itself to bed. The cows are driven out daily in the same way by the village cowherd. Curiously enough they enjoy the freedom which is denied to the aristocratic cattle—they have the right of pasture on the baron's land; as long as one haycock remains standing they cannot be driven in, but as soon as the last wain of hay has passed out, in goes the village herd and revels in the broad meadow.

The German has as little idea of privacy in his family life as of reticence in his conversation. Last year a house in the middle of the village was undergoing repairs; the gable was shored up, the wall towards the street removed, and for weeks the family lived day and night in full view of all passers-by. It was warm summer weather, and they never thought of hanging up a curtain, or contriving a screen to shield themselves from public gaze. If you chance to take an early walk on Sunday mornings you will see strange sights in the village. Toilets are not necessary on work-days, but on Sunday there is a general smartening up, which is usually performed *al fresco*. On one doorstep a dishevelled matron, a tub of cold water by her side, is scrubbing a nude urchin of six, before putting him into the Sunday clothes which have been religiously hidden away all the week; a few yards off the owner of the next cottage sits on a chair in front of his abode, placidly submitting to the operations of the village barber. By church time they are all astir in their finery; not that many of them go to church; there is usually but a scant congregation. The services, at ten and at one o'clock, are held alternately by the clergyman and the schoolmaster. The church is dirty and dilapidated, and looks as if it had not been cleaned for years. The worshippers are separated, as in all German Protestant churches—the women sit downstairs, the men in the gallery; an exception being made for the "quality," who have a pew to themselves, and can enjoy the luxury of sitting together to hear the sermon. There are but two days on which I have seen a full attendance, a school feast and a wedding. The former takes place every year before the summer holidays. The children are placed round the altar, the boys with clean faces, shoes, and stockings, the girls with flowers in their hair. The friends and parents pretty well fill the church, and the schoolmaster holds a

regular examination, making his pupils stand up and read in classes, and answer questions from the Bible, catechism, &c.; copy-books are handed to the burgermeister, the baron, and the rest of the congregation; hymns are sung, and a collection made to provide refreshments for the children during the afternoon; and then they adjourn to the Tanz Platz, a round place shaded by a few lime-trees, just outside our farmyard-gate and just opposite the largest of the two public-houses in the village. A band is in attendance, and the children dance till bed time; and then the elders take their places, and keep it up till the small hours.

A wedding of course makes a great stir in the little place; and one Sunday two weddings were solemnised together. One bride was the old mason's daughter, who married a weaver from Burschla; the other bridegroom was our old cowman, Adam, a poor, miserable-looking object, deaf, short-sighted, and looking half-idiotic. He was the one who slept in the cow-house, and he used to be seen about the yard in the smallest possible amount of clothing compatible with German notions of decency—his legs bare from the knee, or incased, in cold weather, in footless stockings reaching but half-way up. It was a wonder that such an Adam could ever find an Eve to look at him! Yet we were told he was a decent creature, when not in his cups, and was supposed to have saved some money; so an evil-looking widow captured him, and he came on the Saturday to invite us to his wedding. We stood at the window while the bells rang, for the bridal procession as it crossed the farmyard to the church-door was a most comical sight. First went the mason's party; but that was a quiet wedding, and need not detain us long. The cowman was the hero of the day. A band of music preceded him and his bride, and nearly all the village followed them, the younger women with flowers in their hair, the elder ones wearing the queer little peaked cap of black satin with long bows hanging down behind—the holiday coiffure of the Hessian peasantry. But the men were the most wonderful objects. They were attired in hats and coats of marvellous workmanship—heirlooms which had been treasured up for generations—long blue coats with tails sweeping the ground; black beaver hats with nap an inch in length, never made for the heads they then adorned. One had his set on the

very crown, no persuasion would induce it to go on further; another rested on the tip of the wearer's nose, and his companions led him along blindfold in the festive throng. In church the couples stood in front of the altar while the wedding hymn was sung; rings were exchanged, and the clergyman made a very long speech about their reciprocal duties. While we were at our early dinner the happy pair marched in to receive our congratulations; Adam brandishing a huge tankard of ale, Eve carrying some cake of her own making. We were expected to partake of both refreshments. The baron, wishing him joy, drank Adam's health and handed back the tankard, but he strode up to the table, and flourishing it high in the air shouted, "Die Weibspersonen sollen trinken!" With great difficulty he was made to understand that the English ladies drank nothing but water—a most amazing weakness in his estimation. All that day and all the next the village was mad with excitement; dressing up and going from house to house, dancing, drinking, and shouting. On the Monday morning the other couple came to call. As they did not belong to the house they were received on the steps, with all the idlers of the place forming a background. They were not so grand as Adam, and brought their refreshment in a black bottle, which the baron, after making them a speech, put to his lips, thinking it was beer, and found, to his consternation, that it was strong schnapps. He could not affront the merry-makers, so he had to gulp it down as he best could, trying hard not to look rueful as he did so.

It is wonderful what a craze Germans have for dancing. Every possible occasion, public or private, is made an excuse for open-air dancing, to which all flock. Even the house-servants disappear, without asking leave or license, and may be seen spinning round in almost interminable waltzes and polkas. Sunday is the great dancing day; but one day does not content them, they always take the Monday also with us, and in other districts they take Tuesday as well. The entertainment begins as soon as church is over, and is prolonged far into the night. By law it ought to cease at midnight, but the law is not always rigidly enforced; everything is done by the Government to keep up a military spirit among the people, and on patriotic anniversaries the gendarme is conveniently deaf, and lets them go on till

two o'clock, or later if they will. Each village in the valley sent its contingent to the armies of 1870, and each village celebrates its war festival on a different anniversary; so that the warriors and their friends have ample opportunities of enjoying themselves, till their pockets are empty and their brains bewildered. Of course, the work done after such revels is both scant and bad, and a considerable portion of their earnings must be spent at each feast. My young English governess remarked that the Germans must be very rich, for the English could never afford such frequent holidays and junketings; and she cannot be very far wrong, for this summer, in a small town in the Hartz where the dancing was kept up on Sunday and the two following days, beginning at eleven A.M. and lasting till broad daylight on the following morning, the people paid one hundred and ten thalers (sixteen pounds eight shillings) for the band alone.

On one Sedan Feier, during the afternoon when the mirth was at its height, a man came up and confidentially informed our farm inspektor that two or three others had plotted to rob an outlying field of the Herr Baron's that very night, when all were on the Tanz Platz. He was to have been one of them, but qualms of conscience had induced him to turn king's evidence. The inspektor held a consultation with his master and with Herr Hose the builder—the most intelligent man in the place—and the result was that a counter-plot was laid, the informer was sworn to secrecy, and the inspektor and Herr Hose set out secretly to watch for the thieves. They patrolled the fields all night long, but no one came near them; whether the informer's conscience had led him to give a hint to his comrades, or whether the whole affair had been but a dream of his schnapps-disordered brain. For two days the inspektor went about, stern and silent, evidently fancying the whole village was laughing in its sleeve at the hoax which had been played on him; on the third a glorious opportunity of revenge came within his reach. The village geese had often been seen trespassing in the baron's fields and had been driven out again; but this time thirty trespassers were caught in the corn, and were impounded in the farmyard. The crier was sent round to proclaim that those who had lost their geese should come to claim them in the yard at six P.M., and should receive them on pay-

ment of a fine of one mark (one shilling) per goose. However, instead of leaving the matter in the hands of his inspektor, who would have shown no mercy, the Herr Baron must needs go down at six to see the fun. Of course he was instantly surrounded by a mob of old women, each protesting her innocence and bewailing her poverty; and, of course, the delinquents were let off with threepence instead of a shilling apiece. One old crone, the miller's wife, had no fewer than twelve geese in the pound. She stood glowering at them as they waddled out in single file amid the laughter of the bystanders, made a sudden swoop upon a venerable gander which brought up the rear, gave him a sound whipping, and flung him from her, exclaiming that he was the sinner who led all her innocent fowls astray. The burgermeister's geese used to trespass regularly on the upper fields belonging to the farm, but his old gander had been regularly trained for the purpose. He always took up a commanding position, and if he saw anyone approaching he used to set up a warning cackle, and the whole flock would instantly collect and follow him to a place of safety. At last the Herr Baron, who had long kept his eye upon him, shot him before he could get off his premises, and from that day the burgermeister's geese have left his corn unplundered.

The Kirchweih is the last and greatest festival of the year. It takes place in the autumn, after all the field-work is over and the largest amount of farm-wages have been paid. It lasts four consecutive days and nights. On a Wednesday evening the musicians enter the village, the fun begins next morning and lasts till late on the Sunday night. It is a movable feast, and it always determines the date of our departure from Hausen; for country life in Germany is, generally speaking, only for the summer months. The approach of winter drives families into the towns, and the changeable and capricious spring is far advanced before they venture to leave their warm retreat.

THE DESERTED ROOM.

THE fire flames leapt about the logs,
As in the days of old;
About the silent room they played,
In chequer work of gleam and shade.
The Persian carpet on the floor,
Showed its dimmed beauty as of yore;
The portraits from the walls looked down,
And eye and lip in smile or frown,
The tale she taught them told.

The fire flames leapt about the hearth ;
 The cricket sang its song ;
 The ivory notes she loved so much,
 Lay waiting for her wakening touch ;
 Her own, or sister flowers, drooped,
 Where the great crimson curtains looped ;
 And by her chair her favourite book,
 Its place, mute pleading for her, took
 To rest, unopened long.

The fire flames leapt about the hearth ;
 A sense of something gone
 Hung heavy on the listening ear,
 That used her joyous voice to hear ;
 The echoes of the silent house
 Waiting her flying foot to rouse ;
 It seemed as ghosts her brightness laid,
 In the dull stillness woke and strayed,
 And long-lost empire won.

The fire flames leapt, and paled, and died ;
 And in the eerie gloom
 Sad memories gathered round the hearth,
 Where she brought joy, and youth, and mirth ;
 Sad fancies mingling with them said
 Old tales of half-forgotten dead ;
 And baffled prayers and visions met,
 With loss, and longing, and regret,
 In the deserted room.

NOTHING MORE!

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

"I DID not think you could be so ill-natured!"

Hot tears fell thick and fast down Blanche Falconer's cheeks.

She let them flow more freely than many a fashionable lady in the present day would be willing to do, for as yet her face was innocent of blanc de perle and Ninon's bloom.

Marion Temple stood before this fair Niobe, and watched her with eyes that had a bewildered trouble in their brown depths.

"Keith thinks so much of what you say—oh, you needn't blush—you both have the same old-fashioned, the same absurd ideas! I assure you, long mourning, even for one's husband, is quite gone out of fashion; and Belle Vernon tells me there is quite a talk about the ridiculous seclusion in which Keith insists upon for a mother-in-law."

A quiver passed over Marion's lips.

"But then she was Mr. Falconer's mother, and you are—his wife!"

The girl's hands grew cold as she spoke, thinking of what that mother was.

Blanche gave her pretty shoulders the tiniest possible shrug, and then continued fretfully:

"What possible impropriety could there be in you and me going to Paris for a month with the Montagues? This Mrs. Mayne who is to chaperon you to Mau-

ritius makes no sign. My dear girl, can't you do me a good-natured turn, and tell my husband that you want to go?"

"Indeed, indeed, I can't!" said Marion, in much distress. "It wouldn't be true; and besides, think how lonely it would be for Mr. Falconer, left here with all the sad associations."

"Oh," put in Mr. Falconer's wife, "Keith can take very good care of himself; he's right enough as long as he has all those tiresome books, and his dog Merlin to go about the grounds at his heels. Belle Vernon says he is quite the most tiresome man she knows!"

Up flew the hot colour into Marion's face.

"I'm very young, I know, and perhaps I ought not to say it to you; but, dear Mrs. Falconer, do you really think anyone who can speak so to you, of your husband, can be a true friend?"

Blanche was not angry—she could not sufficiently gauge the bitterness of the reproof given her to be angry; besides, she was naturally sweet-tempered; so she gave a puzzled glance at the girl's earnest face, and said, with a little nod of her head: "It's a pity, I think, you didn't marry Keith yourself; you'd have vegetated through life together, my dear!"

Marion was dumb.

Oh many a shaft at random sent
 Finds mark the archer little meant!

At last the silence was broken by Blanche.

"You say you are 'very young,' my dear girl; but, after all, people are as old as they look; and Charley Durant thought you were older than me!"

This "shaft" found no mark at all; for Marion was not in the least alive to the ignominy of this mistake on Mr. Durant's part.

"That is very likely," she said simply, "I have had so much trouble, you see."

And for a moment her sight was dimmed and blurred with tears.

Mrs. Falconer yawned, once—twice—thrice.

She knew that she had played her last card in the matter of the visit to Paris, and had failed.

"A person like me is buried, actually buried alive in this horrid place!"

This with a plaintive sigh, and a weary glance at the prospect seen from the window near which the two women were seated.

Now "this horrid place" was Glenluna, and it was at that moment looking its fairest

and best. The bay lay glinting in the level rays of the western sun; on either shore, sentinel-wise, stood the purple hills, with here and there the ruby gleam of the heather on their steep declivities. Above, was a dappled sky, pied blue and white. Now and again came the wafting of sea-gulls' wings, or the swift drop of their snowy breasts as they dipped down to rest a moment on the rippling sea. Across the harbour-mouth was a shaft of light, pale, bright turquoise blue; while a marvellous sheen of gold touched the base of the hills, and catching a fishing-smack as it swayed to the breeze, turned it to a fairy barge with a golden sail. Each moment the colours of this panorama deepened and grew more exquisitely bright, and Marion gazing, knew not that for ever, and for evermore, the memory of that picture was to linger on her heart, graven by the hand of pain. Blanche has presently rustled from the room, and the sound of the piano in the distant drawing-room lets Marion know that she is solacing her dulness with such poor means as lie within her reach.

The girl was well pleased to be left alone, for brooding over her was that strange presentiment knowledge of coming pain which we have all experienced at one time or other. The work fell from her hands, and she was thinking so intently, that she started at the opening of the door. It was only a servant with a letter, that had just arrived by the evening post. By no means a remarkable-looking document either; yet, as Marion read it, every shade of colour left her cheek, and a sickening pang pierced her heart.

The letter was a summons to start almost immediately upon her journey to Mauritius; a summons to leave Glenluna, and—Keith Falconer. What was this anguish of desolation that overwhelmed her at the thought? Why had she to stifle a cry that strove to come from her lips as the bitter truth was laid bare before her—the bitter, cruel truth, that her path and his can no more lie side by side? What has she been doing in all the happy weeks that are past, and can never, never come again? She has watched a man's struggles, and pitied a man's misery, until she has learnt to love him, and now—as soon as possible, now at once—she must go!

She realised more than this as she crouched down upon the wide low window-seat, and hid her eyes with her hands. She realised that never more in all the

years to come shall she meet another man like Keith Falconer; never another who shall understand her to the finest fibre of her nature, as he does. And as she thought this, a sudden sense of how his life too will seem empty for the loss of her, a sudden revelation of the truth that his heart has grown to hers, as hers to his, set her heart throbbing madly. It almost seems to stand still though at the sound of a footstep in the corridor; and by the time Keith Falconer opens the door the sweet sad face is white from brow to chin.

"Oh, you are here," he said contentedly. "I have been looking for you; you were right about——"

But here he caught sight of her face.

"Marion—child—what is it?"

She rose from her place in the window, and put Mrs. Mayne's letter into his hand.

"It is a letter from Mrs. Mayne; she sails from Southampton on Thursday. She is sorry to give me such short notice; her own plans have been rather hurried, you see."

Silence!

Neither Keith nor his companion spoke.

He held Mrs. Mayne's letter in his hand, and looked at it with all his might; yet he could not decipher one single word if his life had depended on it. But Marion was no weak, hysteria-ridden woman, to fail without an effort for victory in the day of trial; so she fought for courage, and attained it.

"Of course I must go with Mrs. Mayne. I shall write at once, so as to catch the night post; it will be best for me to meet her at Southampton on the Wednesday night."

Keith dared not look at her; it seemed to him as if never—never since the day when she came across his path, like a star shining out on a dark night, had he so realised what would be the desolation of his life without her.

Another thought too, one whose bitterness is well-nigh unbearable, comes across him: this girl, so young, so innocent, yet so passionately loving, is in some sort a sacred trust from the mother whom he loved, and whom he now mourns; and he, Keith Falconer, without thought or intent of wrong, has cruelly blighted her young life. Full well he knows, that even as he loves, so is he loved; and he recognises the truth, even as the girl herself has done, that nothing so complete as the sympathy

and the companionship that he has given her shall ever come into her life again.

While Marion spoke of her plans, Keith listened to the sound of her voice as we listen to words spoken in a dream.

"Yes," he said, "you are quite right; you had better write at once."

Then he left her.

And as she looked out on the landscape that had been so fair in the glory of the sinking sun, lo! the soft turquoise blue, and the golden sheen, and the red and purple reflections in the mirror of the bay, were all gone, and a dead, cold, grey shadow was creeping over the world.

"Fancy!" said Mrs. Falconer to her guest next morning, "Keith was up and off before any of us were awake! He has gone to town on pressing business; he only settled to go last night, and I was to tell you he will be at Southampton to see you off on Thursday."

Blanche was radiant; her husband's society was at all times irksome to her, and his rare absences were quite holiday-times in her estimation.

And Marion, seeing this, suffered for him so intensely, that for the time being her own sorrow was forgotten.

"Could nothing make things different? Why cannot she love him? Why is she blind to the noble nature of the man whose name she bears?"

Thus the girl pondered through the hours of that weary day. She would have cut off her little white hand, and gone maimed for the rest of her life gladly, if by so doing she could have drawn these two—husband and wife—close to one another. That is not love which is full of self-pleasing, which strives to drag down, not to upraise; for the core of a love that is pure and true is the longing to help, not hinder.

When Marion met Mrs. Mayne, she felt at once that fate had been kind in giving her such a companion. She cheered the girl by bright and sparkling descriptions of life in the Isle of France; descriptions not one whit too highly coloured (as Marion found in the days that were yet to come); she told her of her Aunt Millicent's perfections, and pictured pleasantly the quiet happiness that might be found in her companionship. And the girl listened, taking comfort; yet with one thought ever present to her heart—Keith would come; he would come and say good-bye! When he did come, Marion chanced to be

alone, and as he clasped her cold and trembling hands in his, the man at first could find no words to say. The pain of the parting that was so near stripped off all disguise from either; and each, looking at the other, knew that "the bitterness of death" had come.

"I have very little time to stay," Keith said at last. "I cannot go on board with you; I must go up to town again by the next train."

And Marion knew that he would fain shorten the pain of this interview for her sake. "I shall do very well," she said, smiling bravely, "Mrs. Mayne is so kind; and she has told me delightful things of Aunt Milly. She was kind in another thing, too; she said I was going to say good-bye to an old friend, and that she was a new one, and so she went off to see after our cabins, and left me here to see you alone."

She said this, looking up into his face with her lovely haggard eyes, and oh, the pitifulness of the story that they told him! It is given to none of us to be always on guard, always wise, and this was the hour of Keith Falconer's weakness.

He crushed her hands in his: he looked with despairing eyes into her paling face.

"Child," he said hoarsely, "you will not forget me, will you? You know how it is with me; you know what my life is; and that parting with you is like tearing the heart out from my breast. Oh, my darling, let me think that you will remember me sometimes! Pray for me too, Marion. Pray God for me that I fail not—"

He had drawn her to his breast, and held her fast and close with arms that trembled as they clasped her; her grave, sad, tender eyes looked into his, her lips were white, but she spoke with steadfast calmness:

"I shall never forget you—never. I want to be a help to you, not a hindrance; I am glad you will find help in knowing that I am thinking of you—for indeed I will! And I will pray each night and morning, through all the years to come, that God may help you; for I know, oh Keith—I know how hard it is!"

"Hard!" he muttered, setting his teeth. "If you only knew!"

It was the one sole murmur that ever passed the man's lips in all the years of a wearisome bondage.

"I think I do know," said the girl softly.

There was silence after this, and then

Keith Falconer bent his head until his lips lay close upon her mouth.

A moment more, and she stood blind and dazed with grief—alone.

CHAPTER IV.

TEN years have passed away since Marion Temple and Keith Falconer parted.

We left Marion a girl, full of a girl's impulsive sensitiveness, we find her a woman, calmed and disciplined by the experience of life.

A fair woman too; fairer in her ripened years than in her youth. Time's hand has deepened the steadfast eyes, and given a greater sweetness to the smile—the smile, that is rarer than of yore. Her form has gained in fulness, without losing its supple grace, and her quiet voice tells of a peace won by self-conquest.

Yet with all these love-winning attributes, Marion in all these long years has had no lover. Among men she has had many friends; there have been those who have loved her as a man loves the woman whose uplifting friendship holds him back from all evil; but something that no man has ever tried to set aside has hedged her round, so that none have borne to her that dearest, closest love, that would fain claim all a woman has to give. No word from Keith Falconer has reached her throughout the ten years that have gone by since he and she parted—save once, when, after reaching Mauritius, Marion wrote to tell him of her safety, and to her short, almost formal letter, came a few lines of kind wishes for her happiness in her new home.

Nothing more!

Nothing more—through the quiet nights in that lovely land, when the "hush of the starshine" seemed to cradle regretful memories—nothing more during that awful time, when a dank mist lay low over the cane-tracts, and girdled the great rocky hills—when a terrible pestilence devastated the Isle of France, and the sea sobbing against the coral-reefs seemed to sing a ceaseless dirge for the many dead; through joy and sorrow, weal and woe, no word or sign from Keith Falconer reached the woman he had loved so passionately, yet so hopelessly. For he would not hold her to him by one single link of his own forging; she was young and untried by the world, life was all before her, she would perchance forget, and form new ties; he tried to think, he hoped that this might be so; perhaps there were times and seasons when he really did hope it.

And she?

Well, she just took up her life as it was, and lived it up to its highest capability. Had she been one to yield herself a prey to weak repining thoughts, I had never written her story. She accepted Keith's silence, knowing through that quick instinctive sympathy with him which no separating seas, no new, strange surroundings could destroy, how wisely it was meant. Nor had she been unhappy in the passing of the years.

It is only the selfish and feeble ones who refuse to see any brightness in earth's garden because the fairest flower it held for them is out of their reach. "It might have been" does very well for a day-dream; "it is" is a better thought to spur us on to "act in the living present."

Marion had learnt to love the land of her adoption, its ways, and its people.

Close companionship had drawn Aunt Milly and herself daily nearer to each other; a pleasant, refined, and cultured coterie had gathered about them; indeed, there were few houses so popular in the island as Marinette, Aunt Milly's domain. It nestles among luxuriant trees, and the pillars of its wide verandahs are wreathed and entwined with beauteous climbing plants. The garden runs down-hill to the sea, and a quarter of a mile off are the reefs, above which the waves curl and beat like living things.

Everyone in the island says that this year, of which I am now writing, has been the richest and the ripest known for many a long day. It is as though Nature would fain try to heal the wounds made by the pestilence a year ago; fain give all the comfort she can to bereaved hearts and tear-dimmed eyes, by her beauty. And for Marion every flower has a fairer tint, a sweeter perfume than in all the years of her life that are past. . . .

For is not Keith Falconer free—free to seek her—free to claim her as his own?

It is six months ago now since the knowledge of this possible joy disturbed the even tenor of her days; but, when first she read the record of his wife's death—read that "Blanche, wife of Keith Falconer, M.P.," had only lived to be thirty-four years, Marion hardly gave a thought to herself. Like most of us when we hear that some shallow, frivolous creature has passed away to the land of reality, she gave a quick shudder, and could not for a moment grasp the idea of immortality for such a petty trifler.

But as the weeks passed on, a new and beautiful life seemed to awaken and stir in her heart, and she realised the intensity of passionate gladness enfolded in the thought of seeing Keith once again. No longer young; changed it might be in many outward things, but the same, the very same to her, as when together they watched the sunlight die away from the hills about Glenluna Bay, and knew that the light of their own lives was fading too! She loved to wander alone along the rocky shore, where here and there streamlets from the hills came tumbling and trilling down to the sea: the waves sobbing above the coral-reefs that had once seemed to chant a requiem, now seemed attuned to the dear refrain: "He will come—he will come to me soon!" The fireflies glittering in the woods at night seemed of a new and brighter beauty, and the "hush of the starshine" that had seemed once to cradle regret, now throbbled with the silence of passion too deep for words. She never doubted that the man she loved so well had done his duty nobly to the end by the woman, whose shallow nature had been, while she lived, as a millstone about his neck; equally, she never doubted that the woman he had loved and parted from ten years ago was as dear to him now as then. That he would come to her when time was ripe, she never doubted either.

There is "love, and love," you see; and the highest, truest love depends but little on mere external things, it needs not words and looks, and sweet assurances to keep it alive!

Well, in the midst of all the tropical loveliness that adorned the island that was Marion's home, a sudden gloom descended upon the face of nature, like a dark veil over the face of a beautiful woman. Clouds gathered in dull gray masses where sea and sky met. A sinister moaning came from the reefs, birds flew low, and fluttered here and there in fear, obedient to a subtle instinct of coming danger.

And what was the strange spirit of restlessness that possessed the soul of the woman whose story I am telling?

Why did she wander, restless as the birds, from room to room, from garden to verandah, gazing seaward with a look as of a troubled expectancy?

"What ails you, dearest one?" said Aunt Milly, imprisoning the restless hands.

"I do not know," answered Marion.

"I cannot tell; the sea out there seems to

have something to say to me, something that I must listen to."

Oh, what a weary troubled look was in the depths of the brown eyes that Keith Falconer had loved so well as she spoke!

Much as she loved her niece, Aunt Milly was always just a little afraid of her; and so now she forbore to question any more, only wondering at the strange light in the eyes that were usually so sad and sweet, and at the quiver of suppressed passion round her mouth. The day was dying, the night was coming on.

Marion waited until Aunt Milly had left the room, then she wrapped a crimson shawl about her head, and stole away down the long garden to the shore. A longing that she could not resist drew her to the sea—the sea that was moaning out some message meant for her ears alone.

Pierrot Le Brun, an old servant of the household, met her on her way. It was strange, he thought, that she should be out alone, with the murky darkness falling, and a storm coming on; but then, what would you? "M'zelle," was like no one else in all the island. In the eyes of its humbler inhabitants, she could do no wrong; had she not nursed the sick and tended the dying in the days of that awful pestilence, and seemed to bear a charmed life?

"It is rough to-night, m'zelle," said the old man, standing cap in hand beside her; "there was a ship trying to make for the Fanfaron awhile ago, but I think none could pass the reefs now; the good God help all poor souls out at sea to-night!"

Then he passed on, and Marion went her way.

Her head was bowed low upon her breast, and like the diapason of some pleading litany, old Pierrot's words seemed to ring in her ears: "The good God help all poor souls out at sea to-night!"

Once on the shore, she saw with awe-struck eyes, that all along the western horizon lay low a line of lurid light, a red, angry light, the like of which her eyes had never seen before. Above and all around the heavens were black, and seemed to sway downwards towards the earth, as though from the weight of their own density. She stretched out her arms towards that low-lying bar of light, against which the tossing waves made a line of foam. Had the sullen roar of the sea, in truth, some message to her from the heart that was one with hers?

"What is it? My love! my love!

where are you?" she moaned, with passionate, tearless sobs. "Wherever you are, you are wanting me—and oh, I cannot come!"

A great yearning ached at her heart; a terrible longing, that was the answer to a spirit-cry from afar, consumed her soul.

She clasped her hands as one who prays, and once again that litany of pleading came from her white lips. "The—good—God—help—all—poor—souls—out—at—sea—to-night!"

Suddenly the blackness overhead was cleft by a dazzling shaft of light, and the very ground beneath her feet seemed to vibrate with the awful crash of the thunder. Yet she felt no fear.

Pierrot had ventured before this to turn back and make his way to the place where she stood; but he had only stood sentinel near her, he had not spoken. Now a young sapling at some distance from where he stood was suddenly seized as it were by some invisible hand, and wrenched, and twisted, and bowed almost to the earth.

"M'zelle! m'zelle!" he shouted, springing down the shore to Marion's side. "It is the hurricane—come—haste—do not stay!"

As she turned towards him, the crimson shawl was torn from her head, and whirled aloft out of sight, and in another moment, she and Pierrot were fighting with the tempest, he dragging her along by the hand, until they gained the shelter of *Marinette*.

A spell of lovely tropical weather, calm and bright, followed the storm of that fearful night; the sky was blue as the inner petals of a violet, the sea lapped softly on the shore, the gay-plumaged birds preened themselves in the orange and mango trees. Yet Aunt Milly saw with wonder that a strange watchful eagerness was still shining in her darling's eyes. At any footfall, Marion's colour came and went; at night she laid her down, and lay sleepless and expectant till the morning. So, at last, what her spirit watched for came.

It was Aunt Milly who put into her hand the paper that contained it—the paper that told how the good ship *Ariadne* had gone down off the Cape; and gave among the list of the lost, the name of Keith Falconer.

"He was coming to me—there is his name that has been graven on my heart all these

weary years. I shall never see him any more—but, oh my darling, I shall always know that you were—coming—to—me!"

She fell upon her knees at Aunt Milly's feet, looking up into her face with eyes full of a dumb anguish; then she slid to the floor, and lay there white and still.

It is a marvel what hearts can bear, and yet not cease to beat.

Marion Temple did not die, she lived; nay more, she did her life's work well and bravely—lived, as he who had so loved her would have had her live—for the good of those around her. "It is only waiting a little longer," she once said to Aunt Milly, and though auntie's old eyes were blinded with tears as she listened, Marion's were dry.

She knew that her love was "coming to her;" she knew that he had loved her the same through all the long years of silence and separation; she knew that, if Heaven had willed it so, her happy head would yet have rested on his breast.

But it was not to be!

Keith's only message to her was his name in the list of those who perished in the ill-fated *Ariadne*, the ship that went down upon that stormy night, when Marion, standing on the lonely shore, watched and waited for she knew not what. That message was enough; she could work and wait until the hand of death should lead her to that land where "there shall be no more sea"—the brightest jewel of her life, a memory, nothing more!

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER V. EAGLES AND FLIES.

"ILMA," said Clari, on her return home, "when is the first performance of *Cleopatra*?"

"You have seen Prosper, Giulia?"

Clari went to the glass and took stock of herself deliberately. She knew perfectly well why Ilma had said, "You have seen Prosper." She looked flushed and brilliant, and at least ten years younger; Ilma had only been mistaken in thinking that her patroness had just returned from a battle instead of being on the eve of one.

"Yes; I have seen Prosper; but I did

not ask him about the Cleopatra, because I would not have believed him if he had told me. I would not believe if he told me the sun shone. No; not even if I saw it shine with my own eyes. No; I would not believe the sun if he agreed with Prosper. Ilma?"

"Giulia?"

"You do not love Miss Celia?"

"Fräulien March?"

"You hate her, then—there."

"Why should I hate her? I would as soon hate a cat—that's all."

"A cat? No; I don't think one would hate a cat very much, if it did not trouble one. But, if I did hate a cat, I would say so. I hate a great many things—bad coffee, and stupid people, and trouble, and lies, and Prosper, and—and people that hate nothing. But, never mind. You are quite right, Carina. It is good, yes, it is wise, not to hate people until one is quite sure they cannot harm one. It is not wise to hate one's enemies, Carina, no; nor to love one's friends. One never knows what is to be. When is the first night of Cleopatra? Well, Prosper had his faults; but he was not stupid—no."

"Do you mean you hate Fräulien March, Giulia?"

Clari lifted her shoulders with serene contempt—as the sun might had he shoulders, and were it suggested to him that he hated a farthing candle.

"I mean nothing at all, since you are so fond of her. Let us speak of other things. I will call on Lady Quorne."

Ilma was stupid, being cunning; but, for the same reason, she had the compensating insight which makes up for want of brains. At any rate it was clear that, whether she hated Celia for the sake of old times or no, she had been ordered to hate the rival of her patroness almost as clearly as Fitz-Urse and his fellows had been ordered to rid the king of the Archbishop of Canterbury—for a woman's hint to a woman need not to be so direct as a man's to a man. There was, at any rate, so much of the royal about Clari as to concentrate her power of hating upon what seemed to her the greatest and strongest, and to turn it into the likeness of magnanimity by leaving her no hate to spare for rivals and other natural enemies, whom she was thus compelled to deal with by deputy—whence the value of Prosper, who had always done all such dirty work for her without even letting her know that it

was done. It was for her, like a sovereign, to decree "Cleopatra shall fail!"—it was for meaner hands and narrower brains to save her the pains. *Aquila non captat muscas*—Eagles don't snap at flies. To crush Andrew Gordon and Cleopatra—high art and its arch-fiend together—was heroic enough to suit her sense of tragedy as well as her thirst for revenge; to ensure it by brushing out of the way such a fly as an English soprano was for meaner hands. Ilma thought, so far as nature had given her the power—not very far, but far enough for practical results, if not for the comprehension of reasons.

"Yes," she said with decision; "I do hate Fräulien March. I always did; from the very minute she came to Lindenheim."

"The very minute? Then he made love to her the very minute she came to Lindenheim?"

"No, Giulia; she made love to him. I mean—"

"Ah? But never mind; it is all the same who begins. I should like to know what it means to be in love, Ilma. It would be nice—for a change. But I suppose it would tire, like all other things. I thought it would be nice, once, to have diamonds in my ears. I don't care for them any more. I am tired of having things in my ears—especially *Casta Diva* and——" She went to the looking-glass again, and took out her earrings. "There! you shall have them, Ilma. And now I will go and call on Lady Quorne."

And so, without one word of plain English, French, or Italian, the fiasco of Celia, the only soprano on earth capable of singing Cleopatra, was discussed, settled, bargained, and, in part, paid for. Translated into any sort of word-language, Clari had said: "Miss Celia is in my way, and eagles may not stoop to flies—sparrows may. I am an eagle, you are a sparrow, Miss Celia is a fly. You are not so clever as Prosper; but jealousy, stimulated by diamonds, should make the stupidest woman out-do the cleverest man."

In one respect she wronged Ilma. That young lady was incapable of what Clari meant by hate—real hate is a passion, like real love, and almost as rare. Clari knew it, and judged others by her own tragic standard. But Ilma had what, for the purpose, did just as well—an old grudge and a long memory. The walk to Waaren

rankled still, and the sense of her own recent failure turned jealousy into envy. She took the diamonds, and was fired with the liveliest sense of favours to come. What could be more natural than that a prima donna should wish to ensure the immediate failure of a rival, whose years were fewer than her own? She, too, judged by her own standard; and perhaps the smaller nature, as often happens, understood the larger better than the larger comprehended the small. For while the little can have no greatnesses, the great must needs have a thousand littlenesses.

So Ilma took the diamonds—the outward symbols of the broken bargain that Noemi Baruc had made with her arch-enemy. But it was not enough to take them; she must earn not only these, but more, and she must earn them well. It is all very well for a queen to say to her minister, Go and conquer my enemy. The minister should, to be of any use, be more than a penniless dependent, a foreign singer without a name, a mere drop in the sea of London without friends, or influence, or talents, or the means of buying them. But it is by instinct that genius knows its instruments, not by reason. Once more—if a woman, fired by envy, jealousy, disappointment, and diamonds, cannot, in such a case, dispense with all else, be she as poor as Job and as foreign as Clari in Saragossa Row, it must be that she has scruples; and from that disadvantage Mademoiselle Krasinska was absolutely free. It is even an advantage to be stupid, for brains make up in scruples for what they gain by skill.

It is likely enough that nobody on earth cared for the Gavestons—except the Gavestons. But then, much the same may be said of most people.

Somehow or other, as time went on, neither the influence nor the income of the curate of St. Anselm's expanded with his expanding needs. It is true that little Bessy was still alone in the nursery, but not likely that she would remain alone much longer. A connection with Hinchford did not seem to benefit the Swanns any more than a connection with the family of the auctioneer had been of service to its aristocratic member. The rarity of his visits to his cousin Alicia by no means satisfied his parishioners; indeed it would have been worldly-wise in him if he had

gained flavour for his sermons, as well as health for himself, by taking a walk in the Hinchford direction every Friday afternoon, putting up at The Five Adzes, and not returning till Saturday morning. Once, indeed, the countess called in her carriage upon Mrs. Gaveston, but she proved so utterly unlike the countess as described by the curate that the honour did him little good in the long run, especially among the stationers who dealt in photographs, and whose trade he had well-nigh spoiled. It is one thing to be a popular curate, when unmarried, to even one of fifteen young ladies who meet to hear one read Locksley Hall aloud; but it was doubtful now if the curate of St. Anselm's, had he been the finest reader alive, could have reckoned upon a larger audience than the two Bessies.

And changes were beginning to take place, even in Deepweald. Nobody had as yet even begun to hint that to pull down the cathedral and build it up again would be good for trade. But the oldest and most respected inhabitant of the city had died, and had been succeeded by an inhabitant even older and yet more respectable; a chimney had been on fire in College Court; and, altogether, the city had been by no means without its history. Among incidents of hardly less importance than these, the curate, at Bessy's wiser suggestion and with her help, had written straight to the earl and asked him if he could not do something for the countess's cousin. Nothing is too minute to be included in the chronicles of Deepweald, supposing it to be necessary that every city should have its chronicles. Reginald did not like the task, for he was a bad hand at letter-writing, and a still worse at begging; but Bessy had no such scruples, and honestly believed, even after nearly three years of marriage, that her husband was fit to be bishop of the diocese. The see was not vacant, but at any rate they might make him a dean, and even a good living, at a sufficient distance to give her rank as the rector's wife rather than the auctioneer's daughter, would be worth accepting as a step to better things.

It had been a great piece of business, writing that letter to Lord Quorne, and called for a separate discussion over almost every word. Reginald could write a sermon in half-an-hour at a pinch; but then it does not much matter how one spells sermons. Making a petition to a peer is

a different kind of matter altogether. But at last the letter was not only written but sent, to the curate's intense relief. Bessy watched every post, but he felt that he had done his duty by his family, and that nobody could henceforth complain if he let himself vegetate at St. Anselm's henceforth and for ever. He would always be able to say, "I have done my best; I have done all I can."

For many days Bessy's sanguine confidence in the effect of such a triumph of literary skill as that letter acted upon the postman, like watching upon a pot that is meant to boil. Her husband's eye was beginning to say to her, "There; I knew nothing would come." She began to give up saying, whenever the postman rang, "There! perhaps that is a letter from the earl." Presently she began to give up thinking it even, and was even beginning to imagine that it would never have been written if her advice had been followed.

The phonology of knockers is a science, but there is not much more character about rings than about the so-called Italian hand that ladies practised twenty years ago. The Gavestons—trifles must be made the most of in Deepweald—had only a bell. But nevertheless there was no mistaking for the postman's clatter the quick tinkle that might, and did, announce Miss Hayward—who was Miss Hayward still. Had she been otherwise, the chronicler of Deepweald would have no need to descend to trifles for lack of more remarkable matter.

Miss Hayward, though not popular, was always welcome. Her secret was, that wherever she went, she carried news. In ancient Athens she would have been simply invaluable.

"I'm so sorry Mr. Gaveston is not at home," she said, after disposing of the weather and little Bessy. "Something has happened which I'm not sure ought not to shock one; only of course one doesn't want to be shocked without being sure that one ought to be."

"Of course not!" said Bessy Gaveston. "I'm sure nobody wants to be shocked less than I do. What is it—nothing too dreadful?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. People think differently now about things than what they used to. I don't mean Mr. Gaveston, my dear."

"I should think not—I'm sure Reginald never thinks different; never. He doesn't

hold with any of the new ideas—he never even reads them."

"No. I don't object to a clergyman preaching in a surplice—not at all, though I ought to tell you, as a friend, that I know it for a fact that there are people in St. Anselm's that do. It does look high, to be sure; but then one can't possibly approve of what's low. After all, St. Anselm's isn't St. Botolph's, and it's proper to show that we can pay for our washing. What I object to is—you remember Celia March, Bessy?"

"Poor Celia March? Of course I do. What about her?"

"I always did—I never did approve of you and Mr. Gaveston making so much of that girl. Of course it wasn't for me to say anything at the time, for I never give my opinion till it's asked for; that's like locking the stable-door before the horse is stolen, you know, and that's a thing I never did, and, therefore, I never will. But I never did approve of those girls with eyes like saucers. There's always sure to be something behind; and when people aren't like their neighbours, they're pretty safe to be different from others—mark my words."

"Good gracious, Miss Hayward! What has she done?"

"Oh, nothing, my dear. It's nothing to me what people do. Only I thought, if you still correspond with her, that you, as a clergyman's wife, ought to do it with your eyes open, that's all. P'r'aps, if you weren't a clergyman's wife, and bound to keep yourself select, I wouldn't say a word now; for people do all sorts of things now that in my time they'd have been turned their backs on for, and never spoken to again. People mayn't mind preaching in surplices, for about that there's two opinions, and I can't say I disapprove; but when clergymen's wives associate with actresses and suchlike, why then—well, people will talk, my dear; and quite right too."

"Good gracious, Miss Hayward! Celia March turned actress? Why I'd as soon—it's too dreadful; it can't be. Oh, I am sorry. But, I assure you, I have lost sight of her for ever so long—I have indeed."

"I'm glad to hear it, I'm sure," said Miss Hayward, shortly. "I'm very glad indeed. I saw it in the papers. She's going to act in something called Cleopatra, who was a most improper person, as I happen to know; she's going to act in

London, in *The Times*. She drank vinegar, you know, and was killed by an asp— but you know what I mean; it's all in *The Guide to Knowledge*, and——”

“A letter for master, ma'am,” said the housemaid, bringing in a letter on a tray.

“Very well, Mary; put it down. Oh, I am so sorry!” said Bessy. “Poor Celia!”

“Poor, indeed!” said Miss Hayward. “But there's one comfort; one knows what they come to. If it wasn't for that, who'd be respectable, I should like to know? But I'm glad you don't know anything about her, Bessy, for yours and Mr. Gaveston's sake; very glad indeed. I thought you'd be sure to know all about it, or else I wouldn't have mentioned it, I'm sure.” Miss Hayward wore no spectacles, and needed none; and her eyes were upon the letter which Mary had laid upon the table, address downwards. “And how,” she asked, “by-the-way, is the Countess of Quorne?”

“Oh, very well, I believe. But I was thinking of Celia, poor girl.”

“My dear, in such cases, pity is thrown away. I want to hear about the countess. Of course you often hear from her?”

“Well—no—that is—ah!” exclaimed Bessy, suddenly feeling her heart leap as she caught sight of a coronet and the letter “Q.” “Yes—there is a letter from the earl—for Reginald. Oh dear—I wish——” and she examined the envelope as if the postmarks could tell her what was within.

“Pray don't mind me,” said Miss Hayward politely.

“It is for Reginald—I must wait till he comes. I wonder—yes, I knew it was only a matter of time. Miss Hayward—I'm afraid—I hope—Reginald won't be curate of St. Anselm's very long.”

“Indeed? That is news! I congratulate you, Bessy dear, with all my heart—I do, indeed! Where shall you go?”

“I don't know yet—I don't know what the earl has done. But I was sure he would do something—sure!”

“My dear, with such influence, Mr. Gaveston ought to be a bishop in time.”

Bessy was doubly pleased that the letter had come at last, in such a manner that all Deepweald would hear of the coronet and the letter Q. Independently of the triumph of her sagacity, her aristocratic prestige was whitewashed in the city for at least

nine days to come; for ten days it would have been, had she been polite enough to treat the letter as a matter of course, and piqued her visitor's interest by saying nothing. But Bessy Gaveston was, after all, but a simple soul.

“And, indeed,” Miss Hayward went on, “even now it may be to make him a colonial. They're making colonials everywhere—even among the Cannibals.”

“Oh, Miss Hayward, surely——”

“I am told, my dear, on high authority, that there were few people who stand in greater need of improvement than the Cannibals. I have always been of opinion that to show a Cannibal the error of his ways should be a great satisfaction to a well-constituted mind like yours. And their climate is most delightful, I believe; and then colonials get plenty of holidays, and their anecdotes are most delightful.”

Bessy's heart was beginning to fall again. She could not quite remember in what latitude and longitude, according to her geography-book, the Cannibals live, but she thought of Bessy the younger, and felt that even episcopal dignity might be bought too dear. She wished Reginald would come home.

“But, perhaps,” went on Miss Hayward, “you will have work at home. Perhaps you will be thrown among drunkenness, and crime, and all sorts of shocking things. I have often thought that Mr. Gaveston's talents were thrown away on a quiet place like St. Anselm's. That's what I should like if I was a clergyman's wife, Bessy—to get a lot of tipsy men together and give them a good talking to. They'd be thankful to me, when I'd done. Ah—Mr. Gaveston—let me congratulate you!”

“Miss Hayward? I'm delighted, I'm sure,” said Gaveston, who entered his own house without ringing. “Well, Bessy—anything happened? Ah—a letter from—yes, it's from my Cousin Alicia.” He looked at Bessy, as if to gain courage from her humble grey eyes. “Well—anyway, here goes: Heads or—I should say, we'll see. ‘DEAR MR. GAVESTON,—The pressing parliamentary duties’—he ran his eyes down the letter: Bessy watched his face eagerly, but gathered no more than from the postmarks. Miss Hayward also watched, with the interest which only reaches its climax when taken in the affairs of others. At last he handed the open letter to his wife with a sigh. “There, Bessy. Well,

Miss Hayward—and how goes the world with you?"

"I am to congratulate you I, trust, Mr. Gaveston?"

"Oh yes." But he pulled his whiaker so absently that Miss Hayward almost fancied he had said, "Oh no."

Meanwhile Bessy read:

"DEAR MR. GAVESTON,—The pressing parliamentary duties of Lord Quorne have prevented his answering you earlier. We are quite delighted to hear that you and Mrs. Gaveston are well, and shall hope to have the pleasure of making her acquaintance ere long. Indeed it is for that reason that I write to you instead of Lord Quorne, as I want both you and Mrs. Gaveston to be of real service to me. As to your letter, Lord Quorne's church influence is long ago disposed of, and will not, in all likelihood, be open again for a long time. You may be sure that, whenever it is in his power, my husband will not forget my kinsman and old friend. Meanwhile, what I ask you is for me; and my request is addressed to Mrs. Gaveston as much as to you. A young lady, Miss Celia March, in whom I am deeply interested, is about to make her first appearance this season on the operatic stage. Indeed, if I am not mistaken, you met her last year at Hinchford; and you must have known her father, who was organist at Deepweald. I need not tell you that a girl like her, thrown suddenly into the midst of our profession—"Our profession!" wondered Bessy; but she read on—"into the midst of our profession requires to live respectably and does not find it easy. Her father is infirm—deaf, in fact—and she has no other relations. I want to find her a home among friends, for the season, where she will feel at home, and I absolutely don't know what to do with her. She cannot lodge alone; that would never do. Her father has a rooted objection to her holding the least communication with artists or professional people off the stage; and he is, as perhaps you may know, the most obstinate man whom I ever knew. On receiving your letter, it struck me that Mrs. Gaveston might not object to spend a season in town, with an old acquaintance for a companion. Will she? I hope she will. I suppose some one can take your Sunday duties—indeed,

I can find you a clergyman who will be only too happy, and it will be a great thing for Miss March. Indeed, I don't know what else to do. You will have to take lodgings in a good part of the town, where Miss March may have plenty of fresh air and yet be within easy reach of the theatre. You will also require to hire a brougham. My coachman will manage all that for you. Miss March is, for a day or two, staying with me. It will be best if you will arrange to come up on Monday, when you shall find lodgings ready for you. Of course you will be at no expense to yourself during your stay. Mrs. Gaveston will please to accept the enclosed, for immediate requirements, from her husband's old friend, kinswoman, and sincere well-wisher, ALICIA QUORNE."

Bessy turned red and pale. She glanced at Miss Hayward. To be the chaperon of an actress, after all? She looked at Reginald. To be in London for the season; to go to Quorne House; to keep a brougham; to spend, all at once, a cheque for a hundred pounds? Mrs. Swann's daughter's head turned and swam. The eyes of Reginald and Bessy met, and said, "Well?" and "Well?"

But there was only one answer. When Lady Quorne underscored "I hope," it was for her poor relations to read "I command."

"Well, Bessy," said Miss Hayward, "I see you have things to talk about, so I won't stay tea to-day. I only came to tell you about Celia March; that's all."

"I think—I think," stammered Bessy, looking at her husband, "that—that, in fact— Is it so wrong, Reginald, to be on the stage?"

"It entirely depends upon circumstances," said the curate, ex cathedra. "I can humbly conceive of circumstances which may make it wrong for a man to be a shoemaker; but one may be quite satisfied that if—if, in short, a lady like, say Lady Quorne, goes to a shoemaker for her shoes, that he is a good shoemaker; and a shoemaker is a man, and therefore a good shoemaker is a good man. And, by Butler's analogy, the same rule applies."

"I'm very glad to hear it," said Miss Hayward. "Very glad indeed."

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLIV. WHAT THE BROTHERTON CLERGYMEN SAID ABOUT IT.

HAD Jack knocked at the door and asked for Lady George he certainly would not have seen her. She was enduring at that moment, with almost silent obstinacy, the fierce anger of her indignant husband. "She was sure that it would be bad for her to go to Cross Hall at present, or anywhere among the Germaines, while such things were said of her as the marquis had said." Could Lord George have declared that the marquis was at war with the family as he had been at war some weeks since, this argument would have fallen to the ground. But he could not do so, and it seemed to be admitted that by going to Cross Hall she was to take part against her father, and so far to take part with the marquis, who had maligned her. This became her strong point, and as Lord George was not strong in argument, he allowed her to make the most of it. "Surely you wouldn't let me go anywhere," she said, "where such names as that are believed against me?" She had not heard the name, nor had he, and they were in the dark; but she pleaded her cause well, and appealed again and again to her husband's promise to take her to the Deanery. His stronghold was that of marital authority—authority unbounded, legitimate, and not to be questioned. "But if you commanded me to quarrel with papa?" she asked.

"I have commanded nothing of the kind."

"But if you did?"

"Then you must quarrel with him."

"I couldn't—and I wouldn't," said she, burying her face upon the arm of the sofa.

At any rate on the next morning she didn't go; nor, indeed, did he come to fetch her, so convinced had he been of the persistency of her obstinacy. But he told her as he left her that if she separated herself from him now, then the separation must be lasting. Her father, however, foreseeing this threat, had told her just the reverse. "He is an obstinate man," the dean had said, "but he is good and conscientious, and he loves you."

"I hope he loves me."

"I am sure he does. He is not a fickle man. At present he has put himself into his brother's hands, and we must wait till the tide turns. He will learn by degrees to know how unjust he has been."

So it came to pass that Lord George went down to Cross Hall in the morning, and that Mary accompanied her father to the Deanery the same afternoon. The dean had already learned that it would be well that he should face his clerical enemies as soon as possible. He had already received a letter worded in friendly terms from the bishop, asking him whether he would not wish to make some statement as to the occurrence at Scumberg's Hotel, which might be made known to the clergymen of the cathedral. He had replied by saying that he wished to make no such statement, but that on his return to Brotherton he would be very willing to tell the bishop the whole story if the bishop wished to hear it. He had been conscious of Mr. Groschut's hand even among the civil phrases which had come from the bishop himself. "In such a matter," he said in his reply, "I am amenable to the

laws of the land, and am not, as I take it, amenable to any other authority." Then he went on to say that, for his own satisfaction, he should be very glad to tell the story to the bishop.

The story as it reached Brotherton had, no doubt, given rise to a great deal of scandal and a great deal of amusement. Pountner and Holdenough were to some extent ashamed of their bellicose dean. There is something ill-mannered, ungentlemanlike, what we now call rowdy, in personal encounters, even among laymen; and this is of course aggravated when the assailant is a clergyman. And these canons, though they kept up pleasant, social relations with the dean, were not ill-disposed to make use of so excellent a weapon against a man, who, though coming from a lower order than themselves, was never disposed in any way to yield to them. But the two canons were gentlemen, and as gentlemen were gracious. Though they liked to have the dean on the hip, they did not want to hurt him sorely when they had gotten him there. They would be contented with certain sly allusions and only half-expressed triumphs. But Mr. Groschut was confirmed in his opinion that the dean was altogether unfit for his position—which, for the interest of the Church, should be filled by some such man as Mr. Groschut himself, by some God-fearing clergyman, not known as a hard rider across country and as a bruiser with his fists. There had been an article in the Brotherton Church Gazette, in which an anxious hope was expressed that some explanation would be given of the very incredible tidings which had unfortunately reached Brotherton. Then Mr. Groschut had spoken a word in season to the bishop. Of course he said it could not be true; but would it not be well that the dean should be invited to make his own statement? It was Mr. Groschut who had himself used the word "incredible" in the article. Mr. Groschut, in speaking to the bishop, said that the tidings must be untrue. And yet he believed, and rejoiced in believing, every word of them. He was a pious man, and did not know that he was lying. He was an anxious Christian, and did not know that he was doing his best to injure an enemy behind his back. He hated the dean; but he thought that he loved him. He was sure that the dean would go to some unpleasant place, and gloried in the certainty; but he thought that he was

most anxious for the salvation of the dean's soul. "I think your lordship owes it to him to offer him the opportunity," said Mr. Groschut.

The bishop, too, was what we call a severe man; but his severity was used chiefly against himself. He was severe in his principles. But, knowing the world better than his chaplain, was aware how much latitude it was necessary that he should allow in dealing with men. And in his heart of hearts he had a liking for the dean. Whenever there were any tiffs the dean could take a blow and give a blow, and then think no more about it. This, which was a virtue in the eyes of the bishop, was no virtue at all to Mr. Groschut, who hated to be hit himself, and wished to think that his own blows were fatal. In urging the matter with the bishop, Mr. Groschut expressed an opinion that, if this story were unfortunately true, the dean should cease to be dean. He thought that the dean must see this himself. "I am given to understand that he was absolutely in custody of the police," said Mr. Groschut. The bishop was annoyed by his chaplain; but still he wrote the letter.

On the very morning of his arrival in Brotherton the dean went to the palace. "Well, my lord," said the dean, "you have heard this cock-and-bull story."

"I have heard a story," said the bishop. He was an old man, very tall and very thin, looking as though he had crushed out of himself all taste for the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, but singularly urbane in his manner, with an old-fashioned politeness. He smiled as he invited the dean to a seat, and then expressed a hope that nobody had been much hurt. "Very serious injuries have been spoken of here, but I know well how rumour magnifies these things."

"Had I killed him, my lord, I should have been neither more nor less to blame than I am now, for I certainly endeavoured to do my worst to him." The bishop's face assumed a look of pain and wonder. "When I had the miscreant in my hands I did not pause to measure the weight of my indignation. He told me, me a father, that my child was——" He had risen from his chair, and as he pronounced the word, stood looking into the bishop's eyes. "If there be purity on earth, sweet feminine modesty, playfulness devoid of guile, absolute freedom from any stain of leprosy, they are to be found with my girl."

"Yes, yes; I am sure of that."

"She is my worldly treasure. I have none other. I desire none other. I have wounded this man by certain steps which I have taken in reference to his family; and then, that he might wound me in return, he did not scruple to use that word to his own sister-in-law, to my daughter. Was that a time to consider whether a clergyman may be justified in putting out his strength? No, my lord. Old as you are, you would have attempted it yourself. I took him up and smote him, and it is not my fault if he is not a cripple for life." The bishop gazed at him speechlessly, but felt quite sure that it was not in his power to rebuke his fellow-clergyman. "Now, my lord," continued the dean, "you have heard the story. I tell it to you, and I shall tell it to no one else. I tell it to you, not because you are the bishop of this diocese, and I the dean of this cathedral—and as such, I am in such a matter by no means subject to your lordship's authority—but, because of all my neighbours you are the most respected, and I would wish that the truth should be known to some one." Then he ceased, neither enjoining secrecy, nor expressing any wish that the story should be correctly told to others.

"He must be a cruel man," said the bishop.

"No, my lord; he is no man at all. He is a degraded animal, unfortunately placed almost above penalties by his wealth and rank. I am glad to think that he has at last encountered some little punishment, though I could wish that the use of the scourge had fallen into other hands than mine." Then he took his leave, and as he went the bishop was very gracious to him.

"I am almost inclined to think he was justified," said the bishop to Mr. Groschut.

"Justified, my lord! The dean—in striking the Marquis of Brotherton, and then falling into the hands of the police!"

"I know nothing about the police."

"May I ask your lordship what was his account of the transaction?"

"I cannot give it you. I simply say that I think that he was justified." Then Mr. Groschut expressed his opinion to Mrs. Groschut that the bishop was getting old—very old indeed. Mr. Groschut was almost afraid that no good could be done in the diocese, till a firmer and a younger man sat in the seat.

The main facts of the story came to the

knowledge of the canons, though I doubt whether the bishop ever told all that was told to him. Some few hard words were said. Canon Pountner made a remark in the dean's hearing about the Church militant, which drew forth from the dean an allusion to the rites of Bacchus, which the canon only half understood. And Dr. Holdenough asked the dean whether there had not been some little trouble between him and the marquis. "I am afraid you have been a little hard upon my noble brother-in-law," said the doctor. To which the dean replied that the doctor should teach his noble brother-in-law better manners. But, upon the whole, the dean held his own well, and was as carefully waited upon to his seat by the vergers, as though there had been no scene at Scumberg's Hotel.

For a time, no doubt, there was a hope on the part of Mr. Groschut and his adherents that there would be some further police interference—that the marquis would bring an action, or that the magistrates would demand some enquiry. But nothing was done. The marquis endured his bruised back at any rate in silence. But there came tidings to Brotherton, that his lordship would not again be seen at Manor Cross that year. The house had been kept up as though for him, and he had certainly declared his purpose of returning when he left the place. He had indeed spoken of living there almost to the end of autumn. But early in July it became known that, when he left Scumberg's Hotel, he would go abroad. And before the middle of July it was intimated to Lady Alieo, and through her to all Brotherton, that the dowager, with her daughters and Lord George, were going back to the old house.

In the meantime Lady George was still at the Deanery, and Lord George at Cross Hall; and to the eyes of the world the husband had been separated from his wife. His anger was certainly very deep, especially against his wife's father. The fact that his commands had been twice—nay, as he said, thrice—disobeyed, rankled in his mind. He had ordered her not to waltz, and she had waltzed with, as Lord George thought, the most objectionable man in all London. He had ordered her to leave town with him immediately after Mrs. Jones's ball, and she had remained in town. He had ordered her now to leave her father and to cleave to him, but she had cleft to her father and had deserted

him. What husband can do other than repudiate his wife under such circumstances as these! He was moody, gloomy, silent, never speaking of her, never going into Brotherton lest by chance he should see her; but always thinking of her—and always, always longing for her company.

She talked of him daily to her father, and was constant in her prayer that they should not be made to quarrel. Having so long doubted whether she could ever love him, she now could not understand the strength of her own feeling. "Papa, mightn't I write to him?" she said. But her father thought that she should not herself take the first step, at any rate, till the marquis was gone. It was she who had in fact been injured, and the overture should come from the other side. Then at last, in a low whisper, hiding her face, she told her father a great secret; adding, with a voice a little raised: "Now, papa, I must write to him."

"My darling, my dearest," said the dean, leaning over and kissing her with more than his usual demonstration of love.

"I may write now?"

"Yes, dear, you should certainly tell him that." Then the dean went out and walked round the Deanery garden, and the cathedral cloisters, and the Close, assuring himself that after a very little while the real Lord Popenjoy would be his own grandson.

CHAPTER XLV. LADY GEORGE AT THE DEANERY.

It took Mary a long, long morning—not altogether an unhappy morning—to write her letter to her husband. She was forced to make many attempts before she could tell the great news in a fitting way; and even when the telling was done she was very far from being satisfied with the manner of it. There should have been no necessity that such tidings should be told by letter. It was cruel, very cruel, that such a moment should not have been made happy to her by his joy. The whisper made to her father should have been made to him, but that things had gone so untowardly with her. And then, in her present circumstances, she could not devote her letter to the one event. She must refer to the said subject of their separation. "Dear, dearest George, pray do not think of quarrelling with me," she said twice over in her letter. The letter did get itself finished at last, and the groom was sent over with it on horseback.

What answer would he make to her? Would he be very happy? Would he be happy enough to forgive her at once, and come and stay with her at the Deanery? or would the importance of the moment make him more imperious than ever in commanding that she should go with him to Cross Hall? If he did command her now, she thought that she must go. Then she sat meditating what would be the circumstances of her life there—how absolutely she would be trodden upon; how powerless she would be to resist those Dorcas conclaves after her mutiny and subsequent submission! Though she could not quite guess, she could nearly guess what bad things had been said of her; and the ladies at Cross Hall were, as she understood, now in amity with him who had said them. They had believed evil of her, and of course, therefore, in going to Cross Hall she would go to it as to a reformatory. But the Deanery would be to her a paradise, if only her husband would but come to her there. It was not only that she was mistress of everything, including her own time, but that her father's infinite tenderness made all things soft and sweet to her. She hated to be scolded, and the slightest roughness of word or tone seemed to her to convey a rebuke. But he was never rough. She loved to be caressed by those who were dear and near and close to her, and his manner was always caressing. She often loved, if the truth is to be spoken, to be idle, and to spend hours with an unread book in her hand under the shade of the Deanery trees, and among the flowers of the Deanery garden. The dean never questioned her as to those idle hours. But at Cross Hall not a half-hour would be allowed to pass without enquiry as to its purpose. At Cross Hall there would be no novels—except those of Miss Edgeworth, which were sickening to her. She might have all *Mudie* down to the Deanery if she chose to ask for it. At Cross Hall she would be driven out with the dowager, Lady Susanna, and Lady Amelia, for two hours daily, and would have to get out of the carriage at every cottage she came to. At the Deanery there was a pair of ponies, and it was her great delight to drive her father about the roads outside the city. She sometimes thought that a long sojourn at Cross Hall would kill her. Would he not be kind to her now, and loving, and would he not come and stay with her for one or two happy weeks in her father's house? If

so, how dearly she would love him; how good she would be to him; how she would strive to gratify him in all his whims! Then she thought of Adelaide Houghton and the letter; and she thought also of those subsequent visits to Berkeley Square. But still she did not in the least believe that he cared for Adelaide Houghton. It was impossible that he should like a painted, unreal, helmeted creature, who smelt of oils, and was never unaffected for a moment. At any rate she would never, never throw Adelaide Houghton in his teeth. If she had been imprudent, so had he; and she would teach him how small errors ought to be forgiven. But would he come to her, or would he only write? Surely he would come to her now, when there was matter of such vital moment to be discussed between them. Surely there would be little directions to her given, which should be obeyed—oh, with such care, if he would be good to her.

That pernicious groom must have ridden home along the road nearly as quickly as the dean's oob would carry him, for the express purpose of saying that there was no message. When he had been about ten minutes in the Cross Hall kitchen, he was told that there was no message, and had trotted off with most unnecessary speed. Mary was with her father when word was brought to him, saying that there was no message. "Oh, papa, he doesn't care!" she said.

"He will be sure to write," said the dean, "and he would not allow himself to write in a hurry."

"But why doesn't he come?"

"He ought to come."

"Oh, papa; if he doesn't care, I shall die."

"Men always care very much."

"But if he has made up his mind to quarrel with me for ever, then he won't care. Why didn't he send his love?"

"He wouldn't do that by the groom."

"I'd send him mine by a chimney-sweep if there were nobody else." Then the door was opened, and in half a second she was in her husband's arms. "Oh, George, my darling, my own, I am so happy. I thought you would come. Oh, my dear!" Then the dean crept out without a word, and the husband and the wife were together for hours.

"Do you think she is well?" said Lord George to the dean in the course of the afternoon.

"Well? why shouldn't she be well?"

"In this condition I take it one never quite knows."

"I should say there isn't a young woman in England in better general health. I never knew her to be ill in my life since she had the measles."

"I thought she seemed flushed."

"No doubt, at seeing you."

"I suppose she ought to see the doctor."

"See a fiddlestick. If she's not fretted she won't want a doctor, till the time comes when the doctor will be with her whether she wants him or not. There's nothing so bad as coddling. Everybody knows that now. The great thing is to make her happy."

There came a cloud across Lord George's brow as this was said, a cloud which he could not control, though, as he had hurried across the park on horseback, he had made up his mind to be happy and good-humoured. He certainly had cared very much. He had spoken no word on the subject to anyone, but he had been very much disappointed when he had been married twelve months and no hope of an heir had as yet been vouchsafed to him. When his brother had alluded to the matter, he had rebuked even his brother. He had never ventured to ask a question even of his wife. But he had been himself aware of his own bitter disappointment. The reading of his wife's letter had given him a feeling of joy keener than any he had before felt. For a moment he had been almost triumphant. Of course he would go to her. That distasteful Popenjoy up in London was sick and ailing; and after all this might be the true Popenjoy who, in coming days, would re-establish the glory of the family. But, at any rate, she was his wife, and the bairn would be his bairn. He had been made a happy man, and had determined to enjoy to the full the first blush of his happiness. But when he was told that she was not to be fretted, that she was to be made specially happy, and was so told by her father, he did not quite clearly see his way for the future. Did this mean that he was to give up everything, that he was to confess tacitly that he had been wrong in even asking his wife to go with him to Cross Hall, and that he was to be reconciled in all things to the dean? He was quite ready to take his wife back, to abstain from accusations against her, to let her be one of the family, but he was as eager as ever to repudiate the dean. To the eyes of his mother the dean was now the most horrible of human

beings, and her eldest born the dearest of sons. After all that he had endured he was again going to let her live at the old family house, and all those doubts about Popenjoy had, she thought, been fully satisfied. The marquis to her thinking was now almost a model marquis, and this dear son, this excellent head of the family, had been nearly murdered by the truculent dean. Of course the dean was spoken of at Cross Hall in very bitter terms, and of course those terms made impression on Lord George. In the first moments of his paternal anxiety he had been willing to encounter the dean in order that he might see his wife; but he did not like to be told by the dean that his wife ought to be made happy. "I don't know what there is to make her unhappy," he said, "if she will do her duty."

"That she has always done," said the dean, "both before her marriage and since."

"I suppose she will come home now," said Lord George.

"I hardly know what home means. Your own home, I take it, is in Munster Court."

"My own home is at Manor Cross," said Lord George, proudly.

"While that is the residence of Lord Brotherton it is absolutely impossible that she should go there. Would you take her to the house of a man who has scurrilously maligned her as he has done?"

"He is not there or likely to be there. Of course she would come to Cross Hall first."

"Do you think that would be wise? You were speaking just now with anxiety as to her condition."

"Of course I am anxious."

"You ought to be, at any rate. Do you think that, as she is now, she should be subjected to the cold kindness of the ladies of your family?"

"What right have you to call their kindness cold?"

"Ask yourself. You hear what they say. I do not. You must know exactly what has been the effect in your mother's house of the scene between me and your brother at that hotel. I spurned him from me with violence, because he had maligned your wife. I may expect you to forgive me."

"It was very unfortunate."

"I may feel sure that you as a man must exonerate me from blame in that matter, but I cannot expect your mother to see it in the same light. I ask you whether they do not regard her as wayward and unmanageable."

He paused for a reply; and Lord George found himself obliged to say something. "She should come and show that she is not wayward or unmanageable."

"But she would be so to them. Without meaning it they would torment her, and she would be miserable. Do you not know that it would be so?" He almost seemed to yield. "If you wish her to be happy, come here for awhile. If you will stay here with us for a month, so that this stupid idea of a quarrel shall be wiped out of people's minds, I will undertake that she shall then go to Cross Hall. To Manor Cross she cannot go, while the marquis is its ostensible master."

Lord George was very far from being prepared to yield in this way. He had thought that his wife in her present condition would have been sure to obey him, and had even ventured to hope that the dean would make no further objection. "I don't think that this is the place for her," he said. "Wherever I am she should be with me."

"Then come here, and it will be all right," said the dean.

"I don't think that I can do that."

"If you are anxious for her health you will." A few minutes ago the dean had been very stout in his assurances that everything was well with his daughter, but he was by no means unwilling to take advantage of her interesting situation to forward his own views. "I certainly cannot say that she ought to go to Cross Hall at present. She would be wretched there. Ask yourself."

"Why should she be wretched?"

"Ask yourself. You had promised her that you would come here. Does not the very fact of your declining to keep that promise declare that you are dissatisfied with her conduct, and with mine?" Lord George was dissatisfied with his wife's conduct and with the dean's, but at the present moment did not wish to say so. "I maintain that her conduct is altogether irreproachable; and as for my own, I feel that I am entitled to your warmest thanks for what I have done. I must desire you to understand that we will neither of us submit to blame."

Nothing had been arranged when Lord George left the Deanery. The husband could not bring himself to say a harsh word to his wife. When she begged him to promise that he would come over to the Deanery, he shook his head. Then she shed a tear, but as she did it she

kissed him, and he could not answer her love by any rough word. So he rode back to Cross Hall, feeling that the difficulties of his position were almost insuperable.

On the next morning Mr. Price came to him. Mr. Price was the farmer who had formerly lived at Cross Hall, who had given his house up to the dowager, and who had in consequence been told that he must quit the land at the expiration of his present term. "So, my lord, his lordship ain't going to stay very long after all," said Mr. Price.

"I don't quite know as yet," said Lord George.

"I have had Mr. Knox with me this morning, saying that I may go back to the Hall whenever I please. He took me so much by surprise, I didn't know what I was doing."

"My mother is still there, Mr. Price."

"In course she is, my lord. But Mr. Knox was saying that she is going to move back at once to the old house. It's very kind of his lordship, I'm sure, to let bygones be bygones." Lord George could only say that nothing was as yet settled, but that Mr. Price would be, of course, welcome to Cross Hall, should the family go back to Manor Cross.

This took place about the 10th of June, and for a fortnight after that no change took place in any of their circumstances. Lady Alice Holdenough called upon Lady George, and, with her husband, dined at the Deanery; but Mary saw nothing else of any of the ladies of the family. No letter came from either of her sisters-in-law congratulating her as to her new hopes, and the Manor Cross carriage never stopped at the dean's door. The sisters came to see Lady Alice, who lived also in the Close, but they never even asked for Lady George. All this made the dean very angry, so that he declared that his daughter should under no circumstances be the first to give way. As she had not offended, she should never be driven to ask for pardon. During this time Lord George more than once saw his wife, but he had no further interview with the dean.

BRITISH MOBILISATION.

At the present time, and under the peculiar circumstances which now rule over public affairs, it is almost imperative that the public should be better informed than they are respecting both the component parts of our land forces, and what could be done

if we were forced to send an army into the field. For the last four or five years our military authorities have been endeavouring to effect what is called a mobilisation of the whole army; and, considering the difficulties they have had to contend with, the attempt has been a much greater success than was at first anticipated. In England, Ireland, and Scotland, the active army and troops have been divided into eight army corps. Of these the first has its headquarters at Colchester, the second at Aldershot, the third at Croydon, the fourth at Dublin, the fifth at Salisbury, the sixth at Chester, the seventh at York, and the eighth at Edinburgh. A glance at the map will show how carefully the military partitions have been chosen from a geographical point of view. Still more will these be admired when we come to examine the minor divisions, of which more presently. Each army corps is theoretically—and, in a very great measure, practically—complete in itself. The great difficulty the authorities have to contend with is one which is unknown in foreign armies. In the English service we have continually to provide for the relief of troops stationed in India and in the colonies. In Russia and Germany this is an obstacle which does not exist; while in France it is very partial, Algeria being the only colony garrisoned by the French.

As an example of how far our mobilisation scheme has been carried out, let us take the First Army Corps, quartered, as we said before, at Colchester. The staff of the corps consists of a general officer in command, four aides-de-camp, six officers of the adjutant-general's and quartermaster-general's departments, a brigadier-general commanding the artillery, and a colonel commanding the engineers—each of whom has a brigade-major and an aide-de-camp attached to his staff—a commandant at headquarters, a provost-marshal, a commissary-general, a principal medical officer, a chief veterinary surgeon, and a principal chaplain. As yet the names of the officers who are to fill these several appointments have not been filled in, which, although an error on the economical, and therefore in some measure on the right side of the question, is certainly a mistake as regards the efficiency of the army. If our forces are to be mobilised, the staff of each army corps, of each division, and of each brigade, ought most certainly to be filled up. At the present moment we have a superabundance of officers, who,

although barely in the prime of life, are on half-pay, and unemployed. The difference between the pay these gentlemen now receive and what they would receive if employed is, comparatively speaking, very trifling, in consideration of the immense good that would be effected to the service by an army corps being placed on such a footing as to be always ready for any emergency. As it is, that portion of the Army List where the composition of the eight army corps is given looks like a play-bill, on which the different parts of a play are detailed, but where the names of no actors are given. But having said this much, we have adduced all the chief evidence that can be brought against this part of the scheme of British mobilisation; which, to say the least of it, must have caused the military authorities not a little care and trouble.

In former days, in the times of any of our old wars, a kind of mobilisation of the army existed, but only when troops were actually called to take the field. It is true we had no such term as army corps, which we have borrowed of late years from the French and the Germans; but two or three battalions were always united together in brigades, and two or three brigades formed a division. The different regiments, however, had rarely the advantage of knowing each other. Highland battalions were generally kept together, and the battalions of foot guards were always brigaded with each other. In our new system of mobilisation, every regiment in the service has, so to speak, a distinct and individual clanship with some other corps. Thus if, or when, the First Army Corps is called into the field, the cavalry brigade of the corps would consist, as regards cavalry, of the Fifth Lancers, the Twenty-first Hussars, and the Suffolk Yeomanry; and in the infantry, the first brigade of the first division—there are three divisions in each army corps, in each division there are two brigades, and in each brigade three battalions—consists of the Sixty-fourth, the One Hundred and Fifth, and the One Hundred and Eighth Foot. Should these corps be quartered in England their post would be with this brigade at all times; and, in the event of any of them being stationed abroad, what is called the "linked battalion" of such corps would take its place. Thus the Sixty-fourth Regiment is now stationed at Colchester, its "linked battalion" is the Ninety-eighth Regiment, which is at Malta; and under

the new system of mobilisation care is taken to avoid as much as possible sending two battalions that are "linked" together out of the country at the same time. In like manner the One Hundred and Fifth Foot is also stationed at Colchester, and its "linked battalion," the Fifty-first, is quartered in Bengal; and the One Hundred and Eighth Regiment, forming another regiment of the brigade at Colchester, has for its "linked battalion" the Twenty-seventh, which is stationed at Malta.

As has been remarked before, the great obstacle towards forming a really effective mobilisation of the British Army, is the continual demand there is upon our forces for the relief of regiments who have served their time in India or the colonies. There is also another, which, although a less often occurring difficulty, is still a great hindrance to the perfect working of any system of the kind. We allude to the petty, and not always inconsiderable, wars, which are so often occurring in one or other of our dependencies, and which call for reinforcements of troops being sent to one or other of our colonies, such as is at present the case at the Cape. Severe drains like these upon our military resources must always impede greatly the development of a system like that of our army mobilisation, which can hardly be said to be as yet fairly tried, and which it will certainly take several years to test properly.

It must not be thought that all the regiments which compose one of the newly-formed army corps, are quartered at the same place as the headquarters and staff of the corps. On the contrary, they are more or less scattered, but are all in the vicinity of the staff, and within easy call. Thus the First Army Corps has its headquarters at Colchester, and there also are quartered the two brigades which form the first division; the one being composed of the Sixty-fourth, One Hundred and Fifth, and One Hundred and Eighth Regiments; the other of the Fiftieth Regiment, and of the first battalion of the Twenty-second Regiment. But the cavalry brigade is stationed at Maldon; the second division of the army corps is at Chelmsford; and the third at Gravesend. Of the second division, the two brigades are respectively at Chelmsford and Warley; whilst those of the third division are at Gravesend and Chatham; and the artillery—composed of three troops of horse artillery and five batteries of foot—are some at Colchester, and

others at Woolwich and Shorncliffe. Of engineers attached to the First Army Corps there are a pontoon troop, a telegraph troop, and a company for field works; the two former being stationed, strange to say, at Aldershot, the latter at Chatham.

Here, again, an example of what must be called the incompleteness of the system of mobilisation which we have adopted meets us. In every one of the eight army corps there are certain anomalies which either ought not to exist, or, if they are inevitable, show that this scheme of military concentration is not adapted to our service. Thus, in the First Corps, the second brigade of the first division of infantry is a mere myth: the headquarters of the brigade are put down as being at Colchester; but the regiments which compose it, the first battalion of the Twenty-second Foot and the Fiftieth Foot, are quartered at Buttevant and Kinsale respectively. And it is the same with the first brigade of the second division of the same corps, which is nominally stationed at Chelmsford. The regiments which compose this brigade are the first battalion First Foot, the second battalion Eighteenth Foot, and the One Hundred and Fourth Foot. These corps are stationed—the first at the Curragh, the second at Kilkenny, and the third at Birr. Nor is this extraordinary anomaly caused by regiments being on foreign service; it is a regular muddle of the authorities, and is printed, as we have copied it, in the Army List for January last. The object and intention of army mobilisation is, that whenever troops are wanted for offensive or defensive purposes, they should be ready at hand, and the corps that are to work together should be stationed at or near the same place. In some, or perhaps most respects, this idea has been carried out in our British mobilisation; but, in many instances, the troops destined for a certain place appear to have been selected from those at as great a distance as possible. We have given one or two instances of this, but there are others still more glaring and absurd. Thus, the third division of the Second Army Corps consists of two brigades, both of which have their headquarters at Dorking; but the troops which compose these brigades are the Royal Ayr Militia, the Renfrew Militia, the Royal Perth Militia, the Galway Militia, the North Cork and the South Cork Militia. How these gallant regiments are to get, in

the event of a sudden emergency, to Dorking, we are not informed. It must, however, be allowed that the compilers of this list of stations have made some compensation to the regiments thus curiously displaced from their own countries. For having sent three Scotch and three Irish corps to Dorking, they have named four Yorkshire militia corps to the Curragh, and five Irish militia regiments to Edinburgh.

It is needless to say that such a distribution of troops would be utterly useless in the event of any sudden emergency. When the war between France and Germany broke out in 1870, more than half the first defeats of the French army were, with truth, attributed to the fact of men, belonging to the reserve, having to travel from one end of France to the other before they could join their regiments. As a matter of course, great delay was occasioned by this, and the consequence was that many corps commenced the campaign several hundred men under their proper strength.

In Germany the exact contrary was the case. The present writer happened to be at Cologne for two or three days in July, 1870, while the army was being mobilised. No regiment had to move from the town where it was quartered until the moment came to join the headquarters of its brigade, which was never more than a few hours' journey by rail. In the same way every brigade was more or less close to the headquarters of its division, and no division was far from the headquarters of its army corps. As for the men composing the reserve, they seemed to literally lay down the pen, the trowel, the brush, or whatever else, as citizens, they gained their bread by, and take up the lance, the rifle, or the sabre, according to the branch of the service to which they belonged. Anything more admirably organised it would be impossible to imagine. There was no confusion of any kind. The consequence was, as we all know, that the whole German army was mobilised and ready to march in less than a week, and struck the first blow at the enemy long before the latter had time to collect his scattered forces.

Unless a scheme of mobilisation be drawn up in such a manner that the troops composing each brigade, division, and army corps can be called under the colours at almost a moment's notice, it is worse than useless for any practical purpose. In the plan of British mobilisation, as given in the Army List, there is a mixture of the prac-

tical and the unpractical, such as has seldom been seen in any official document. For instance, let us take the second division of the Fifth Army Corps. This division has its headquarters at Warminster, where both the brigades composing it are also quartered. The second brigade is formed, sensibly enough, of three neighbouring militia regiments; namely, the Royal Wilts, the Royal Berks, and the Royal Bucks. But the other brigade, having also its headquarters at Warminster, is composed of three Irish militia regiments; namely, that of Monaghan, of Louth, and of Longford. Let us, for instance, suppose that the Fifth Army Corps had to be mobilised at short notice, how long would it take these three regiments to be got together in their respective native places? And how much more time would it take for them to reach Kingstown, cross the Channel, and come to their rendezvous? It is to be feared that, by the time they reached Warminster, their services would be no longer required. In these days, the fate of an army is decided in a very few days, often in a few hours.

The composition of the Fourth Army Corps, of which the headquarters are at Dublin, is even more extraordinary than that which we have already noticed. In this corps there are fourteen militia regiments. Of these, four are Scotch and ten are English; so that in the event of the only army corps in Ireland being mobilised, the brigades would be filled up with militia regiments, not one of which belonged to the country where they were serving. There are in Ireland thirty-two militia regiments, of which, all save eight or nine are told off to army corps in England, and their places in Ireland taken by militia regiments from England or Scotland. In the same manner, there are belonging to Scotland eleven militia infantry regiments. Of these, all save three are mobilised with army corps of England or Ireland. Comment upon such a state of things is surely unnecessary. We hear and read a great deal regarding the difficulty of obtaining recruits for the regular army, as well as for the militia. On the different causes that hinder men from coming forward for the former service, we may have something to say on a future occasion. But as regards the militia, may not the extraordinary scheme of mobilisation have something to do with the deficiency? It stands to reason, that a working-man, or artisan, would far rather engage for service in a regi-

ment which assembled close to his own home, than in one in which he was liable to be sent a long distance from his family and his belongings. Take, for instance, the Fourth West York Militia. The headquarters of this regiment are at Leeds; but if the Fourth Army Corps were mobilised, the regiment would be sent to the Curragh. Surely, it would be more sensible, more rational, and more likely to attract recruits, if, in the event of mobilisation, the Fourth West York took its place in the ranks of the Seventh Army Corps, of which the headquarters are at York.

In order to make the mobilisation of the British army really effective, it ought to be on a large scale, as much as possible what the embodiment of the militia has always been on a small one. That is to say, the men ought to know and to feel that, save in the event of any great emergency, they will not have to serve at any great distance from their homes. A system of this sort would also have another great advantage. An army corps could be mobilised in fewer hours than it would take weeks to effect under the present scheme. And this we take to be the chief reason for any kind of mobilisation at all. If Irish regiments are to travel all the way to England or Scotland; and English corps have to be sent to Ireland in the event of mobilisation, it would seem as if there were very little improvement upon the plan that has been enforced hitherto in the British Army—that of telling off regiments to their respective brigades, after the occasion arises for an army being called together. Moreover, to the Edinburgh artisan, or to the Leeds mechanic, having to go to the Curragh is equivalent to foreign service, and would be quite as much disliked. Nor should we forget that, in all probability, if there ever is reason for a mobilisation of the forces, it would not be partial, but universal throughout the empire.

The strength of a British army corps, when mobilised, is supposed to be about twenty-five thousand men. This includes one brigade of cavalry, consisting of three regular and two yeomanry regiments; three divisions of infantry, each division comprising two brigades, and each brigade composed of three regular, or militia, battalions, besides thirteen or fourteen batteries of foot and two or three troops of horse artillery, with a troop of engineers for pontoons, one for tele-

graphic work, and a company of the same corps for field work.

Apart from the mobilisation of our active army, there is what is called the mobilisation of the garrison army. This is divided into several garrisons—namely: Portsmouth, Plymouth, Portland, Dover, Chatham, Harwich, Pembroke, Edinburgh, Cork, Dublin, Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and lastly, one which is called the small forts and ports of Ireland. Each garrison has on its staff a general officer commanding, with general officers, or colonels of artillery, and engineers under him, besides the regular complement of other staff officers. It is in this garrison army, as it is called, that the greater number of militia corps, both infantry and artillery, are embodied. Let us take, for instance, the garrison of Plymouth, which includes Staddon, Bovisand, Breakwater, Malree, and Whitsand Bay Works. The troops mobilised for this garrison are composed of a single battalion of regular infantry; five batteries of royal artillery; two companies of royal engineers; six regiments of militia artillery; detachments of six corps of volunteer infantry; four corps of volunteer artillery; two of volunteer engineers; and four corps of army pensioners. Against such a composition for a garrison, no objection can be waged. On the contrary, nothing could be more sensible than the employment of volunteers for the defence of important posts like those of our different garrisons, leaving the regular infantry of the line for work in the field.

Here again, however, the difficulty which we noted in connection with the mobilisation of the eight army corps is observable. For instance, the militia infantry detailed for the defence of Portsmouth consist of the Hampshire, the North Tipperary, and the Aberdeen regiments. Why the two latter should be brought, the one from the West of Ireland and the other from the North of Scotland, or why the Edinburgh regiment of militia artillery should form part of the Dublin garrison, it is difficult to imagine. It is true that in this mobilisation of the garrison army there are very few similar anomalies to be noted, but those which do exist are so many more than ought to be at all. Taken as a whole, the distribution of troops in the mobilisation of this portion of the army is very effective, and in every way, save the particular we have mentioned, to be commended. In the event

of an invasion there would be a place for every militiaman and every volunteer in the kingdom. Nothing would be left to chance; every corps, and every man composing each corps, would know where his post would be in the hour of danger. The work of detailing so many regiments, batteries, brigades, and divisions in the mobilisation both of the active and garrison army must have been one of no small labour, and that it has been most creditably performed there can hardly be two opinions. It is not perfect—few things in this world are—but it certainly utilises, at any rate in theory, every man bearing arms, whether belonging to the regulars, the militia, or the volunteers, in the United Kingdom.

There is a third organisation which, although not yet complete, is very nearly so; and which would add greatly to our defensive strength throughout the kingdom. We mean the "local brigades," as they are called, which are composed exclusively of volunteers, and are numbered from one to twenty-six, leaving from ten to fifteen to be still embodied. The staff of these local brigades consist of a commandant, an artillery and an engineer officer; and the number of corps which compose them vary from two to six, according to the strength of the respective regiments. Thus, Local Brigade Number One has its headquarters at Holt, and is composed of the Second Norfolk Artillery Volunteer Corps at Norwich, and of the Third Norfolk Rifle Volunteer Corps at Dereham. The Second Local Brigade has its headquarters at Walsham, and is composed of two batteries of the Norfolk Artillery Militia at Yarmouth, and the First and the Fourth Norfolk Rifle Volunteer Corps at Norwich. And so on throughout the whole list of these local brigades.

There could hardly be a more curious study for those who like to measure the present by the past, than a comparison between what our army is, and how it is organised now, and what it was in 1854, when we "drifted" into the Crimean War. In those days we had no volunteers; our militia was composed chiefly of men who were not fit for the regular army, and was officered by gentlemen who had no intention of ever joining the regulars, and who were mostly too old to be fit for active service. Of mobilisation we had none whatever, either for our active or for our garrison army. Even in our regular troops, the only test either for the appoint-

ment, or the promotion, of officers was the possession of a certain sum of money. We have changed all this; and have certainly changed it for the better. Officers now enter the army with the same intention that men are called to the Bar, or study medicine, or go into the Church—they become soldiers because they wish to join the profession of arms. Our regular army—cavalry, infantry, and artillery—is, in every sense of the word, far more efficient than it was even a few years ago, and is gaining, not losing, in this respect every day. Our militia force would do credit to any army in the world, and our volunteers are the wonder of all foreigners who see them. About a year ago the present writer happened, when walking up Westbourne Terrace, to meet a volunteer corps on its way to Hyde Park for the usual Saturday afternoon exercise. He was in company with a French officer who had seen not a little service in different parts of the world, and who knows what soldiers ought to be. The Frenchman asked what regiment it was, and when told it was a volunteer corps would not believe his informant, but offered to bet that it was a rifle corps of the regular army. It was only by going into a shop in one of the neighbouring streets, and putting the same question to the shopman, that he could be made to believe a volunteer regiment could look so smart and move so well.

-But no matter how individually excellent our regulars, or militia, or volunteers may be, the most soldierlike qualifications would be of no avail without a proper and regular scheme of mobilisation, by which, as orderly housekeepers say, there is a place for everything and everything can be put in its place. This scheme, or plan, we have now got. It may have yet to be made perfect, but so far as it goes it is excellent; and, as we said before, an immense improvement upon the muddle and utter want of organisation of former days. Let us only hope that we may never have to put the plan to the test.

MISS JOSEY'S ROMANCE.

WE were sitting together, my aunt and I, in the pleasant twilight of an April evening. It was too dark to see to work, but hardly dark enough for candles. Outside a faint rosy reflection lingered in the sky. Inside we still cherished the fire, as a friend from whom we were loath to part.

The kettle was singing on the hob, the crumpets were mutely asking to be toasted, but the orthodox hour for tea had not yet arrived. My aunt glanced up at the clock and gave a little sigh. "That fish we had to dinner was very salt." I thought so too, and wished the clock would move its fingers a little faster.

Suddenly there came three slow distinct raps at the door. My aunt gave quite a start. The stocking she had been knitting fell to the ground. "Bless us all! who's gone now?" she said with an unwonted quaver in her voice.

Martha being out of the way I went to the door. A tall man dressed in black was standing in the porch. Speaking in a deep automatic voice, he said: "You are respectfully bidden to the funeral of the late Mistress Josephine Orris of Crag End."

"Oh dear! oh dear!" interjected my aunt.

"Who died on Monday morning last," went on the man in black. "The body will be lifted on Saturday next at two o'clock in the afternoon." Without another word he turned on his heel and went. Half a minute later we heard him rapping at some other door a little distance away.

"And I never even heard that she was ill!" said my aunt, as I went back to my chair. "How dreadfully sudden it must have been." Then she cried softly to herself for a little while. We did not light the candles that evening till long after dark.

"She must have been eighty if she was a day," said my aunt after a time. "And it's not more than three months since the major died. Well, there was never a more loving couple, and no doubt it's for the best that she should not be long after him."

That custom of bidding to funerals has gone out in St. Clement's* years ago, as I suppose it has in other places. I never remember to have seen a hearse there when I was a girl. The dead were always carried to the grave on the shoulders of bearers, the mourners walking two and two behind. I attended several funerals there in my time. Seed-cake and wine were generally provided at such times, and occasionally viands of a more substantial kind. But whatever else might be there or not there, it was considered necessary

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 17, p. 421, January 18, 1877, "The Poor Gentlewomen of St. Clement's."

to have one, and sometimes two, large tankards of hot spiced ale for the behoof of the mourners. A lemon stuck with cloves always floated on the top of the ale. As soon as the body was lifted, and that slow dreadful journey downstairs began, which most of us have heard with such woful sinking of the heart, the door of the room in which the mourners were assembled was shut, and the tankard was handed round, beginning with the chief mourner, as though it were a species of loving cup. It was looked upon as disrespectful to the deceased if you did not at least touch the rim with your lips; but whatever the ladies might do, the gentlemen present generally did much more than that.

"What I am about to tell you," began my aunt, "happened many years before I became an inmate of the Endowment, or indeed had any thought that in my old age I should be glad of such an asylum. I was living at that time with your great-aunt Charity, and a frequent visitor at her house was a certain Miss Josephine Dunne—Miss Josey, as she was familiarly called, being liked by all of us both young and old. She had been elected into the Endowment about two years before I first saw her. She lived in the cottage that is now Miss Whincop's, and there your great-aunt and I used to visit her once a month and drink tea with her. She must have been quite fifty-five at that time, but was wonderfully well preserved and fresh-looking for her age. Never has the Endowment sheltered within its precincts a sweeter-tempered or a kinder-hearted gentlewoman than dear Miss Josey.

"Her only relative, so far as I ever heard, was a brother some five or six years older than herself, who was known to everybody in St. Clement's as Old Sammy Dunne, and not unfrequently by the more unenviable nickname of Old Flint and Steel. An attorney by profession, he had long ago abandoned the law for the more congenial and profitable business of money-lending. Reputed to be what in our small way would be called enormously rich, he still lived in the little dark house in a little dark bye-street that he had inhabited for thirty years. Being a bachelor, and so well-to-do, people sometimes wondered why he did not have Miss Josey to keep house for him, instead of allowing her to become an inmate of the Endowment for Poor Gentlewomen. But if anybody hinted at such a thing in Miss Josey's

presence, a little spot of red would come into each of her cheeks, and then after a moment or two she would say smilingly: 'Samuel and I never could agree when we were boy and girl at home, so that I am quite sure we could not agree now. For my part, I always think that relations are better apart.'

"He doesn't give her the value of a silver sixpence from one year's end to another,' your great-aunt would sometimes say; 'and mark my words, he won't leave her the value of a silver sixpence when he's dead—and yet I daresay the man expects to go to heaven when he dies.'

"It was indeed a shame, for Miss Josey was very badly off at times. Occasionally I have known her to have nothing but bread and cheese for dinner, for three or four days at a time. Often, when we had something specially nice at home, Aunt Charity would send a plate of it, with her love, to Miss Josey; besides which, many a little packet of tea and pat of butter found their way into her cupboard, so that our consciences did not prick us when we called upon her and drank tea out of her delicate egg-shell china, and munched a couple of pieces of bread-and-butter not much thicker than wafers. But, poor as Miss Josey might be, nobody ever heard a murmur from her lips, and she was never without a black silk gown for visiting or receiving company in.

"One afternoon—how well I remember it—when I called on Miss Josey, I found her on the point of going out. She was going as far as Dixon's on the Pavement to match some wools. I turned and walked with her. We had got what we wanted, and were just stepping out of the shop, when a gentleman nearly ran against us, or we nearly ran against him, I am not sure which. He was a tall military-looking man, with iron-grey hair and short whiskers, who carried his head as though he still wore the regulation army stock. He was closely buttoned up, and carried a thick silver-mounted malacca under his arm. Both he and Miss Josey started back. Then the gentleman bowed and was about to pass on. But in one moment, and with his finger and thumb still holding the brim of his hat, he became as it were transfixed. He stood and stared as a man might do who sees a ghost—not that I altogether believe there are such things, my dear. I turned my eyes on Miss Josey. To my astonishment, she also looked as if a ghost had risen at her feet. Every particle of

colour had fled from her cheeks, while her eyes evidently saw nothing but the face before her. Surprise, incredulity, doubt, joy—I could read them all, or fancied that I could, in her varying expressions. While one might count a dozen they stood speechless, staring straight into each other's eyes. 'Is it you—Philip—Major Orris?' gasped Miss Josey at length. 'Or are you a stranger?'

"I am Philip Orris, true enough, and you are—Josephine Dunne!"

"Yes, I am still Josephine Dunne," she said with a wan smile. Then in a moment her eyes grew moist. 'It was thirty-five years, on the 8th of August, since we parted last, but—but I think I should have known you anywhere again.' Her voice had an odd little tremor in it. I was afraid that she was going to break down.

"The major had hold of her hand by this time. He held it in both of his. 'Ah—we are both changed,' he said with a little sigh. 'Everything seems changed but your eyes, Josephine. Them I should have known anywhere and always.'

"Miss Josey blushed. 'You used to praise my eyes long ago,' she said in a low voice, 'but now I cannot see well without spectacles.'

"To me they were the most beautiful eyes in the world,' said the major gallantly, ignoring the spectacles. 'What a strange fatality is that which has brought us together to-day! I am here but for a few hours, and I meet—you!'

"You have left the army, have you not?"

"Yes, I was invalided two years ago on half-pay. That confounded Indian climate nearly finished me off.'

"Your name was mentioned in the despatches more than once.'

"Ah, you found that out, did you? They spoke of me far more highly than I deserved.'

"Miss Josey shook her head. 'I am sure they would not do that,' she said.

"I am down in the old neighbourhood for a couple of weeks,' said the major. 'I am staying with my friend, Squire Tattam, at Wing Hall, but this is the first time I have set foot in St. Clement's since—since you know when. And you?'

"Again Miss Josey blushed. 'All my relations are dead except my brother. I have found a home for the rest of my days in the Endowment for Poor Gentlewomen.'

"At this moment, a friend whom I wanted to see came out of the shop, so I left Miss Josey and the major together.

Three minutes later Miss Josey rejoined me. 'You must really forgive me for not introducing you,' she said, 'but I was so flurried that I hardly knew what I was about. I wish he had not seen me in my spectacles,' she added plaintively.

"Major Orris!" said my Aunt Charity, when I told her whom we had met. 'Why he was Miss Josey's sweetheart, ever so many years ago—the first and last, I truly believe.' Then she told me how, when Miss Josey was a young beauty of nineteen, the major, at that time a dashing ensign in a marching regiment, had met her at a ball, had fallen in love with her, and had sought permission from her father to make her his wife. But the ensign was poor, and old Mr. Dunne, although he afterwards fell into difficulties, was rich, and the lovers were forbidden to see or write to each other again. Young Orris, however, was a bold and ardent wooer, and he succeeded in seeing Miss Josey again and again. At length he wrung from her a promise to elope with him to Gretna Green. Everything was arranged, and in the dusk of an August evening, Miss Josey stole away from home and joined her lover at the corner of Langley Copse, where a carriage and pair was in waiting. Five minutes later they were on their way to the Border. By some means or other, however, Josey's brother Samuel became aware of the plot, and succeeded in bribing the post-boy, who was to have driven the lovers on the first stage of their journey, into allowing him to take his place. He must have muffled himself up in some way or other, for neither the ensign nor Josey recognised him. After driving northward for about five miles, Master Samuel quietly turned the horses' heads into a cross road that led back to St. Clement's, and before either of the runagates were aware of the trick that was being played them, the carriage drew up at the door of Mr. Dunne's house, and Mr. Dunne himself handed his daughter out, and made some remarks the reverse of complimentary to the discomfited young soldier. The end of the escapade was that Miss Josey was relegated to the care of an aunt in Devonshire, and that Ensign Orris exchanged into a regiment that was on the point of sailing for India. They never saw each other again till they met by accident that afternoon at St. Clement's.

"We had news of the major two or three times during the fortnight that

followed the meeting. We heard of his being in St. Clement's more than once, and it was even whispered that he and Miss Josey had been seen walking together in the dusk of evening in the Abbey Meadows; but when it comes to a question of identity, people are liable to make strange mistakes.

"Time went on, and we heard no more of Major Orris. Miss Josey never mentioned his name, and, in view of her reticence, my aunt and I took care to follow her example. One day, about a year after the meeting on the Pavement, Miss Josey burst into my aunt's room in an abrupt way that was very unusual with her. She was evidently brimming over with excitement. 'What do you think?' she said. 'You would never guess the news I have to tell you. Major Orris, through the death of a relative, has come into quite a large fortune. His sisters too, Carry and Gertrude, are to have five thousand pounds apiece. They are like me, you know; neither of them has ever been married, and it seems that Philip—I mean Major Orris—has had to keep them as well as himself out of his half-pay. Poor fellow! what a struggle it must have been to keep up appearances at all.' Of course, we were all very glad to hear of the major's good fortune. We took tea that very afternoon at Miss Josey's, and she bought herself a new cap in honour of the occasion.

"About a month afterwards, Aunt Charity said to me one evening when she came in from shopping: 'What do you think one of the assistants at Maddison's told me this afternoon as a little secret? Why, that Miss Josey has bought herself a new dove-coloured silk dress! Now, what can she want with a dove-coloured silk? I have never seen her in anything but black these dozen years. And—it's no business of mine, of course—how has she been able to afford it? She must have been saving up for years.'

"For the next two or three Sundays we took care not to miss meeting Miss Josey at morning service. But there was no change in her attire. She still wore the black silk, old and faded now, that she had worn for the past five years: I could see that Aunt Charity was puzzled. 'I hate mysteries,' she said, 'and there's one here.'

"The mystery was not destined to be of very long duration. It was elucidated in quite a sudden and unexpected manner. The news came on us like a thunderbolt.

Miss Josey and Major Orris had eloped—had actually gone off in a chaise and pair to Gretna Green!

"Aunt Charity began to cry when the news was told her—why, I'm sure I don't know. I laughed, and was rebuked for my levity. 'At her time of life too!' said my aunt. 'Surely, she doesn't fancy that she's a young girl after all these years. And she might have been married comfortably and respectably in her own parish church, and we could all have had a good view of the ceremony. I knew there was a mystery about that dove-coloured silk.'

"'What will the other Poor Gentlewomen say and think?' I ventured to ask. 'I'll be bound to say, such a thing was never known in the Endowment before,' said my aunt. She might have added, 'and never will be again.' What a flutter, what a commotion there was inside the old walls! Miss Delancey wore cherry-coloured ribbons in her bonnet for six months afterwards, and took to ogling the elderly beaux when she walked out of an afternoon, as she had ogled the young ones thirty years before.

"But to go back. Hardly had we had time to familiarise ourselves with one astounding piece of news before another was, so to speak, thrown at our heads. Mr. Samuel Dunne, as soon as the news of his sister's escapade reached his ears, ordered another chaise and pair, and started helter-skelter after the fugitives, vowing that if it were in the power of man to do so, he would stop the wedding. 'A meddling old fool,' was your great-aunt's comment. 'He ought to know that he has no power to stop the wedding. I'm glad now that Miss Josey has never been beholden to him for a penny of his ill-gotten brass, and I hope with all my heart that he will be too late to interfere.'

"We all hoped the same thing. We had been considerably shocked and somewhat scandalised by the news of Miss Josey's flight, but now that we knew her brother was in pursuit of her, all our sympathies veered round to her at once. We forgot that she and her lover were two grey-haired people, we overlooked the absurdity of the whole affair, in our burning desire that Samuel Dunne should be balked in his attempt to spoil for the second time the happiness of a sister, to whom he had never behaved as a brother should behave.

"He was balked, but in a way that neither he nor any of us had dreamt of. Three weeks after he started in pursuit

of his sister, his body was brought back to St. Clement's, and laid in the family vault beside his father and mother. Miss Josey, as it always comes natural to me to call her, and her husband were the only mourners. It was their first appearance in St. Clement's since their wedding, and it was their last for some time. They called on no one, and left the town as soon as the dead man's will had been read. Your great-aunt was not far out in her prediction. The thousands were all left to London charities—not a penny to any local ones—and three paltry hundreds to his sister. Happily, our dear Miss Josey was now beyond the need of his money.

"We neither saw nor heard anything of her for quite three months. Then, one afternoon, a messenger brought a note. It was written from the King's Arms Hotel, and was an invitation for your great-aunt and me to go there and drink tea with Miss Josey. 'We shall hear all about it at last,' said your great-aunt. 'She must be dying to talk to somebody that she knows. She'll get the major out of the way for this afternoon, you see if she don't.' The major was certainly not there. We were told that he was gone to look after some property which he thought of buying. As for dear Miss Josey, she was not one bit altered, though her mourning made her look a little strange at first. We all cried a little at that first meeting, as was but natural; but as soon as we grew more composed, Miss Josey was full of eager questionings about old friends and acquaintances—more particularly about the Poor Gentlewomen of the Endowment. Little by little the particulars of her marriage came out, and that without any prying on our part. One thing we did not learn—why it was that the major and his bride had chosen to go all the way to Gretna Green, instead of having the banns read out at St. Clement's. 'Of course, the major must have proposed it,' said your great-aunt, 'and Miss Josey hadn't the heart to say no.'

"'It was only a fit and proper ending to the romance begun thirty-five years ago,' I said. 'I like the major all the better for it.'

"'Romance!' quoth your great-aunt, with a toss of her cap-strings. 'What have people at their time of life to do with romance? There are no fools like old ones.'

"I could have kissed Miss Josey when she told me how, when the major wanted

to measure her finger for the wedding-ring, she drew from round her neck the ribbon on which hung the ring he had bought her so many years before. Day and night it had never left her all that time.

"'It was perhaps foolish vanity on my part,' said Miss Josey, with a smile, 'but all that first week I never wore my spectacles once. A bride in spectacles, you know! It was Philip who insisted on my taking to them again. You know how lost I am without them—and really it seemed like coming back to an old and dear friend, to feel them perched on my nose again.'

"It would appear that the major and his bride had got more than halfway on their journey to the Border, before they had the least intimation that anyone was following them. They were overtaken by another postchaise containing a couple in a greater hurry than they were, the postilion of which told their postilion that a little lame old gentleman, with fierce black eyes, was only twenty miles behind, and was vowing what he would do when he should overtake them. Miss Josey at once recognised the portrait of her brother. The major pushed on at a quicker rate than heretofore; for although Samuel Dunne had no legal control over his sister, it was just as well to get the wedding over as quickly as possible, after which any interference on his part would be worse than useless. At the next posting-house at which they stopped the major engaged all the spare horses in the place, and took them on with him; so that when Mr. Dunne reached there, he was necessarily delayed for some hours for want of the means of getting forward. The fugitives had been married six hours, when he burst into their sitting-room. He was a very passionate man, and he said many cruel and unjust things. At length the major's patience became exhausted. He rang the bell and ordered the servant to show Mr. Dunne the door. The old man took up his hat, and turned and shook his clenched fist in the major's face. What he intended to say remained unsaid for ever. Next moment a terrible change came over his face, his hat dropped from his nerveless fingers, he tottered as he stood, and would have fallen had not the major caught him in his arms. He had been stricken with death. For a fortnight he lay speechless and helpless. Night and day Miss Josey nursed him. He only

spoke once, a little while before he died. 'All a mistake, Josey; all a mistake,' he whispered. She kissed him and he smiled, and for a moment the major saw what he had never seen before—a likeness between the brother and sister.

"And all this happened more than twenty years ago," said my aunt in conclusion; "though, to look back, it only seems like twenty weeks. Well, if ever there was a happy couple in this world it was the major and his wife. It is only three months since he died, and to-morrow my dear old friend will be laid by his side. So are the links that bind us to this life broken one by one."

INTERVIEWING EXTRAORDINARY.

SIGNS are not wanting of a desire to naturalise the nuisance here, but "interviewing" is not yet held to come within the regular duty of a newspaper reporter. In America it is otherwise. There, nobody who is supposed to have a story to tell, is safe.

A New York paper informs its readers that the son of Mayor Overstolz has eloped with an actress a few years his senior, and taken her to Buffalo. A reporter of the Buffalo Express immediately sets about hunting the lady up, and finds her sitting quietly at home, attired in a becoming *négligé*, studying a new part. He explains the reason of his coming, and the actress declares the story is an infamous lie. Then with justifiable indignation she says: "A few years his senior? I suppose that means I am older than he is?" "That's the idea," her visitor admits. "Well," returns the lady, "that's another falsehood; I am eighteen and he is twenty-six. It makes me feel bad to have my name mentioned that way, but in justice to myself, I can only say I certainly would not marry him. I am sorry for him too, for he is a perfect gentleman."

Another reporter introduced himself to a pleasant-faced, sun-browned lady, who in her unassuming personality represents the only female rival to Boyton, Sydney Cook, and other famous professional divers of the century, and was gratified to hear that Mrs. Consadine would detail her strange experiences with pleasure. Originally stewardess of a steamship, on board which her husband served as head-waiter, she had gone with him to Mexico upon his

entering the service of a pearl-fishing company as diver. Watching her husband and his mates at their work, she fancied she would like to share their labours. Her first experiment was made in shallow water, and she came up bleeding at the nostrils, mouth and ears, and fainted upon reaching the surface. Nothing daunted, she tried it again and again, until she found herself able to remain under water as long as any of the men. In 1874, Mr. Consadine was suffocated through the breaking of his air-supplying tube, and his widow succeeded to the vacancy. Physically, her sex proved no hindrance, but the people at the fisheries were loath to employ her, and she would have had to give up her strange calling but for a Captain Hartley, who gave her a job on the schooner *Gaviota*, a vessel carrying smuggled silver, which had sunk on a sandbank, eighteen miles from the shore, in seventy-five feet of water. The adventurous woman found her task so unpleasant, that she was inclined to relinquish it after once going down; but nettled by the way the men sneered at her on account of her sex, she persevered until the last cask of dollars was brought up.

That she held out to the end says much for Mrs. Consadine's courage. One day, Pablo Vasquez, a first-rate diver, went down to put a torpedo in position to blow up the schooner's deck. Before he had come up again, the man in charge of the battery exploded the torpedo, and Pablo was killed. On another occasion she was down at the bottom, when the Mexicans attacked the Americans, and the man in charge of the air-pump had to leave his post to defend himself. Of course there was a sudden stoppage of the air supply. She felt a frightful sense of oppression at the chest, there was a thunderous roaring in her ears, and a hot shiver ran through her body. Luckily the man at the signal-line was still at his place, and answered her call; bringing her to the surface nearly dead, her face all black and blood-stained. Another two minutes under water would have killed her; as it was, she was incapacitated for work for a couple of days. No wonder that, brave as she had proved herself to be, the feminine diver, when asked if she intended to follow the perilous calling any longer, shook her head significantly as she replied: "No more of it for me."

Having discovered that there were in New York some half-a-dozen traders in superfluous wedding-gifts—one dealing

only in china, another in silver and plated ware, and so on—an inquisitive reporter, anxious to enlighten the public respecting this unsuspected traffic in hymeneal offerings, interviewed the proprietor of a large store, devoted ostensibly to the sale of unredeemed pledges, which were in reality bridal presents of jewellery and trinkets for which the recipients had no use. One bride, for example, as the dealer explained, received eight opera-glasses from as many friends; of course, she did not want them all, and five of them found their way into his store. When a marriage between two rich young people comes off, a list of the wedding presents is pretty sure to be given to the newspapers. "I don't go to them," said the shrewd snapper-up of unconsidered trifles—"I don't go to them as soon as they are married. They would kick you out of the house, if you went there on such an errand in the first few weeks. You have to let them settle down to house-keeping, and find out for themselves how much useless stuff they have got about them; and even then the wife generally objects to sell; but after you have seen them two or three times they fall in with the idea, and are willing to sell what they do not want. Of course, I get the things pretty cheaply; young married people seldom know the value of the presents they receive, and besides, they have cost them nothing, so it is all profit to them."

An Irish-born citizen of San Francisco, known to be a lucky speculator in mining stock, was one day caught in a communicative mood by a newspaper-man who wanted to know the secret of his means. "Och, it's a fine thing," said he, "to dale in stocks whin you know you're right. I git all my points from Flood. Misther Flood's a friend o' mine. I make all my money through him. A few days agone I wint to him and sez I: 'Misther Flood, would I be best buyin' a few shares of Savage? It's going chape, an' maybe but it'll git out of my rache soon.' Me friend Flood looked up from his writin'—he was signing a cheque for an orphan asylum—and sez he to me, shakin' his big head: 'Don't touch it; devil a thing is there in the mine but wather, an' it might hurt ye,' sez he. Then I wint and tuck seven hundred shares: it was going at seventeen dollars. Betimes, it rose to twenty-two, and I wint to his office. He was glad to see me. He was spaking to his clerk about kaping the assessments from getting mixed with the dividends, but he kindly stopped, and gave me a nod

and a wink. 'Good-mornin', Misther Flood,' sez I. 'Savage is a square stock, it's lapin' about like a dog wid a male o' poison. Wouldn't I best sell a trifle o' it short?' He looked kindly at me and sez he: 'Lave it alone for awhile; it's risin' like a full moon, widout signs o' stoppin', and I couldn't advise ye to sell.' Thin I wint and sold me Savage at the profit of three thousand six hundred dollars. I git all me points from me friend Flood; but don't go talkin' about it. He might change his system and break me."

Our lady readers will be shocked to learn that there lives a man with a soul so dead, as to glory in having extracted from a hundred and forty-three engaged lovers how their sweethearts behaved when put to the momentous question. A hundred and forty stoutly maintained that the hundred and forty single ladies involved had not said a single word, each and all significantly remarking: "Actions speak louder than words." Two of the remaining gentlemen asseverated that when they proposed, the bewitching maidens respectively murmured: "Oh, John! you don't mean it! This is too much happiness! too much! I never thought you loved me! It's yes, yes; I've loved you, oh, so long, and now to be so happy, so blest!" These young men both confessed they would rather the young ladies had not been so talkative about the matter just at that time. The last of the hundred and forty-three happy lovers said he had not gone through more than a quarter of a very carefully-prepared proposition, before the girl—a blonde, weighing some hundred and seventy pounds—arose, threw herself heavily on his lap, vigorously wound her arms around his neck, and cried: "You bet I'll have you, Henry! I've been waiting to hear you say that for six months. Why didn't you say it long ago, you stupid old man? There! (A kiss.) You're mine! (Another kiss.) All mine! (Two kisses.) And nobody else will ever get you! (Accompaniment ad libitum.) And see here; if ever you go back upon me, and won't marry me, I'll make it unhealthy for you, you bet! I'm none of your soft, spring-chicken-hearted girls." His confession ended, the engaged one enquired: "Don't you think, for the occasion, she was rather boisterous?" and was answered: "Rather so; but, for your own sake, don't go back on her!"

To the New World—we should say to the Old World—we are indebted for the invention of spiritualism, as unprofitable

an invention hitherto as ever was devised, although some of its professors may have made a pretty good thing out of it. But there is promise of this reproach being removed, for one spirit has occupied itself in doing real service to somebody; the highly-favoured somebody being Mr. William Babcock, market-gardener, of East New York, whose twin-brother Charles has even, since his death, some six years ago, waited upon Mr. B. in a materialised form. He was at his side when the reporter of *The Sunday Mercury* sought him among his cabbages, although that worthy failed to catch a glimpse of the defunct one, from not being possessed of the right kind of perceptive power. Mr. Babcock was busy, putting cabbage-heads into a large basket and emptying them therefrom into a waggon. "My brother," said he, "is going to help me lift the basket." Then he took hold of the basket, and told his brother to take it easy, and poured the cabbages into the waggon. Charles, he averred, always sat by his side as he drove to market, and, being very shrewd, aided him in bargaining. A little while ago he thought of buying a small farm adjoining his own, but the spirit told him there was something wrong about the title. Another man bought the farm and was badly cheated. There was a time when cabbages were a drug in the New York market. The spirit-brother went to New York, ascertained the state of things, and reported to Mr. Babcock, who was thus saved from making an unprofitable journey. "Did the spirit talk with the market-men?" enquired the reporter. "Oh no," was the reply; "the market-men cannot talk with the spirit, but the spirit can look into their minds, and ascertain the prices of the various kinds of produce."

Twenty years ago a man had to visit Noble county, Ohio, to gather up a drove of horses and cattle for the Baltimore market. One evening, as it was growing dark, he left Whigsville to go to Sarahsville, four miles beyond. He was never seen again. Last September a young lady of eighteen years, living near Whigsville, dreamed a dream, and was soon afterwards interviewed regarding it; and this is what she said: "It seemed to me that I was in a place familiar to me, though, on account of the great darkness, I could not distinguish any landmarks. Presently the lightning began to flash, and the thunder to roar, and between the flashes I began to see where I was. I knew it was the portion of the road about a mile from

Sarahsville towards Whigsville. I was walking along, but at length I sat down, and something seemed to say: 'Wait and see what will happen.' I did so, and almost immediately I beheld a man, a stranger to me, riding up the hillside. He seemed in great haste. Almost immediately I saw another man emerge from the darkness of the fence-corner opposite, and, with a heavy bludgeon in his hands, he ran up behind the man on horseback and dealt him a terrible blow on the head. There was a fall, a groan, and then I seemed to awake, although I did not; that was simply a part of my dream. When I next looked, the murderer was concealing the body of the dead man in a huge hollow tree. He next took the money from the saddle-bags and placed it in a large bag of his own, and taking the saddle from the horse, turned him loose; and after digging a hole in the ground, put the saddle therein and covered it over with leaves and brush. Then he started away. As he did so, a flash of lightning shone full upon his face, revealing William Styles, my father! I screamed in reality, and awoke."

The unhappy dreamer further deposed that she went to the spot she had seen in her vision, dug among the rotten weeds, and came upon a skeleton. She was too horrified to pursue her investigation herself, but told some of the people of the strange matter, and they discovered the stirrups and buckles belonging to the buried saddle. Filled with wonder at what he had heard, the interviewer went in quest of further information. He found that the dead man's bones had been interred in the graveyard, and, at the harness-maker's, saw a stirrup and two buckles, eaten with rust. Of Mr. Styles, he was told that he had been noted, far and wide, for his cowardice. He could hardly be persuaded to go outside his own door at night; and, if a storm came on, betook himself to the cellar. In consequence of his daughter's dream, the good folks of the town rather suspect Mr. S. had good reasons for his fears; "but," says the cautious relater of the story, "as he is dead already, no criminal prosecution will probably be begun against him at present."

Journalists eager in pursuit of knowledge do not always find those they propose to "pump" so ready to submit to the operation, perhaps for the reason that impelled a convicted murderer to stipulate that what he said should be put down exactly as he said it, because "you reporters always

stretch things to an uncommon size." The insulted man pocketed the affront, and got what he wanted—a result not achieved by his brother-scribe, who went to Mount Carmel, soon after that place had been swept pretty clean by a tornado, armed with a portentous list of questions. Accosting a citizen, whose property "had been dispersed over several congressional districts," he asked him from what direction the tornado approached, its rate of velocity, its shape, whether the current of cloud revolved in the same direction as the hands of a watch, and divers other questions of a similar character. When he had finished, the citizen of Mount Carmel gazed upon him for a few moments, spat upon his hands, pulled off his coat, and said: "Stranger, if you had been sitting on your front stoop, and suddenly seen a brazen, fiery whirlwind scooting along like a fast mail-train a year behind its time, and the next thing you knew was, that your wife was sailing over the Presbyterian church, while your house had taken to itself wings, and flown to the uttermost parts of the earth, you wouldn't be such an irretrievable idiot as to go and ask whether things flew around from right to left, or vice versâ." Then he fell upon that collector of scientific information for the people; and when that bemaused representative of a free press reached his home again, his wife, as she looked upon the wreck, exclaimed: "Oh, Eliakim, there has been another tornado, and you have got caught in it!"

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. B. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VI. A LITTLE BIFT.

So, at last, Celia, in spite of herself, had developed into a prima donna—nay, into the open and declared rival of the great Clari herself, with all her memories of that concert at Deepweald, exaggerated by distance of time, to drag her down. Assuredly every road leads not only to Rome, but to everywhere. Noëmi Baruc from the Ghetto, Celia from the Cathedral Close; the born queen and the born nobody; the open enemy of art and its docile slave, were pitted against one another in a formal contest, which seemed likely to become one of the fifteen thousand decisive battles of the operatic world.

There was little going on that season to

distract the attention of musical people from their proper topics. People may think that these are not very large, and indeed scarcely a sufficient cause for much excitement among men and women who, having ears, must necessarily have heads; and, having heads, must be presumed to have something more than emptiness inside them. But facts have nothing to do with reasons. It is quite possible to go through life without taking the faintest interest in Wagnerism, or spiritualism, or the spelling reform; but if the foot once crosses the threshold of one or the other, in goes the whole man, body and soul, and there is no help for him. So may an Earl of Quorne regard the whole universe as contained in a prize cucumber, and his countess look upon a duel between prime donne as a veritable Armageddon. Where a countess leads, at least a hundred will follow; and a hundred people are quite enough to constitute a world. And so it may be said that the eyes of the world were upon Celia—of all women in the world.

A great deal had happened, more than can be told in any number of volumes fewer than four, since she and the dream of her heart had finally been laid upon that all-devouring altar of destiny called Cleopatra. But Celia herself would have found one word more than enough wherein to tell it all—to her, it was not a history; it was a hurricane. She had never had much scope for the exercise of free will; now, she had none. The spirit of her father, intensified by a lifetime of suppression and concentration, fairly rushed out to meet the coming triumph halfway; it swept away with it Prosper like a heap of dust, Lady Quorne like a bundle of feathers, Celia like a single straw. How, she neither knew nor asked; it was not in her philosophy to speculate over the masterfulness of a great spirit on the rebound, and of its intense directness of course and singleness of aim over the atmosphere of frivolity and knavery in which it had to expand. A triton among minnows is but a poor simile for Andrew Gordon among Prosper and Lady Quornes. He even hurled earnestness into the green-room and enthusiasm into the drawing-room, and gained for his fierce and narrow personality the sympathy that only comes from power. One can only dash in the large results of his influence, which cut through details and threw them aside right and left like wooden splinters before a round saw worked by steam. Much might be learned of it from the talk at rehearsals, where the

deaf man came daily and mesmerised the conductor's bâton with his dull and deep-set eyes. But all could only be learned by the absence of talk, which meant the presence of action. Somehow the most callous chorus-singer seemed to feel that the Cleopatra meant something more than an extra drill—and more than that no chorus-singer could be expected to feel. Prosper had managed Clari by stooping to conquer; he could not manage this new master at all. But he was amply content to feel that the triumph of Cleopatra was foregone. There was more than the common interest attaching to the re-appearance of a famous composer, after a sullen retirement which had for so long made him dead except in the world of memories. That was much; but Andrew Gordon had come back to life, not only with the prestige of a ghost, but with the energy of a demon.

How should a girl's dream stand in the way of a strong man's will? It was incredible, and it seemed too impossible to be worth regarding. Celia seemed to see the poor little white wings of the bird that had come to sing in her heart swept away helplessly in the whirlwind; she might strain her eyes after it with longing, but there was no moment for reaching out her hands to keep it back—it was gone. Her father could see nothing but Cleopatra, and had forgotten his desperate lapse into mere human sympathy as if it had never been, and as a healthy man forgets a disease. Since the Score had been gathered up again from its four corners, all the days had rushed by as if they had been only one day of chaos—if chaos has anything to do with days. They had left Saragossa Row. Had Celia ever lived there, except in a dream? Walter had vanished. Then she had found herself a guest of Lady Quorne; and she had scarcely breathing-time enough for it to go to her heart that her father, even for Cleopatra's sake, could so readily let her go so entirely out of his days. Was she his child after all? Or only a wheel in some inexorable machine, of which the sole purpose was to turn out the Cleopatra, and then to break up and be done with for good and all? She, alone, felt no more enthusiasm for the result than a wheel does for the work of a steam-engine. She had to move as force bade—that was all. Then came the details—rehearsals and Prosper. And, at last, without knowing how or why, the new prima donna assoluta, of whom at

ten minutes every day—which is the English for fame—found herself sitting in Lady Quorne's carriage beside Bessy Gaveston.

It was the first minute in which she had time to stretch her thoughts since, in Saragossa Row, her whole time was spent in that barren vacuum which passes for thinking; every road must indeed lead everywhere to bring Celia March and Bessy Swann together again under the wing of the Countess of Quorne.

"Celia?" said the chaperon timidly, as if she had put out her voice to touch Celia with instead of her finger, and was afraid of breaking her. She had never spoken to an actress in her life; and yet she could not quite reconcile the two ideas of her old protégée being at one and the same time an actress, and Celia March of the Close, whose shabbiness, shyness, and awkwardness she remembered as long as she could remember anything. She felt as old school-fellows might, when the fellow who could turn off elegiacs like Ovid, and bowl like Reginald Gaveston, after a few years of steady and respectable failure, becomes private secretary to a great man who was his own fag, and was famous for nothing but false quantities, and the qualities for which schoolboy humour has invented many forcible but not over delicate names. In whatever way it comes, it is a strange feeling—perhaps, the strangest of all that there are. "If I had met you in the very street, I shouldn't have known you," said Bessy, for the sake of saying something very strong indeed. "But—oh dear, what has happened? Why, you are crying, Celia! Aren't you glad to see somebody from Deepweald again? And there is little Bessy at home, though she's in bed now—"

"Oh, please, please, Bessy," said Celia between sobs, "please don't notice—don't mind. I shall be better in a minute—I shall indeed. Not glad to see you? Oh, Bessy, I wish—I wish that the carriage would drive on and on until we got to Deepweald, and I could get out there and go back into our old house and find everything the same as it used to be when—" "When I was so miserable" she could only have said, had she left her sentence unbroken. "I should like to cry myself to sleep, and then go to sleep for the rest of my days."

"For the rest of your nights, you mean? There—never mind; it does everybody good to have a cry now and then. Only

anything like anybody when you were a girl—but it is all so strange. I'm sure, if I'd been told that I should ever dine with Lady Quorne in London, I shouldn't have believed them."

"Indeed, you mustn't think I'm not glad to see you!" said Celia. "It feels like going home, so much—so much, that I want to be there. I am so tired. I want to hear the rooks and the organ, and just go to sleep—"

"Yes—and I'm tired, too. But, thank goodness, there's no need to get up to-morrow morning before we like, and we can have breakfast just as late as we please. I hope the man's driving us right? But I wonder at your wanting to go back to Deepweald. I don't—not yet, any way. I wish Reginald would get something in London—perhaps he will, as Lady Quorne seems so kind; not a bit like a countess, and she asked after little Bessy just like anybody might. There—you're better now you've had your cry out, aren't you?"

But it was not a light thing for Celia to cry—the relief came so late as to be in itself bodily pain. Her heart was a reservoir, where the tears for which well-nigh every day had served for a spring, had been gathering for years without an outlet, or rather had been frozen while they gathered. With her father in her life, or with her life in his, she had never dared to break down in this way; the spirit of the Score, present always and everywhere, had called for a tension too harsh and constant to allow of tears. It had given her even false strength enough to force herself through that evening's dinner, though she had felt a hard lump come into her throat as soon as she met the Gavestons in the drawing-room. Bessy, wherever she might be, and under whatever conditions, looked like a woman who had come straight from home, and her alliance with the peerage had not deprived her voice of the tone of her native county. But when she rolled away from the company in a carriage with springs as smooth as those of a dream, and saw through the window the gas-lamps and their suggestive flare, in contrast with the picture of a quiet white moon over tall elms that Bessy had brought her from homeland, what could she do but give in and cry? Her father was not there, and Bessy was a mother, as everybody soon learned—though not her own. She sat up straight, which brought her a timid inch nearer to little Bessy's mother's wing.

"I wish I were little Bessy," said Celia.

"Do you? What an odd thing to say."

"Is it?"

"But you always were saying and doing odd things. My father used very often to talk about you—"

"Tell me, Bessy—am I so very unlike everybody? I wish—I wish I was like you."

"Yes; you always were quite unlike anybody I ever knew—your skin was so dark, and your eyes were so large, and you never even had a flirtation," said Bessy, reaching at once the climax of singularity, and ignorant that, according to Mademoiselle Krasinski, Celia had been the deepest-dyed flirt in Lindenheim. "You never seemed even to have a girl-friend. But of course, as you have gone on the stage, that accounts for it all. I wonder what it would feel like to be on the stage? Reginald has a wonderful memory, except when he forgets things; but I should forget all I had to say at the first word, and stand staring at the people till they wondered what I was there for. No—I don't think you'd like to be me. I think I should like to be you, just to feel what it's like, you know. I don't mean I should like to be a real actress, because that would hardly do. What fun you must have, to be sure."

Evil communications were already beginning to corrupt the good manners of St. Anselm's—to have dined with a peeress and to be riding home with a prima donna were clearly not good for Bessy. But then those who are compelled to live at home with extra sobriety, have surely some little right to put one toe over the traces when they go abroad.

Meanwhile Celia was creeping closer, half-inch by half-inch, under the wing of Mrs. Gaveston, whose mere presence felt like a peaceful rest after those long weeks of whirl. And there was more sympathy between them than any physiognomist would suppose, who judged one by her quiet grey eyes and round pink face, and the other by her eyes of dark splendour and her southern colouring. As all real physiognomists know, the rules of physiognomy are all and always wrong, except when they are right: so that they are doubly untrustworthy. It is to be feared that the new prima donna was uncomfortably like a plain, homely, thatched cottage, which should stand in a garden of common wallflowers and cabbage-roses, but whose owner had buried it among strange-looking ferns, filled its window-frames with stained glass, and labelled it

grandly after his ambitious fancy. There was plenty of hearth-room for lighting a home-fire, but the feeble taper, which alone had been as yet lighted, only looked wonderful from the outside because of the colours through which it shone. Her eyes might be strangely like her great rival's in their southern depth and glow, but it was a simple English soul that looked out through them—as plain and simple as Bessy Gaveston's own. And the idea of fun for her in being torn and dragged into the glare out of her shell! It is true that Celia had never yet learned what is meant by fun, but the word touched a new chord, and stung her.

"Oh, I do hate it all so!" her whole nature cried out loud in her, and with an energy that for the moment scared her chaperon. "No—I oughtn't to say it; I have never said a word like that before, and—but I do. Bessy, please!"

Even Bessy was wise enough, if for nothing else, to feel the cry go through her, and to feel the tears come into her own heart, at the prayer of a shy sister-soul for a few crumbs of common love and sympathy. "Bessy—please," told even her a bitter tale of a life that begged dumbly for a look or a touch as if for a great thing that she dared not hope for, much less demand. The chaperon's arm was as wise as her heart; it went out, and round Celia's waist, as she said:

"What—you hate being on the stage? Then why do you go on it? Of course I thought you liked it, or you wouldn't be there."

"I must, Bessy. But never mind."

"But I do mind—there. If I didn't want to do a thing like that, I wouldn't, and wild horses shouldn't make me."

"Don't speak of it any more, please. I oughtn't to have said a word."

"But I will—and you ought, Celia. I thought people turned actors and actresses because they liked it; it can't be nice to make believe to be somebody else, and learn long speeches and things, if one doesn't like to."

"But people have to live in all sorts of ways they don't like, Bessy."

"Is that why you go on the stage?"

"No—not now."

"Then—?"

"I must—that's all."

"Oh dear! But you never were like anybody. Do you mean Mr. March makes you?"

"No—but I have to."

"Yes. And when you were a child you

had to get up and practise at six in cold frosty mornings—and you never had a day's rest or pleasure—and he used"—"to beat you," she was going to say, according to the traditions of Deepweald, but checked herself. "I know. We had a girl once who lived with you, and she used to say you led the life of a gallow's slave. And now it's the same story, I suppose."

"No!" said Celia. "My father has done right, always—he is doing right now. It is wicked of me to hate anything but not trying to do my best and hardest for him. Oh Bessy, you don't know—you can't know! But oh, it is terrible to feel that the Cleopatra depends on me."

"You sing very nicely, I know, Celia, or else Lady Quorne wouldn't think so. But couldn't anybody else sing in this thing of his if you don't like to? I don't wonder at your being frightened—I know I should be."

"No—nobody but me. You don't know how it has been. He has spent his whole life in writing this part and training me for it, so that he could be sure it would be sung just as he pleased. I didn't understand it all once—but I do now. I only wish I had no voice, Bessy—or I wish I could make myself not care; and then I'd go through it if it killed me without minding anything or being afraid."

"But can't anybody else learn the songs? Couldn't he teach somebody else, like he taught you?"

"In twenty years? Cleopatra comes out in seven days—only six days now."

"Oh, what a sigh! But do you mean to tell me it takes a professional twenty years to learn two or three songs? Why Mr. March once taught me four songs in one week—"

"Yes," said Celia hastily, not caring to dwell upon her father's peculiar method with the amateurs of Deepweald; "but there's another reason why nobody could take my place, even if anyone could study the Cleopatra in six days—"

"Well?"

"Don't you remember he is deaf, Bessy? No—there is no help for it; none. He has gone through with it, and so must I. Yes—I must; and I will."

"Well, all I can say is, that I don't understand. Except that Mr. March is a— Never mind. I don't understand how it can take more fuss to sing a song, than to preach a sermon; and I don't know what would become of St. Anselm's, if Reginald took twenty years over every time he preaches. I'm pretty sure some

of them would go to sleep before he'd doné. But I suppose Lady Quorne knows. You ought to get married, Celia."

"No."

"But yes, I say. You've got no mother, nor father—for Mr. March doesn't count—not a soul belonging to you. It isn't natural; and, for all you're so clever, I see now you're no more fit to go on the stage than my little Bessy—poor little darling. I wish you knew how to flirt, like other girls. What has become of that young man who knew you abroad, and once called on me at Deepweald, and who knows Lady Quorne?"

What indeed? When she had set her lips and said, "I will," she was thinking of something else than the Cleopatra; her crying-fit had left her heart periously softened; and her will was needed, for more than aught else, to harden it against a growing vision of what might have been, which to her was grander, in its rest and tenderness, than all the worship of art and all the glory of song. If she could not feel the single-hearted enthusiasm for the great cause with which her father inspired others, it was because she was feeling the loss of what she had only just begun to know. The one friend whom she trusted without question had failed her, and left her in what others called her coming glory, but which she knew to be her utmost need. If she had dismissed him for duty's sake, what then? A girl has not to learn that a man who loves does not accept such dismissals. Where was he, if his words had ever meant anything more than empty air? The Score was all that was left her; it was indeed a case of "must" and "will."

"He seemed very nice," said Bessy meditatively, "and he was at Oxford with Reginald. And I really don't know who else to think of for you. The young men in Deepweald are not nice at all—quite a different sort than they used to be, when I was a girl. But here we are. And I declare there is Reginald, just at the door. Here we are, you see. How have you been enjoying yourself at your friend's? I'll tell you all about Lady Quorne's when I've put Celia to bed; she's tired, and I promised Lady Quorne to make her keep early hours."

"Glad to see you again, Miss March," said the curate, helping her from the carriage a little clumsily. "So you're in training, eh? I've been at the Temple, seeing my old friend Tom Bloxam—you

know, my dear—of Brasenose, who made the biggest score in my time; and it was just like old times, and we had some capital songs. Ah, it's a good thing to get out of Deepweald once in a blue moon; occasionally, you know."

"The biggest score?" asked Celia, wearily and absently echoing the too-familiar word.

"Yes—a hundred and twenty, and not out. What a—bother this latch-key is, to be sure. But I shall learn the trick in time. There. So you've enjoyed yourselves? That's all right. You're looking very well, Miss March, and I'm delighted to see you. Bessy will be a mother to you, I know, and I'll be a father. What's this letter on the candlestick? Just look at the address, Bessy, there's a good girl—the air seems to have got into my eyes."

"It's for you, Celia."

Celia was not unused to letters now. Prosper had occasion to write to her most days, especially now that the field-night was so near. But this was in German, and smelled of Lindenheim.

"DEAR MISS MARCH"—she read by the light of her bedroom candle, while Bessy stood watching her husband as he vainly struck his fourteenth match to light theirs—"I am just come to London with an engagement, and of course I have heard the first thing of the great things you are going to do. I send a thousand congratulations to the star of Lindenheim—our star. I got your address at the theatre, for I want so much to see you again, if a great prima donna like you will condescend to remember a humble comprimaria like me. I will come and see you to-morrow morning, on the chance of your having time for five minutes' talk about old times. Thine with all thy heart,
ILMA KRASINSKI."

It was natural enough; for Lindenheim meant brotherhood and sisterhood all over the world, not the less fully because brothers and sisters now and then hate one another. Celia had no unkindly recollection of her fellow-student. But could Prosper have read the soul of that letter he would have trembled; and Andrew Gordon's dream of glory for art would have turned into a nightmare. Ilma was only Ilma; but, if eagles scorn flies too much, eagles are not wise.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLVI. LADY SARAH'S MISSION.

TOWARDS the end of June the family at Cross Hall were in great perturbation. In the first place it had been now settled that they were to go back to the great house early in July. This might have been a source of unalloyed gratification. The old marchioness had been made very unhappy by the change to Cross Hall, and had persisted in calling her new home a wretched farmhouse. Both Lady Susanna and Lady Amelia were quite alive to the advantages of the great mansion. Lord George had felt that his position in the country had been very much injured by recent events. This might partly have come from his residence in London; but had, no doubt, been chiefly owing to the loss of influence arising from the late migration. He was glad enough to go back again. But Lady Sarah was strongly opposed to the new movement. "I don't think that mamma should be made liable to be turned out again," she had said to her brother and sisters.

"But mamma is particularly anxious to go," Amelia had replied.

"You can't expect mamma to think correctly about Brotherton," said Lady Sarah. "He is vicious and fickle, and I do not like to feel that any of us should be in his power." But Lady Sarah, who had never been on good terms with her elder brother, was overruled, and everybody knew that in July the family was to return to Manor Cross.

Then there came tidings from London—unauthorised tidings, and, one may say,

undignified tidings—but still tidings which were received with interest. Mrs. Toff had connections with Scumberg's, and heard through these connections that things at Scumberg's were not going on in a happy way. Mrs. Toff's correspondent declared that the marquis had hardly been out of his bed since he had been knocked into the fireplace. Mrs. Toff, who had never loved the dean, and had never approved of that alliance, perhaps made the most of this. But the report, which was first made to the dowager herself, caused very great uneasiness. The old lady said that she must go up to London herself to nurse her son. Then a letter was written by Lady Amelia to her brother, asking for true information. This was the answer which Lady Amelia received:

"DEAR A.,—I'm pretty well, thank you. Don't trouble yourselves.—Yours, B."

"I'm sure he's dying," said the marchioness, "and he's too noble-hearted to speak of his sufferings." Nevertheless she felt that she did not dare to go up to Scumberg's just at present.

Then there came further tidings. Mrs. Toff was told that the Italian marchioness had gone away, and had taken Popenjoy with her. There was not anything necessarily singular in this. When a gentleman is going abroad with his family, he and his family need not as a matter of course travel together. Lord Brotherton had declared his purpose of returning to Italy, and there could be no reason why his wife, with the nurses and the august Popenjoy, should not go before him. It was just such an arrangement as such a man as Lord Brotherton would certainly make. But Mrs. Toff was sure that there was more in it than this. The Italian

marchioness had gone off very suddenly. There had been no grand packing up; but there had been some very angry words. And Popenjoy, when he was taken away, was supposed to be in a very poor condition of health. All this created renewed doubts in the mind of Lord George, or rather, perhaps, renewed hopes. Perhaps, after all, Popenjoy was not Popenjoy. And even if he were, it seemed that everyone concurred in thinking that the poor boy would die. Surely the marquis would not have allowed a sick child to be carried away by an indiscreet Italian mother, if he cared much for the sick child. But then Lord George had no real knowledge of these transactions. All this had come through Mrs. Toff, and he was hardly able to rely upon Mrs. Toff. Could he have communicated with the dean, the dean would have soon found out the truth. The dean would have flown up to London and have known all about it in a couple of hours; but Lord George was not active and clever as the dean.

Then he wrote a letter to his brother as follows:

"MY DEAR BROTHERTON,—We have heard through Mr. Knox that you wish us to move to Manor Cross at once, and we are preparing to do so. It is very kind of you to let us have the house, as Cross Hall is not all that my mother likes, and as there would hardly be room for us should my wife have children. I ought perhaps to have told you sooner that she is expecting such an event. We hear too that you are thinking of starting for Italy very soon, and that the marchioness and Popenjoy have already gone. Would it suit you to tell us something of your future plans? It is not that I want to be inquisitive, but that I should like to know, with reference to your comfort and our own, whether you think that you will be back at Manor Cross next year. Of course we should be very sorry to be in your way, but we should not like to give up Cross Hall till we know that it will not be wanted again.

"I hope you are getting better. I could of course come up to town at a moment's notice, if you wished to see me.—Yours affectionately,
GEORGE GERMAIN."

There was nothing in this letter which ought to have made any brother angry, but the answer which came to it certainly implied that the marquis had received it with indignation.

"MY DEAR GEORGE," the marquis said, "I can give you no guarantee that I

shall not want Manor Cross again, and you ought not to expect it. If you and the family go there, of course I must have rent for Cross Hall. I don't suppose I shall ever recover altogether from the injury that caused brute did me.—
Yours,
B."

"As to your coming family of course I can say nothing. You won't expect me to be very full of joy. Nevertheless, for the honour of the family, I hope it is all right."

There was a brutality about this which for a time made the expectant father almost mad. He tore the letter at once into fragments, so that he might be ready with an answer if asked to show it to his sisters. Lady Sarah had known of his writing, and did ask as to her brother's answer. "Of course he told me nothing," said Lord George. "He is not like any other brother that ever lived."

"May I see his letter?"

"I have destroyed it. It was not fit to be seen. He will not say whether he means to come back next year or not."

"I would not stir, if it were for me to determine," said Lady Sarah. "Nobody ever ought to live in another person's house as long as he has one of his own; and of all men certainly not in Brotherton's." Nevertheless, the migration went on, and early in July the marchioness was once more in possession of her own rooms at Manor Cross, and Mrs. Toff was once again in the ascendant.

But what was to be done about Mary? Had Popenjoy been reported to enjoy robust health, and had Mary been as Mary was a month or two since, the marchioness and Lady Susanna would have been contented that the present separation should have been permanent. They would at any rate have taken no steps to put an end to it, which would not have implied abject submission on Mary's part. But now things were so altered! If this Popenjoy should die, and if Mary should have a son, Mary's position would be one which they could not afford to overlook. Though Mary should be living in absolute rebellion with that horrid dean, still her Popenjoy would in course of time be the Popenjoy, and nothing that any Germain could do would stand in her way. Her Popenjoy would be Popenjoy as soon as the present marquis should die, and the family estates would all in due time be his! Her position had been becoming daily more honourable as these rumours were received. Everyone at Manor Cross,

down to the boy in the kitchen, felt that her dignity had been immeasurably increased. Her child should now certainly be born at Manor Cross, though the Deanery would have been quite good enough had the present Popenjoy been robust. Something must be done. The marchioness was clear that Mary should be taken into favour and made much of—even hinted that she should not be asked to make shirts and petticoats—if only she could be separated from the pestilential dean. She spoke in private to her son, who declared that nothing would separate Mary from her father. "I don't think I could entertain him after what he did to Brotherton," said the marchioness, bursting into tears.

There were great consultations at Manor Cross, in which the wisdom of Lady Sarah and Lady Susanna, and sometimes the good offices of Lady Alice Holdenough, were taxed to the utmost. Lady Sarah had since the beginning of these latter troubles been Mary's best friend, though neither Mary nor the dean had known of her good services. She had pretty nearly understood the full horror of the accusation brought by the marquis, and had in her heart acquitted the dean. Though she was hard she was very just. She believed no worse evil of Mary than that she had waltzed, when her husband had wished her not to do so. To Lady Sarah all waltzing was an abomination, and disobedience to legitimate authority was abominable also. But then Mary had been taken to London, and had been thrown into temptation, and was very young. Lady Sarah knew that her own life was colourless, and was contented. But she could understand that women differently situated should not like a colourless existence. She had seen Adelaide Houghton and her sister-in-law together, and had known that her brother's lot had fallen in much the better place, and to her, any separation between those whom God had bound together was shocking and wicked. Lady Susanna was louder and less just. She did not believe that Mary had done anything to merit expulsion from the family; but she did think that her return to it should be accompanied by sackcloth and ashes. Mary had been pert to her, and she was not prone to forgive. Lady Alice had no opinion, could say nothing about it; but would be happy if, by her services, she could assuage matters.

"Does she ever talk of him?" Lady Susanna asked.

"Not to me; I don't think she dares. But whenever he goes there she is delighted to see him."

"He has not been for the last ten days," said Lady Sarah.

"I don't think he will ever go again—unless it be to fetch her," said Lady Susanna. "I don't see how he can keep on going there, when she won't do as he bids her. I never heard of such a thing! Why should she choose to live with her father when she is his wife? I can't understand it at all."

"There has been some provocation," said Lady Sarah.

"What provocation? I don't know of any. Just to please her fancy, George had to take a house in London, and live there against his own wishes."

"It was natural that she should go to the Deanery for a few days; but when she was there no one went to see her."

"Why did she not come here first?" said Lady Susanna. "Why did she take upon herself to say where she would go, instead of leaving it to her husband? Of course it was the dean. How can any man be expected to endure that his wife should be governed by her father instead of by himself? I think George has been very forbearing."

"You have hardly heard the whole story," said Lady Sarah. "Nor do I wish to tell it. Things were said which never should have been spoken. If you will have me, Alice, I will go to Brotherton for a day or two, and then I will go and see her."

And so it was arranged. No one in the house was told of the new plan, Lady Susanna having with difficulty been brought to promise silence. Lady Sarah's visit was of course announced, and that alone created great surprise, as Lady Sarah very rarely left home. The marchioness had two or three floods of tears over it, and suggested that the carriage would be wanted for the entire day. This evil, however, was altogether escaped, as Lady Alice had a carriage of her own. "I am sure I don't know who is to look after Mrs. Green," said the marchioness. Mrs. Green was an old woman of ninety, who was supported by Germain charity, and was visited almost daily by Lady Sarah. But Lady Amelia promised that she would undertake Mrs. Green. "Of course I'm nobody," said the marchioness. Mrs. Toff and all who knew the family

were sure that the marchioness would, in truth, enjoy her temporary freedom from her eldest daughter's control.

Whatever might have been Lord George's suspicion, he said nothing about it. It had not been by agreement with him that the ladies of the family had abstained from calling on his wife. He had expressed himself in very angry terms as to the dean's misconduct in keeping her in Brotherton, and in his wrath had said more than once that he would never speak to the dean again. He had not asked anyone to go there; but neither had he asked them not to do so. In certain of his moods he was indignant with his sisters for their treatment of his wife; and then again he would say to himself that it was impossible that they should go into the dean's house after what the dean had done. Now, when he heard that his eldest sister was going to the Close, he said not a word.

On the day of her arrival Lady Sarah knocked at the Deanery door alone. Up to this moment she had never put her foot in the house. Before the marriage she had known the dean but slightly, and the visiting to be done by the family very rarely fell to her share. The streets of Brotherton were almost strange to her, so little was she given to leave the sphere of her own duties. In the hall, at the door of his study, she met the dean. He was so surprised that he hardly knew how to greet her. "I am come to call upon Mary," said Lady Sarah, very brusquely.

"Better late than never," said the dean, with a smile.

"I hope so," said Lady Sarah, very solemnly. "I hope that I am not doing that which ought not to be done. May I see her?"

"Of course you can see her. I daresay she will be delighted. Is your carriage here?"

"I am staying with my sister. Shall I go upstairs?"

Mary was in the garden, and Lady Sarah was alone for a few minutes in the drawing-room. Of course she thought the time was spent in conference by the father and daughter; but the dean did not even see his child. He was anxious enough himself that the quarrel should be brought to an end, if only that end could be reached by some steps to be taken first by the other side. Mary, as she entered the room, was almost frightened, for Lady Sarah had certainly been the greatest of

the bugbears when she was living at Manor Cross. "I am come to congratulate you," said Lady Sarah, putting her hand out straight before her.

"Better late than never." Mary did not say so, as her father had done, but only thought it. "Thank you," she said, in a very low voice. "Has anyone else come?"

"No; no one else. I am with Alice, and as I have very, very much to say, I have come alone. Oh, Mary, dear Mary, is not this sad?" Mary was not at all disposed to yield, or to acknowledge that the sadness was, in any degree, her fault; but she remembered, at the moment, that Lady Sarah had never called her "dear Mary" before. "Don't you wish that you were back with George?"

"Of course I do. How can I wish anything else?"

"Why don't you go back to him?"

"Let him come here and fetch me, and be friends with papa. He promised that he would come and stay here. Is he well, Sarah?"

"Yes; he is well."

"Quite well? Give him my love—my best love. Tell him that in spite of everything I love him better than all the world."

"I am sure you do."

"Yes; of course I do. I could be so happy now if he would come to me."

"You can go to him. I will take you if you wish it."

"You don't understand," said Mary.

"What don't I understand?"

"About papa."

"Will he not let you go to your husband?"

"I suppose he would let me go; but if I were gone what would become of him?"

Lady Sarah did not, in truth, understand this. "When he gave you to be married," she said, "of course he knew that you must go away from him and live with your husband. A father does not expect a married daughter to stay in his own house."

"But he expects to be able to go to hers. He does not expect to be quarrelled with by everybody. If I were to go to Manor Cross, papa couldn't even come and see me."

"I think he could."

"You don't know papa if you fancy he would go into any house in which he was not welcome. Of course I know that you have all quarrelled with him. You think, because he beat the marquis up in London, that he oughtn't ever to be spoken

again. But I love him for what he did more dearly than ever. He did it for my sake. He was defending me, and defending George. I have done nothing wrong. If it is only for George's sake, I will never admit that I have deserved to be treated in this way. None of you have come to see me before, since I came back from London, and now George doesn't come."

"We should all have been kind to you if you had come to us first."

"Yes; and then I should never have been allowed to be here at all. Let George come and stay here, if it is only for two days, and be kind to papa, and then I will go with him to Manor Cross."

Lady Sarah was much surprised by the courage and persistence of the young wife's plea. The girl had become a woman, and was altered in appearance. She certainly looked older, but then she was certainly much more beautiful than before. She was dressed, not richly, but with care, and looked like a woman of high family. Lady Sarah, who never changed either the colour or the material of her brown morning-gown, liked to look at her, telling herself that, should it ever be this woman's fate to be Marchioness of Brotherton, she would not in appearance disgrace the position. "I hope you can understand that we are very anxious about you," she said.

"I don't know."

"You might know, then. Your baby will be a Germain."

"Ah—yes—for that! You can't think I am happy without George. I am longing all day long from morning to night, that he will come back to me. But after all that has happened, I must do what papa advises. If I were just to go to Manor Cross now, and allow myself to be carried there alone, you would all feel that I had been—forgiven. Isn't that true?"

"You would be very welcome."

"Susanna would forgive me, and your mother. And I should be like a girl who has been punished, and who is expected to remember ever so long that she has been naughty. I won't be forgiven, except by George, and he has nothing to forgive. You would all think me wicked if I were there, because I would not live in your ways."

"We should not think you wicked, Mary."

"Yes; you would. You thought me wicked before."

"Don't you believe we love you, Mary?"

She considered a moment before she made a reply, but then made it very clearly. "No," she said, "I don't think you do. George loves me. Oh, I hope he loves me!"

"You may be quite sure of that. And I love you."

"Yes; just as you love all people, because the Bible tells you. That is not enough."

"I will love you like a sister, Mary, if you will come back to us."

She liked being asked. She was longing to be once more with her husband. She desired of all things to be able to talk to him on her coming hopes. There was something in the tone of Lady Sarah's voice, different from the tones of old, which had its effect. She would promise to go if only some slightest concession could be made, which should imply that neither she nor her father had given just cause of offence. And she did feel—she was always feeling—that her husband ought to remember that she had never brought counter-charges against him. She had told no one of Mrs. Houghton's letter. She was far too proud to give the slightest hint that she too had her grievance. But surely he should remember it. "I should like to go," she said.

"Then come back with me to-morrow." Lady Sarah had come only on this business, and if the business were completed there would be no legitimate reason for her prolonged sojourn at Brotherton.

"Would George come here for one night?"

"Surely, Mary, you would not drive a bargain with your husband?"

"But papa!"

"Your father can only be anxious for your happiness."

"Therefore I must be anxious for his. I can't say that I'll go without asking him."

"Then ask him, and come in and see me at Alice's house this afternoon. And tell your father that I say you shall be received with all affection."

Mary made no promise that she would do even this as Lady Sarah took her leave; but she did at once consult her father. "Of course you can go if you like it, dearest."

"But you!"

"Never mind me. I am thinking only of you. They will be different to you now that they think you will be the mother of the heir."

"Would you take me, and stay there, for one night?"

"I don't think I could do that, dear. I do not consider that I have been exactly asked."

"But if they will ask you?"

"I cannot ask to be asked. To tell the truth, I am not at all anxious to be entertained at Manor Cross. They would always be thinking of that fireplace into which the marquis fell."

The difficulty was very great, and Mary could not see her way through it. She did not go to Dr. Holdenough's house that afternoon, but wrote a very short note to Lady Sarah, begging that George might come over and talk to her.

CHAPTER XLVII. "THAT YOUNG FELLOW IN THERE."

A DAY or two after this Lord George did call at the Deanery, but stayed there only for a minute or two, and on that occasion did not even speak of Mary's return to Manor Cross. He was considerably flurried, and showed his wife the letter which had caused his excitement. It was from his brother, and like most of the marquis's letters was very short.

"I think you had better come up and see me. I'm not very well. B."

That was the entire letter, and he was now on his way to London.

"Do you think it is much, George?"

"He would not write like that unless he were really ill. He has never recovered from the results of that—accident."

Then it occurred to Mary that if the marquis were to die, and Popenjoy were to die, she would at once be the Marchioness of Brotherton, and that people would say that her father had raised her to the title by—killing the late lord. And it would be so. There was something so horrible in this that she trembled as she thought of it. "Oh, George!"

"It is very—very sad."

"It was his fault; wasn't it? I would give all the world that he were well; but it was his fault." Lord George was silent. "Oh, George, dear George, acknowledge that. Was it not so? Do you not think so? Could papa stand by and hear him call me such names as that? Could you have done so?"

"A man should not be killed for an angry word."

"Papa did not mean to kill him!"

"I can never be reconciled to the man who has taken the life of my brother."

"Do you love your brother better than me?"

"You and your father are not one."

"If this is to be said of him I will always be one with papa. He did it for my sake and for yours. If they send him to prison I will go with him. George, tell the truth about it."

"I always tell the truth," he said angrily.

"Did he not do right to protect his girl's name? I will never leave him now; never. If everybody is against him, I will never leave him."

No good was to be got from the interview. Whatever progress Lady Sarah may have made was altogether undone by the husband's sympathy for his injured brother. Mary declared to herself that if there must be two sides, if there must be a real quarrel, she could never be happy again, but that she certainly would not now desert her father. Then she was left alone. Ah, what would happen if the man were to die? Would any woman ever have risen to high rank in so miserable a manner? In her tumult of feelings she told her father everything, and was astonished by his equanimity. "It may be so," he said, "and if so, there will be considerable inconvenience."

"Inconvenience, papa!"

"There will be a coroner's inquest, and perhaps some kind of trial. But when the truth comes out no English jury will condemn me."

"Who will tell the truth, papa?"

The dean knew it all, and was well aware that there would be no one to tell the truth on his behalf, no one to tell it in such guise that a jury would be entitled to accept the telling as evidence. A verdict of manslaughter, with punishment at the discretion of the judge, would be the probable result. But the dean did not choose to add to his daughter's discomfort by explaining this. "The chances are that this wretched man is dying. No doubt his health is bad. How should the health of such a man be good? But had he been so hurt as to die from it, the doctor would have found something out long since. He may be dying, but he is not dying from what I did to him." The dean was disturbed, but in his perturbation he remembered that if the man were to die, there would be nothing but that little alien Popenjoy between his daughter and the title.

Lord George hurried up to town, and

took a room for himself at an hotel in Jermyn Street. He would not go to Soumberg's, as he did not wish to mix his private life with that of his brother. That afternoon he went across, and was told that his brother would see him at three o'clock the next day. Then he interrogated Mrs. Walker as to his brother's condition. Mrs. Walker knew nothing about it, except that the marquis lay in bed during the most of his time, and that Dr. Pullbody was there every day. Now Dr. Pullbody was an eminent physician, and had the marquis been dying from an injury in his back, an eminent surgeon would have been required. Lord George dined at his club on a mutton-chop and a half-pint of sherry, and then found himself terribly dull. What could he do with himself? Whither could he betake himself? So he walked across Piccadilly and went to the old house in Berkeley Square.

He had certainly become very sick of the woman there. He had discussed the matter with himself, and had found out that he did not care one straw for her. He had acknowledged to himself that she was a flirt, a mass of affectation, and a liar. And yet he went to her house. She would be soft to him and would flatter him. She would make him welcome, and in spite of his manifest neglect would try, for the hour, to make him comfortable.

He was shown up into the drawing-room, and there he found Jack De Baron, Guss Mildmay, and Mr. Houghton, fast asleep. The host was awakened up to bid him welcome, but was soon slumbering again. De Baron and Guss Mildmay had been playing bagatelle—or flirting—in the back drawing-room, and after a word or two returned to their game. "Ill, is he?" said Mrs. Houghton, speaking of the marquis; "I suppose he has never recovered from that terrible blow."

"I have not seen him yet, but I am told that Dr. Pullbody is with him."

"What a tragedy—if anything should happen! She has gone away; has she not?"

"I do not know. I did not ask."

"I think she has gone, and that she has taken the child with her; a poor puny thing. I made Houghton go there to enquire, and he saw the child. I hear from my father that we are to congratulate you."

"Things are too sad for congratulation."

"It is horrible; is it not? And Mary is with her father."

"Yes, she's at the Deanery."

"Is that right?—when all this is going on?"

"I don't think anything is right," he said, gleefully.

"Has she—quarrelled with you, George?" At the sound of his christian-name from the wife's lips he looked round at the sleeping husband. He was quite sure that Mr. Houghton would not like to hear his wife call him George. "He sleeps like a church," said Mrs. Houghton, in a low voice. The two were sitting close together, and Mr. Houghton's arm-chair was at a considerable distance. The occasional knocking of the balls, and the continued sound of voices, was to be heard from the other room. "If you have separated from her I think you ought to tell me."

"I saw her to-day as I came through."

"But she does not go to Manor Cross?"

"She has been at the Deanery since she went down."

Of course this woman knew of the quarrel which had taken place in London. Of course she had been aware that Lady George had stayed behind in opposition to her husband's wishes. Of course she had learned every detail as to the Kappa-kappa. She took it for granted that Mary was in love with Jack De Baron, and thought it quite natural that she should be so. "She never understood you as I should have done, George," whispered the lady. Lord George again looked at the sleeping man, who grunted and moved. "He would hardly hear a pistol go off."

"Shouldn't I?" said the sleeping man, rubbing away the flies from his nose. Lord George wished himself back at his club.

"Come out into the balcony," said Mrs. Houghton. She led the way and he was obliged to follow her. There was a balcony to this house surrounded with full-grown shrubs, so that they who stood there could hardly be seen from the road below. "He never knows what anyone is saying." As she spoke she came close up to her visitor. "At any rate he has the merit of never troubling me or himself by any jealousies."

"I should be very sorry to give him cause," said Lord George.

"What's that you say?" Poor Lord George had simply been awkward, having intended no severity. "Have you given him no cause?"

"I meant that I should be sorry to trouble him."

"Ah—h! That is a different thing." Then there was a pause. "You do love

me, George?" There was a beautiful moon that was bright through the green foliage, and there was a smell of sweet exotics, and the garden of the Square was mysteriously pretty as it lay below them in the moonlight. He stood silent, making no immediate answer to this appeal. He was in truth plucking up his courage for a great effort. "Say that you love me. After all that is passed you must love me." Still he was silent. "George, will you not speak?"

"Yes; I will speak."

"Well, sir!"

"I do not love you."

"What! But you are laughing at me. You have some scheme or some plot going on."

"I have nothing going on. It is better to say it. I love my wife."

"Psha! love her—yes, as you would a doll or any pretty plaything. I loved her too, till she took it into her stupid head to quarrel with me. I don't grudge her such love as that. She is a child."

It occurred to Lord George at the moment that his wife had certainly more than an infantine will of her own. "You don't know her," he said.

"And now, after all, you tell me to my face that you do not love me! Why have you sworn so often that you did?" He hadn't sworn it often. He had never sworn it at all since she had rejected him. He had been induced to admit a passion in the most meagre terms. "Do you own yourself to be false?" she asked.

"I am true to my wife."

"Your wife! And is that to be all?"

"Yes, Mrs. Houghton; that had better be all."

"Then why did you come here? Why are you here now?" She had not expected such courage from him, and almost thought more of him now than she had ever thought before. "How dare you come to this house at all?"

"Perhaps I should not have come."

"And I am nothing to you?" she asked in her most plaintive accents. "After all those scenes at Manor Cross you can think of me with indifference?" There had been no scenes, and as she spoke he shook his head, intending to disclaim them. "Then go!" How was he to go? Was he to wake Mr. Houghton? Was he to disturb that other loving couple? Was he to say no word of farewell to her? "Oh, stay," she added, "and unsay it all—unsay it all, and give no reason, and it shall be as

though it were never said." Then she seized him by the arm, and looked up into his eyes. Mr. Houghton moved restlessly in his chair and coughed aloud. "He'll be off again in half a moment," said Mrs. Houghton. Then he was silent, and she was silent, looking at him. And he heard a word or two come clearly from the back drawing-room.

"You will, Jack; won't you, dear Jack?"

The ridicule of the thing touched even him. "I think I had better go," he said.

"Then go!"

"Good-night, Mrs. Houghton."

"I will not say good-night. I will never speak to you again. You are not worth speaking to. You are false. I knew that men could be false, but not so false as you. Even that young fellow in there has some heart. He loves your—darling wife, and will be true to his love." She was a very devil in her wickedness. He started as though he had been stung, and rushed inside for his hat. "Hallo, Germain, are you going?" said the man of the house, rousing himself for the moment.

"Yes, I am going. Where did I leave my hat?"

"You put it on the piano," said Mrs. Houghton in her mildest voice, standing at the window. Then he seized his hat and went off. "What a very stupid man he is," she said, as she entered the room.

"A very good sort of fellow," said Mr. Houghton.

"He's a gentleman all round," said Jack De Baron. Jack knew pretty well how the land lay, and could guess what had occurred.

"I am not so sure of that," said the lady. "If he were a gentleman as you say all round, he would not be so much afraid of his elder brother. He has come up to town now merely because Brotherton sent to him, and when he went to Scumberg's the marquis would not see him. He is just like his sisters, priggish, punctilious, and timid."

"He has said something nasty to you," remarked her husband, "or you would not speak of him like that."

She had certainly said something very nasty to him. As he returned to his club, he kept on repeating to himself her last words: "He loves your darling wife." Into what a mass of trouble had he not fallen through the dean's determination that his daughter should live in London! He was told on all sides that this man

was in love with his wife, and he knew, he had so much evidence for knowing, that his wife liked the man. And now he was separated from his wife, and she could go whither her father chose to take her. For aught that he could do she might be made to live within the reach of this young scoundrel. No doubt his wife would come back if he would agree to take her back on her own terms. She would again belong to him, if he would agree to take the dean along with her. But taking the dean would be to put himself into the dean's leading-strings. The dean was strong and imperious; and then the dean was rich. But anything would be better than losing his wife. Faulty as he thought her to be, she was sweet as no one else was sweet. Her voice was music to him; her least touch was joy. There was a freshness about the very things which she wore which pervaded his senses. There was a homeliness about her beauty which made her more lovely in her own room than when dressed for balls and parties. And yet he had heard it said that she was declared to be the most lovely woman that had come to London that season. And now she was about to become the mother of his child. He was thoroughly in love with his wife. And yet he was told that his wife was "Jack De Baron's darling!"

PENAL SERVITUDE.

PENAL servitude is one of many experiments which have been made in secondary punishments. The system has been carefully elaborated, and the authorities make no secret of their conviction that it has been brought to absolute perfection. It may be conceded at once that it is a very great improvement upon previous systems of imprisonment; but a parliamentary committee will probably be of opinion that it is susceptible of further improvement still. Up to a comparatively recent date, the English system of imprisonment was atrocious. When the sentence was nominally that of imprisonment, it was often in reality one of torture and murder. If criminals had sinned against society, society still more criminally sinned against prisoners. What English prisons were before the time of John Howard and Elizabeth Fry forms a scandal to humanity itself. The early days of the transportation system—in

the hulks and in the Australian colonies—to a considerable extent recalled these horrors; but it should be said that in course of time they received great mitigation. Transportation had the effect of exiling a large proportion of the dangerous classes from the country; and it is still a question among jurists whether it is not the best kind of long sentences. But the time came when the Australian colonies, with the exception of West Australia, resolutely refused to admit any further convicts. The government of the day was thrown into a state of very serious perplexity. Almost accidentally, and very gradually, the system of penal servitude grew up. It so happened that, some years before the point of extreme difficulty had been reached, a select committee on harbours of refuge had recommended the construction of the Portland Breakwater, to secure a naval station in war, and "to afford shelter and safety to the commercial marine in the long line of coast extending from Plymouth and Torbay to Portsmouth and the Downs." A large amount of convict labour was now at the profitable disposal of the Government. Buildings were run up for the accommodation of a thousand convicts; and after the foundation of the Portland Breakwater had been laid by the Prince Consort, the great work was proceeded with. It was found that another vast prison might easily be made available. At Prince's Town, in the heart of Dartmoor, was an immense range of buildings, which had been used for French prisoners during the long Continental War. The huge barracks were falling into ruins; in places the roof was blown off, and the wall was blown in. A batch of convicts was sent down to make the place habitable, while proper buildings on the approved plan were to be constructed. The plan was also designed to construct up the Medway a chain of artificial basins, that would be able to contain our Fleet. A large prison was constructed at Chatham, and since then, another at Portsmouth, where immense public works have been taken in hand. In 1852, the transportation system was definitely surrendered, and the new punishment, with the corresponding new term of "penal servitude," was invented. In 1863 a Royal Commission was appointed to examine into the working of the system, and one result of the Act of Parliament based upon its report was, that no sentence in future was to be for a less term than five years.

The present convict-prisons are Millbank, Pentonville, Brixton, Chatham, Dartmoor, Parkhurst, Portland, Portsmouth, Fulham, Woking. To these has to be added Borstal, which is an adjunct to Chatham, and Wormwood Scrubs, which is still in process of erection. Fulham is a prison for women only. One part of Woking, and one part of Millbank, are also set apart for females. In all these prisons there is the same plan of administration; the same directors make the same kind of visit; the same diet and clothing are given; there are the same hours of labour, rest, and exercise; there are the same kitchens, bakeries, and "shops." In each prison there is the chapel and the schoolroom. In each is the glittering guard-room, with the array of shining chains and fetters, and the dreadful triangle, to which refractory criminals, under the sentence of directors, are tied up for the lash. In all "a system" prevails, silent, inflexible, inexorable. Human equity is a very rough-and-ready sort of article; it is built up on averages and statistics; it looks to the rule, and not to the individual. The schoolmaster and the chaplain may modify their action to the individual case; the doctor may regulate the kind of labour, or the amount of a flogging; but the governor has very little power in qualifying the nature of the penalty to suit the nature of the case.

Under all the sameness, however, of which we have spoken, the prisons present distinct points of difference. These relate to the character of the men, the character of the governor, and the character of the scenery. Somehow, at Chatham and Portland, convicts have a bad name beyond the inmates of other prisons. For instance, they have been known, beyond any other prisoners, to have had serious riots. Then some of the governors are popular, and others very much the reverse. Convicts are very keen observers of those who are set over them. One of the convicts, who has turned author, declares of a certain governor, that he was a dandy in his dress, and inefficient in his duties. There was one governor, whose name we shall not give, whose life was attempted five times within a single year. Then the situation of some other prisons is of great scenic beauty. Portland overlooks the beautiful bay of Weymouth, the blue Channel, and that strange conflict of currents, which is called the Race of Portland. It is a steep,

shadowless place; quite a large town has grown up in connection with the convict establishment; all about you may see the yellow jackets busy at the quarries, and the white glare of stone oppresses you everywhere. Dartmoor is an extremely interesting prison. While the heavy work at Portland is in the quarries, that of Dartmoor is in the fields. A French writer says: "For seven months in the year it is a vraie Sibéria, covered with unmelting snow. When the snows go away, the mists appear. Imagine the tyranny of perfidious Albion in sending human beings to such a place!" In those days there was dense overcrowding, and the common sanitary precautions were unknown. English officials did not want to be cruel to their foreign prisoners; they were only ignorant and stupid. The graveyard of these unfortunate men is now neatly kept, and there is a touching monument to their memory, with the time-honoured inscription, "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." The climate, though severe, is remarkably healthy; consumption is said to be almost unknown among the natives of Dartmoor, and the place, whose climate was once so much dreaded, is now regarded as a health resort. Again, the situation of Woking, on its pleasant breezy site, makes the place eminently fitted for a sanatorium.

Considerable attention has been drawn to a narrative, recently published, of a convict who was sentenced to five years' penal servitude, and endured four of them.* It is not the only narrative of its kind, but it is the latest, and the most interesting. Anyone who is acquainted with the working of our convict system, will find proofs of its genuine character in every page. Its author does not deny that he was guilty, but says that there was someone who was worse than he was. The prosecution recommended him to mercy, and he was delighted to find that he received the mildest sentence which the law allowed. He found, too, that by earning all the marks he could, he would obtain a remission of one year and a little over from his sentence. He determined in every way to conform himself to the rules of the convict system, and under circumstances of great temptation at one time, and of great provocation at another, he adhered steadily to the scheme of life

* Five Years' Penal Servitude. By One who has Endured it. Richard Bentley and Son.

which he proposed to himself. On two occasions he was deprived of marks, and both times unjustly; he succeeded in having them restored to him. Not even his own children knew of his captivity. They thought that he was on a distant journey. After his release, he went abroad for a year, and then appears to have settled into a business life once more. He may be forgiven, if he neglects, according to his own candid confession, to report himself to the police regularly once a month, for such a step would be his ruin.

Our convict was taken to Millbank after receiving his sentence. There he was to spend nine months in separate confinement, never leaving his cell, except for chapel or exercise. Each prisoner here lost his identity; he henceforth became a mere numeral. Each had his bath, was cropped close, and was supplied with Government raiment, freely stamped all over with the broad arrow. A convict is liable to be stripped on the slightest provocation, and for weeks together may have his hair clipped every night of his life. Number Twenty thousand and One found, however, that there were many things for which he ought to be thankful, even in a convict prison. He had plenty of food, good and wholesome; although prisoners of a robusier kind might not always find it sufficient. He had a good bed, with plenty of clothing, and plenty of time for sleep. Many prisoners, especially those from the agricultural districts, had never been so well off before for clothing, food, and shelter. Then there were doctor, schoolmaster, and clergyman to look after him. Sir Edmund Du Cane, the chief of the prison directors, somewhere uses the remarkable expression, that the "convict" is the "patient" of the state, and certainly the patient's condition is rigorously looked after; wine, food, and efficacious medicines liberally dispensed. Our convict was naturally rather a particular man. He managed to get his morning tub, or, at least, a wash all over; after seeing the authorities, he got leave to wash his hands before dinner; he made a great effort also, to obtain tooth-brush and nail scissors. He did not much admire being shifted from his cell to an "associated room," though afterwards he preferred it. It so happened, fortunately for him, that he had a physical infirmity which exempted him from hard work, and he was therefore put to light employment, and rose to

a position of trust, superior to that held by many prison officials. It will be seen, therefore, that the English system still leaves some kind of hope for the convict. In this respect, the English system contrasts favourably with those of some other foreign countries; Spain, for instance whose convict system has lately been depicted in frightful colours by Mr. Rose, in his work, *Among the Spanish People*. Even in the case of a sentence for life, after a space of fifteen years there is a remission of the full penalty. Our convict criticises rather freely both chaplain and doctor, and he mentions circumstances, which, if uncontradicted, would be very little to their credit. There is a capital library in each prison, and the only rule which he systematically infringed, was that prisoners should not exchange books with one another. Various prisoners have been known to make great progress in science and the languages. Having more bread than he wanted, he used to feed the sparrows from his window, and the bold London birds would flock to him in considerable numbers. The worst charge of all brought against "the system," is the conduct of the warders. Some of these men have very indifferent characters. Many of them displayed great brutality and injustice towards the convicts. Indeed, there is not much to choose, so far as a system of restraint and of hours of labour go, between the condition of many warders and the convicts themselves. There was one wretched warder, in particular, who had a dirty home and unpunctual wife, who used to come back to his duties, when the inexorable bell rang, looking miserable and half-starved. It is a remarkable fact that, in all the convict prisons, there is a great deal of tobacco consumed, invariably by chewing, among the convicts. There is a regular tariff for tobacco among prisoners, the price ranging from tenpence to a shilling an ounce. It is impossible that this could be provided by any one but the warders.

It does not seem that the writer is actuated by any unfair or vindictive feeling towards the warders. On the contrary, he has nothing but good words to give to the kind-hearted old Irishman who was his warder at Millbank, and to other officials who managed to secure the respect and obedience of the prisoners. A great thing necessary is, that a warder should have a large share of the feelings of humanity and sympathy. On one occa-

sion, when the writer of this present article was passing through the wards of a convict prison, he observed a man entering his cell in a state of the greatest rage and irritation. If the warder had given any rough usage, the poor fellow would doubtless have committed some breach of the rules, which would have been followed by condign punishment. But the present writer observed that the warder spoke in a very brotherly and persuasive way to the man, and he was permitted to add a little well-meant advice of his own. The man was speedily pacified and quiet. So much of the treatment of the prisoners depends on the use which the warders make of the great power entrusted to them, that we are afraid there must be a large amount of substantial truth in the imputations brought against the warders, and that there is a considerable percentage of black sheep among them. The only remedy that can be suggested is the employment of a better class of men and greater care in their selection, with better pay, and more holidays than eleven days in the year.

After a certain time, the convict had to be transferred from the separate confinement of Millbank to one of the great penal establishments. He accidentally heard an official say something about Paddington Station. This told him, to his great joy, that he was to go to Dartmoor. On the transfer of the convicts some very curious transactions are said to have happened, which we believe must be new to the authorities. A prisoner, with a twenty-year sentence, may manage to exchange places with a man who has only seven. But the seven-year man may be a regular jail-bird, who has not been long out of prison, and is pretty certain to return to it again. The twenty-year man may be in for forgery, and may have plenty of friends and money outside the prison-walls, and the other poor man may have wife and family whom he desires to befriend. The arrangement is soon made. A bargain is struck. When the men are turned over from the warders of the former prison to a new one, "who don't know them from Adam," the cards of the number are adroitly changed, and the well-to-do convict, if such an expression may be applied, fulfils a shorter term, and, on his release, gets away from the country. Our convict gives a curious account of his transfer from Millbank to Dartmoor. In going through London in the prison-van his eye

eagerly sought the theatrical announcements, the newspaper placards, and the advertisements on the walls. At the Great Western Station the convicts earnestly begged the bystanders to give them some tobacco. They seem to have had a good deal given them, and the warders made rather a show of preventing it than really doing so. A somewhat similar scene took place when they changed carriages at Plymouth. At Tavistock they left the train, and vans were in readiness to take them to Prince's Town. They got out to walk the hills, and the glorious Devonian prospect of moors, rocks, fens, sea, and woods came like a vision of beauty upon prisoners who had been so long immured between stone walls. We remember the case of one poor woman, of most abandoned life, who was sent from London, or some great town, to the penitentiary at Bovey Tracey. For the first time in her life she saw the glorious Devonshire prospect. She burst into tears, and this gracious emotion worked a healthier change in her than all other influences up to that time. We remember hearing of a touching incident which once happened on this road; the snows had fallen heavily. They fall very heavily in this region; on one occasion some soldiers, marching from Plymouth to Prince's Town, lost their way and lost their lives in a snowdrift. On the occasion to which we refer a gang of convicts had been employed to clear the road, that provisions might be brought up to the jail. The men did a great deal of hard work, and the contractor asked permission to give each of them half a pint of beer. It was a great treat to men who had not tasted beer for years. Some tossed it off at once; others lovingly took their time over it, for every drop was precious. It is still a legend of the neighbourhood how those men enjoyed their beer.

Our convict may, we think, be trusted the details which he gives. But just as our soldiers, when serving abroad, are not acquainted with the nature of their campaigns and battles till they read about them in the newspapers, so there are various points in the convict system which he does not understand, and even details about Dartmoor with which he is unacquainted. He seems to be under the idea that all the convict establishments entail a vast expense upon Government. Would he be surprised to learn, as the familiar expression goes, that some of these huge palaces of crime pay all their expenses,

and show a considerable sum in their favour? It is the increasing aim of the directors of prisons to make these institutions self-supporting. He is curiously mistaken when he says: "No official pretends, for one moment, to say that convict labour can ever be made to pay for the expenses of maintaining the establishments." In a blue-book before us, we find it stated that in the cases of Portsmouth and Chatham prisons, the earnings have exceeded the cost of maintenance by three pounds twelve shillings and sevenpence, and six pounds eight shillings and eightpence per head respectively. At Portland the convicts cost the country only about forty-five shillings a head. Then he is mistaken in supposing that all prisoners who can do blacksmiths' work are immediately sent to these shops. The authorities first carefully satisfy themselves whether the men can be trusted with what might prove dangerous weapons in their hands. He calls Dartmoor "a howling wilderness," and says that there are only barracks and the houses of a few shopkeepers, but would recommend some of our aspiring artists to visit this place." Again, "would he be surprised to hear" that artists flock in numbers to Dartmoor; that the place has a good hotel and various lodging-houses, whither tourists and visitants resort? He says that there is a motto over the prison-gate which he was unable to decipher. We may mention that the motto is "Parcere subjectis," which, we believe, is a truer motto for the convicts than for the unfortunate French prisoners to whom it was originally applied. As we have followed our convict so far, we may note his farewell to her Majesty's hospitality. The Government certainly took leave of him in a most ungracious and disobliging manner. The convict is presented with a suit of shoddy, which would not last him a month, and which stamped him as a convict as much as a broad arrow could have done. A special convict's ticket is obtained for him, and a man going up for his discharge is manacled and handcuffed as if he had just been arrested. All this shows unnecessary cruelty. We part with our emancipated convict with the respect due to an erring but repentant man, who has patiently endured his punishment and bravely retrieved his past. We observe that he concludes his work with the expression of a fervent wish that a commission of enquiry may be appointed, and this aspiration, at least, is accomplished.

Some years ago a somewhat similar work was published, entitled *Six Years in the Prisons of England*. In the direct testimony and the mutual corroboration afforded by these two volumes there lies a good deal of valuable evidence. The author of this latter volume describes himself as an unfortunate merchant. He had been a member of the Chamber of Commerce of his city, and was employed in reference to the commercial treaty with France, having letters from M. Rouher, Mr. Cobden, and also a letter of thanks of the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council of Trade. He complains bitterly that a letter which he sent to Mr. Cobden, which might have been of great service to him, was suppressed. He complains that through want of proper surgical attention he was obliged to lose his leg by amputation; and that, contrary to usage, he was not, as in the instance of four worse prisoners, allowed an earlier remission of sentence on account of his misfortunes. He allows that convicts are frequently a most trying, troublesome, and lying set of patients. He thinks that there ought to be regular hospital inspection; and this kind of inspection and also the visits of the directors would best be made suddenly and without notice. Both these volumes of prison experience are filled with curious narratives respecting the lives and exploits of various prisoners. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that in many cases there has been a real miscarriage of justice. A certain percentage, not very large, are convicted, one might almost say accidentally, through a fortuitous conjunction of innocent but most suspicious circumstances. This greatly strengthens the case on behalf of a court of appeal in criminal cases. It affords also an argument of some worth on behalf of the proposed legislation to permit the examination of prisoners. We think that there are some obvious improvements on the side of humanity and the amelioration of the condition of the prisoners. We take it for granted that everything that increases a prisoner's stock of ideas, and which cultivates his affections, is something good in itself, and worth the having. Why should it be an offence to mention in a letter that there has been a war between Russia and Turkey? Why should the photograph of wife, or child, or parent be contraband? Above all, might not more leniency and consideration be shown on the rare occasions when a prisoner is visited by his relatives or

friends? The prisoners are caged like wild beasts; warders are interposed between them and their visitors. No loving caresses, no touch of the hand is permitted. At times it must be very difficult, in the hubbub of many voices, for a sustained conversation to be carried on. If the convict is the "patient of the State," might not his moral culture be developed by permitting more of the softening element of human ties?

There are various details of prison management which might well be modified or altered. We fully believe that the prison authorities desire to act wisely and humanely, but it is the nature of a rigid system to fetter the kindest and frankest minds. Visitors to convict prisons are politely shown over every show-place, but there is a good deal that does not receive—something perhaps that could not bear—inspection. The prison reform which is most urgently needed is the classification of prisoners. The authorities ought to attain to a greater skill in the moral treatment of the prisoners, and have a greater power of modifying their treatment. Above all, there ought to be a wide distinction drawn between confirmed criminals and those who are in a convict prison for the first time. Through the intermixture of criminals the convict prisons do at least as much harm, as they do good through their ameliorating processes. Most crimes are committed by persons comparatively young, and it is during the criminal age, as lawyers call it, that the contaminating influence of the convict prison weaves the influence which is sure to bring back the prisoner once more. Then, again, there are very good reasons for believing that for the first imprisonment the term of duration might be very properly shortened. The punishment might be both shorter and sharper in the first instance, but it might be lengthened in the case of the confirmed criminal. Bitter complaints are made also respecting the uncertainty and inequality of sentences. A convict writes: "Let ten persons embezzle one hundred pounds each, and hear how society indemnifies itself for the crime and the loss! By the mouth of one judge one of these persons is sentenced to one year in prison; by the mouth of another judge another is sentenced to two years; and others have different sentences of penal servitude." Although the labour of convicts is to some extent utilised, we are still far behind the United States in this particular; and the useless

and irritating punishment of the crank and treadmill might be altogether abolished in all our prisons. We believe that our convict system has been well intended and carefully administered, but at the same time it needs a thorough revision; which, having regard to the safety of the State and the aims of secondary punishment, should secure a greater degree both of efficiency and humanity.

COWSLIPS.

Young Spring has daisied all the meads,
And flecked the rustling river-seeds
With dancing daffodils;
The bluebells carpet every dale,
And primrose-blossoms, sweet and pale,
Peep out beside the rills.

On hillside meadows in the sun,
The little children leap and run,
Or chase from flower to flower
The frail white-winged butterflies,
That underneath Spring's sunny skies
Enjoy their little hour.

And over all the meadows green
The yellow cowslip-blossoms are seen;
The children part in bands;
With eager glee and laughing toil,
They rush to grasp the golden spoil,
Meet wealth for children's hands.

Their peals of silver laughter float
Towards me, mingled with the note
Of thrushes' thrilling song.

I listen in my shady nook,
I sigh, uplooking from my book,
For memories gather strong.

I carried once a heart as light
As they who carol in the height
Of childhood's matchless glee.
For me were meadows gold and green,
The thrushes' song, the skies serene,
And cowslips bloomed for me.

For me, too, loving hands entwined
The cowslips in a wreath to bind
My childish flowing hair;
For me, too, tender words brake forth,
And voices, silent now on earth,
Once whispered I was fair.

Ah, my lost childhood! Never more
Until I gain that farther shore,
Wilt thou come back to me!
But then my mother's voice and hand
May welcome me to that fair land,
A child once more to be.

And while it is my lot to wait,
Let me not murmur at my fate,
Nor grudge the children's play.
I will go forth among the band,
And pluck with cheerful heart and hand,
The cowslip-blossoms to-day.

LEGENDS OF THE COUNTY CAVAN.

THE elves of Fairyland have their abode even in the cold, bleak county of Cavan, which is six hundred feet, and in some parts eight hundred feet, above the level of the sea; and was considered so sterile a country that it was left almost entirely to

its Irish inhabitants, at the time when most other parts of Ulster were divided among Scottish and English settlers.

It is true that many of the Protestant descendants of the settlers have made their way thither from the north, in course of time; but they have not influenced the folk-lore of Cavan as much as might be expected.

The fairy legends of the Celtic people in this county display a bolder and more vivid fancy than those related in Donegal, and while the Donegal legends carry the believer in Fairyland back into a distant past, those of Cavan deal with the present, or at least with a period not many years removed from our own day. The most poetical of such wild fancies relate to the loves of the elves for mortal youths and maidens, who are sometimes snatched away from their friends in the pride of their gaiety and beauty.

One pleasant summer day, about sixteen years ago, two lads set out to spend a holiday upon Virginia Lough, a beautiful large lake, covered with little islands, where birds build in the wild holly, hazel, and hawthorn thickets. As the boat neared the largest island, the boys observed a white duck swimming after them, and keeping very close to them.

Francis Lafferty, the elder of the two, happening to have a thorn-branch in his hand, struck the duck with it, and she dived down, colouring the water for some yards round the boat with her blood. She soon rose again to the surface, and continued to follow the boat, though her snowy feathers were dabbled with blood.

The boys landed on Willow Island, and when they re-embarked, after an hour's birdnesting, the duck had disappeared. But Francis was soon reminded of the adventure.

Next day the trampling of a horse's hoofs was heard before his father's cottage, on the borders of the lake, and he ran to the door, followed by his parents and brothers and sisters. A man riding a tall grey horse stopped at the door.

"Where's Francis Lafferty?" he enquired.

"Here, sir."

"You did a dale o' mischief yesterday, Francis."

"Why, sir, what mischief did I do?"

"You struck a white duck that was swimmin' ather yer boat."

"Ay, surely, but what o' that?"

"Thon duck was a beautiful young

lady, an' she fell in love wid you, you foolitch gossoon, an' that was the reason she was swimmin' ather you. You've hurted her, an' you be to lay yer hand on her, an' cure her."

"I'll not go one foot," said the boy sturdily.

"He'll not get going wid you," said the father and mother.

"You be to come," repeated the man; "but I promise to bring you safely back again."

Francis was a trustful boy; and although he had some fears and misgivings, he relied upon the messenger's promise, jumped up behind him, and they rode down the field towards the lake.

The group at the cottage-door saw the horse swim gallantly for some yards, and then disappear beneath the waters.

Francis and his guide drew up at the gate of a splendid castle, and a servant answered the bell.

"I ought not to bid you welcome, but for all that I do," said he, looking hard at Francis. They went into the parlour, where a beautiful young lady, with a bleeding brow and a wound in her neck, lay upon the sofa.

"I didn't mean to hurt you," said Francis, going close to her. "Faix an' troth I didn't know thon duck was you, or I would not have hit it."

"You hurted me very much, Francis. I fell in love wid you when I was swimming ather the boat, an' you hit me, an' now you must marry me."

"But I don't want to get married at-all, at-all," said the poor boy.

"You must marry me," persisted the young lady. "I'll send for you in a few days, an' if you don't come, you'll pine away an' die, an' your friends 'ill all die too."

Poor Francis did not know what to say to this. He mounted the grey horse again, and rode very sorrowfully home.

"I'll come for you in a few days," were the messenger's parting words.

There was dreadful grief in the cottage, when Francis told the result of his visit. Each day his mother wept, and declared she would not let him go; and he always repeated the beautiful lady's threats to destroy the whole family.

"You be to let me go, mother, for the sake of my father an' Grace an' Joe, Maggie, Thady, an' little Mary!" And as the poor woman looked at her husband and five other children, she wept, without knowing what to reply.

At length the grey horse and his rider appeared for the second time at Francis's door. The unfortunate young bridegroom took a tender leave of his friends, and mounted behind the messenger.

A chorus of wailing and lamentation followed them to the water's edge; they disappeared halfway between the shore and Willow Island, and all trace of Francis was lost for ever!

The Laffertys prospered in everything; no farm was so productive as theirs, no dairy so successful. The children grew up handsome and merry, and married well-to-do neighbours, and there were gay dances at their weddings; but the mother was sad in the midst of their mirth, for she could not forget her pretty, yellow-haired son, who was so differently married.

When she stood among the crowd in Virginia market, as the chapel bell rang the Angelus, and the devout people took off their hats, and murmured "Pater-noster," she wondered whether the holy sound was able to penetrate the waters of the lake, and if the fairy wife ever permitted poor Francis to pray. To obtain one glimpse of her son, she would gladly have parted with everything she possessed; and she was wont to wander along the shore on summer evenings, when a handsome drake, accompanied by a snow-white duck, swam between Willow Island and the mainland. But they never came near enough to eat the bread she threw to them.

The next group of Cavan legends which we shall notice relates to people who are carried into Eililand, kept there some years, and at length are restored to their friends.

The inhabitants of Bailieborough got up one starlight frosty morning, and set out to attend the Christmas market at Shercock, some driving cows and donkeys, some carrying baskets, others jogging along in their carts, as well wrapped up as they could be to resist the cold.

When they had got about a mile out of Bailieborough they were electrified by hearing clapping of hands and laughter behind the hedge, and a sound like feet stamping upon a board, while many bright lights shone.

The drivers stood up in their carts to peep over the hedge, and those of the foot passengers who had courage enough looked through it; but nothing could be seen except the lights.

"The gentry! the good people!" cried

the frightened travellers from Bailieborough. "Ha, ha, ha!" was shouted from behind the hedge.

"They'll do us no harm in life," said young Tim O'Brien, who was driving his master's cow.

"Good gossoon! Fine little fellow!" called the voices.

"Come on, son. I'm sore 'feared—come on fast!" said the lad's mother, trembling in every limb and clutching her son's arm.

"Bedad, mother, I must not drive the master's cow too hard, an' him trustin' me to take her to market."

Another man driving a cow passed them at this moment. His terror on hearing the clapping of hands and laughter was so great that he set off at a run, driving his unfortunate animal wildly up and down hill, until he reached Shercock market.

"The breath was nearly out o' her, an' she lost her sale," said the neighbours afterwards, telling the story. Tim transacted his business, and then he and his mother turned into a public-house to refresh themselves; and while they sat there one after another came hurrying in, laughing like mad people, and exclaiming: "Oh, we seen the fairies! We seen the fairies!"

"Don't be out your lane, or very late, Tim," said his mother that evening, as he turned into the Knockbride road, leading to his master's house.

"I be to do what me master bids me," replied the good gossoon, kissing her.

It was growing dusk as he parted from her, but he had light enough to see three sixpences shining on a stone in the road. Much surprised at such unhoped-for good luck, he took them up and put them into his pocket.

As he was going on, a little old woman touched him on the shoulder.

"Tim, me good gossoon," she said, "I've bought you, an' you be to come wid me."

"I'll not go one foot," replied he.

"I'll come for you on Friday evening. Good-bye till Friday. You've been a good honest servant to your master, an' you'll be a good servant to me."

She disappeared, and poor Tim was frightened and bewildered. He hurried home, and told his master and mistress what had happened. "We'll not let her take you, if we can help it," said they.

On the dreaded Friday evening all Tim's friends and neighbours assembled in his master's kitchen, to help to tide him over the fatal hour. A bright fire blazed on

the hearth. Beside Tim sat his mother, holding his hand in both of hers; around him and behind him were his master, mistress, and friends—a strong phalanx of protection. But they proved as powerless against the elfin mistress as they would have been against Grim Death himself, had he stretched forth his skeleton hand to grasp the lad.

In the midst of the talking, firing began outside the house; shots came raining down the chimney. Mocking laughter rang in peals, and while the elfin "Ha, ha, ha!" was echoing, Tim was gone. The terrified people looked round in amazement; he was gone, and no one had been seen to fetch him. The mother's grief was dreadful at the loss of her only son and chief support.

Weeks, months, years went by. At the end of six years, Tim awoke one morning opposite his mother's door; but the house was deserted—the hearth was cold.

Startled and sad, he made his way to the farmhouse at Knockbride. The farmer's wife was making stirabout at the fire. "God bless us, is it you, Tim?" she cried, letting the spoon fall.

"It is, mistress. But where's my mother?"

"Yer mother, poor gasson? She died, it'll be three year again Lamma's."

"Three year, mistress? Three year! Why it was only last Christmas her an' me drove the master's cow to Shercock market."

"Oh Jack, come here!" called the puzzled woman. "Here's Tim come back, an' he's sayin' that he's only away since Christmas."

"Six year it was last Christmas that you were took from us, Tim," said the master, clasping his hands in wonder and gazing at the lad, who might have been stolen the day before, he looked so unchanged.

The neighbours soon assembled, and Tim saw many changes in them. The six years had streaked black hair with grey, had bent upright figures, had wrinkled smooth cheeks, and had made gaps in the familiar circle.

He gave as clear an account as he could of what had happened to him, but a kind of haze seemed to spread over his memory with regard to the fairy world. He said he had lived in splendid houses, warmed by large fires and lighted by many candles, and had had every imaginable delicacy to eat and drink; that his bed had been

warm, and his work light and easy; that they danced, feasted, and caroused continually; and that he had made long excursions every night in company with his little masters; but he was not able to say how or why they had brought him back.

Some miles distant from Knockbride is a large tanyard. Mr. Borland, the owner, is a prosperous man. He has won the fealty of his servants and workmen, and his wife is also very popular among them; but he would himself ascribe his success to a different cause. All the people about the tanyard have from time to time caught sight of a dwarfish man in a grey coat, who went backwards and forwards in the premises, setting things to rights—now peeping into a vat, now turning a skin. Jobs that the men had left unfinished at night were found to be completed when they came to their work next morning. Everybody knew that the master had a fairy friend who cared for his interests; and knowing also that such friends do not like to be spoken about, the workpeople were generally silent as to what they had seen. The fairies are, indeed, the ideal benefactors, who shrink from having their good actions known or praised. But Mr. Borland was far from ungrateful to the little grey man; he swept the kitchen-hearth carefully each night before going to bed, and left a clean pipe and a quantity of cut tobacco on a chair beside the fire. These were always gone in the morning when the master and mistress came downstairs. At length Mr. Borland became dangerously ill, and his wife, in great anxiety sent a servant for the doctor.

The servant had gone about halfway when he met the doctor coming to meet him.

"Oh, sir," said he, "I hope you are not hastening elsewhere, for I was sent to bring you to Mr. Borland of the tanyard."

"Why that's just where I'm going, my man. A little fellow in a grey coat came to me half an hour ago, and bade me hurry to see Mr. Borland, for he was very ill."

One day the servants were busied about their various employments in the kitchen of a gentleman's house in Cavan, when a man called Dan Gow came in and sat down by the fireside.

"God save all here," said he; and he crouched over the blaze, trembling and shivering.

"What ails you, Dan? What ails you, poor man, anyway?" asked the servants.

Then by degrees it came out that he had had an adventure the night before, and had been away with the fairies for eleven hours.

He was at first unwilling to describe his eerie experiences, but all the labourers from the yard crowded into the kitchen, and the maids from above-stairs came hurrying down to listen, and by dint of judicious questions, they at length elicited the whole history.

"It was a clear, fine night, an' I was comin' home from the town wid my fiddle inunder me arm," began Dan, "when, as I got alongside of the planting near Crooknahadden, someone come behint me, an' he ruz me wid a foot an' a slap, an' when I come to meself, I was lyin' me length on the grass, an' I was that sore an' bruised that I could hardly get on me feet again. There was a pain in me back, an' a pain in me shoulder, where I was hit."

"Save us! Poor Dan! Poor fellow! Musha, the crathur!" cried the audience, in various tones of sympathy. "Tell us what did they do on you?"

"They danced round an' round me, laughin' an' carousin', crowds o' the good wee people."

"Was it them kneeked you down, Dan avick?"

"Troth, it was!"

"An' what did you do?"

"I jist played them tunes on the fiddle."

"Was it a castle they were in?"

"It was not."

"Was it a cave, or a fort?"

"No, it was on the grass, an' inunder the trees we were dancin', an' there was fires an' candles in plenty."

"Did you ate wid the gentry, Dan?"

"Is it ate? Ne, I did not ate wid them. There was an uncle o' mine there, an' he come behint me, an' whispered to me not to take bite or sup wid them, if I wished to get away again."

"Was your unole there, Dan dear?"

"In troth he was, an' many an ould neighbour forbye."

A shudder ran through the whole assembly in the wide kitchen at this answer. Each person feared to ask the question trembling upon his lips. The question was this: "Did you see anyone belonging to me among the fairies?" Instead of asking this, they said: "Were the ould neighbours content-like and happy, Dan? Were they anyway failed?"

"Yes, they were ill-like, an' greatly failed, an' they looked pale an' troubled. What way would drunkards an' bad-livin' people like them look, do you think?"

"Did you get speakin' to any o' them, Dan darlin'?"

"I tried to stop them, but they kept drivin' past me in crowds; one crowd swept the other away. They were always movin', so I could not spake to one of them."

"Would you go back again?" asked the servants.

"No! not if you would give me the full of me hat of gold. Well was it for me that the day dawned, an' I got away!"

This story caused a good deal of discussion in the neighbourhood. Most of Dan Gow's neighbours believe that he really had spent eleven hours with the fairies, and that he could, if he chose, make surprising revelations about their enchanted realm; but they shrank from asking many questions as to the condition of former companions whom he had seen there.

Dan Gow was accredited with extraordinary powers, and was consulted by people from all parts of the country. If a farmer had a sick cow, he went to summon Dan. Dan lived alone in a tiny cottage; he pretended to be sarrounded by invisible elfin acquaintances, and if the farmer's offer of reward for his services had not been liberal enough, he was wont to turn round and address an unseen audience.

"Mr. Donnelan offers me three shillin' to go wid him to cure his cow; can I go? 'No,' do you say? Well, would you allow me to go wid him for five shillin'?" "Yes?" is it 'Yes' you're sayin'? Yes, Mither Donnelan, they're willin' to let me go wid you for five shillin'. Where did I put my elf-bolt?" and he looked about the cabin for an arrow-head, which he declared he had caught, when thrown at him by the fairies, and which was a potent implement in all his cow-doctoring.

Dan is very proud of his skill in dancing, and likes to tell how he learned to dance the hornpipe. As he lay in bed one morning, his door opened, and a tiny man, dressed in bottle-green broadcloth, knee-breeches, silk stockings, silver-buckled shoes, and cocked hat, appeared.

"Is this Dan Gow's?" he enquired.

"It is, your worship; I am Dan Gow."

"Well, Dan, I'm a dancing-master, an' if you'll play me a tune on your fiddle, I'll show you how to dance a hornpipe."

F Dan drew his fiddle from behind him in the bed and played his very best, while the little stranger danced upon the old pigsty-door which happened to be lying on the floor. He said a civil "Good-morning," thanked Dan for his music, and went away.

"Oh Dan, you missed it! you missed it!" exclaimed his neighbour, Bidly Lynch, running in from next door.

"What? Did you see him too?"

"Ay, surely. Why did you take yer eye off the Lepricaun before you asked something from him? You missed it, Dan; you missed it!"

The fairies of Cavan are sometimes heard without being seen.

Huey McDivitt had a farm near Cootehill, and in the midst of it, near his dwelling-house, was an old fort. While sauntering in the grazing-field one summer's evening, he heard the cry of a child somewhere near him.

"Whist, whist!" said a woman's voice. "Stop crying, an' you'll get a drink when Huey McDivitt's old cow's a-milking."

The cry ceased immediately, and the farmer looked round, but no human being was to be seen. Presently the dairymaid appeared, and sat down in the field to milk the cow.

"Master, what'll I do? Old Brownie has kicked the pail over again, an' the milk's spilt," said she, half crying.

"You're not to milk Brownie any more," returned her master; "I'm going to leave her to them." And he nodded mysteriously and glanced round the farm.

So the old cow became the entire property of the fairies. But the farmer married in course of time; and the new mistress, being a very thrifty housewife, could not bear to have a useless old cow about the place, and insisted that she should be sold. Her husband made many excuses; but she would not be satisfied, and, by dint of tormenting the poor man, at last got her own way. However, the day after Brownie's departure, Huey was only too glad to give back her price and bring her home again, for no one had been able to sleep in the farmhouse during the previous night, so piteous had been the crying and wailing of the fairies for the loss of their cow.

The Cavan people are now and then so clever that they succeed in baffling the fairies. Two lads were strolling in the fields on a warm June night, when it was just light enough to see figures, but too

dark to distinguish faces. As they approached a neighbour's house, they perceived two men standing close to his back window; and, stepping forwards, one of the lads whispered, "Who is it?"

There was no answer; but the men at the window disappeared. Before the speaker had got over his surprise at their sudden disappearance, the window was opened and a baby was handed out to him.

"I know what it manes now," said he to his companion. "Come on, an' we'll take the little gossoon to me mother, an' don't you be sayin' one word about it."

His mother was glad to take charge of the baby; she fed him and hushed him to sleep in her own bed. Next day the whole neighbourhood knew that McColgan's child was dead, and that the mother was well-nigh distracted with grief.

The little corpse was waked and buried with keening and mourning.

"Now," said Ned O'Donnel, who had rescued the baby, "give me a houl't o' fhon little chap, mother, an' I'll carry him to poor Rosie."

It was the day after the funeral, and Rosie sat by her fire, idly rocking herself backwards and forwards, and crying quietly. Her overwhelming astonishment and joy, when her own living infant was laid upon her knee, would be very difficult to picture. Ned related his adventure; the little coffin was dug up, brought home to McColgan's and opened, when the wax-like corpse, so closely resembling the living child, was taken out and burned upon the hearth. The assembled neighbours could hardly believe their eyes when the flame sank down, leaving a black oak stick!

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. M. FRANKLTON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VII. FEY.

THE Gavestons were a little late next morning. Celia was down a full hour before Bessy, and spent it in a most needless private rehearsal; for she had been note-perfect and letter-perfect long ago. But her sense of responsibility was more than a burden; except for her persistent trust in Walter, which obstinately refused to be killed, her duty to the score was all that seemed to be left her in the whole wide world. She dreamed of it night and

day, and worked at it as if she were still a child at Deepweald.

"Good morning!" said Bessy, and kissed her. The curate's wife had slept off Lady Quorne, and had dreamed of nothing more exciting than of the other Bessy, and that pleasantly. It was a bright spring morning, such as gives town mice day-dreams of fields where no dust is, and where the sunbeams smell of cow-slips instead of water-carts; and such as makes country-mice think London the sweetest spot in the world. "It is very near May, you know," Lady Quorne had said yesterday evening, "and it is just as seasonable for a clergyman to be in town for the May meetings, and to bring his woman-kind, as for a lay-woman to be in London for the opera, and to bring her incumbrances"—thinking, when she saw what manner of person Mrs. Gaveston proved to be, that some clerical excuse might be required for her chaperonage of a prima donna. But Bessy had thrown over all such scruples long ago, and felt that, being in for the penny, she might just as well be in for the pound, and be hung for a sheep as well as for a lamb—and better.

"What shall we do to-day?" she asked, without waiting for an answer to her good-morning. "I have made such a list of things, that I don't know where to begin. Of course, you know everything, Celia, so it doesn't matter to you, and Reginald has been in London lots of times. Let me see—I've got to call on my cousins in Brixton; and I've wanted to see a mummy ever since I was born; and it would never do to go back without seeing the Queen and the royal family—I wonder what's the best way to see the Queen? And I want to drive in the Park, and there are all mamma's errands, and of course one must see the sights; the proper ones, you know; the Wax-works, and Westminster Abbey, and the Zoological Gardens, and all the things of that sort. But my cousins will keep to some Sunday when there's nothing else to do, and one can do the regular things any day—the Thames Tunnel, and the Dulwich Gallery, and all that. They don't matter so long as one doesn't go back without having seen them. And the mummy—well, mummies will keep a little longer still, I should think. On the whole, I think the best thing we can do to-day is to do some shopping. It was quite impossible to get things in Deepweald, though, of course, we had to spend something in the town. We'll go into all the bonnet-

shops, and see everything they've got, and take our time, and have a real good day to begin. We'll see every bonnet in London—every one. Don't dawdle over your breakfast, Reginald, and we'll start just as soon as ever we can."

But the curate was inclined to dawdle. After his own dissipation of last night, he had a far from unpleasant next morning feeling, which reminded him of Oxford, and he was inclined to prolong the sensation.

"Bessy, my dear, what would you say if I proposed our going to every hatter's in town?"

"I should say you were a goose; because you can see hats in Deepweald, every day. But bonnets—unless you think Miss Hayward wears a bonnet; she calls it one, and you might believe her, being a man. No; you don't see bonnets in Deepweald, not even on me; but you shall. But then I must choose one; and when one has to take such a step as that, one can't begin too soon to make up one's mind. One may never have such a responsibility again."

Mrs. Gaveston had no sense of humour, and spoke in all gravity; the curate had less than none, and Celia less than less than none, if such a depth may be. Neither could deny that Bessy's views of duty were as orthodox as they were profound. But, nevertheless, that long, unbroken vista of bonnet-shops did not look to the curate's mind very much like a holiday, and he sighed.

"I think, my dear, I'll leave it to you. There are one or two men I must look up, you know."

Bessy had better than humour; she had good-humour. "You don't care to come? I daresay Celia and I will manage very well by ourselves. Come in."

A lady to see Miss March; announced by her card as "Ilma Krasinski."

Instantly Bessy Gaveston knew that, without even having gone so far as Regent Street, she had seen her ideal—a head-gear of white lace and ostrich plumes, calculated to turn the heads and inflame the hearts of all Deepweald. It was long before her eyes travelled so low as the eyebrows of Mademoiselle Krasinski. Lady Quorne herself would not have worn a more sweetly exquisite bonnet, she was sure. But the curate's eyes started lower; and they were not particularly pleased with Celia's friend. She recalled the sow-

ing of somewhat wilder oats than he cared to remember, felt that Lady Quorne was right in thinking a chaperon needful for Celia, and not best pleased that his own wife should be selected for the office of chaperon. Ilma, in company with Clari, was eclipsed; in such company as the present, she was somebody to be looked at; and Reginald trusted that, if his wife did spend her day in the milliner's quarter, the foreign lady would not be of the party.

"Dearest Fräulein!" gushed Ilma, in the German dialect of cosmopolitan Lindenheim, which somehow made Celia's heart feel warm; "how glad I am to find you already. You see my little note has not been long before me. Monsieur speaks German? Nor Madame? No? All the better; we can talk about—everything. Ah, one must be careful how one talks in these times. But never mind. I am so glad to see you again; and so proud."

Nothing bewilders the humble-minded like flattery, nor had Celia as yet drank that wine very deeply. Her recollection of Ilma was not very intense; it was not as if her old friend Lotte had turned up again in her life, and had hurried to fuss over her, and laugh her through her coming troubles. But no doubt she had underestimated the comradeship of Lindenheim. No doubt all the brothers and sisters of that family were honestly as proud of one another as she supposed born brothers and sisters to be, for she rated family affection as highly as a beggar rates gold. She let Ilma kiss her on both cheeks wonderingly, but willingly, and was grateful even.

"So you are a real star!" Ilma went on, without waiting.

"Not yet," said Celia, between a smile and a sigh.

"But you are—that is to say, you will be. I always knew it, from the first minute I heard you. I have been wondering where you were all these years, but of course it takes time to get known. Everybody has not Clari's luck. You know her, by-the-way, don't you?"

"I have met her; and I have heard her."

"Yes. Well, you needn't be much afraid of her. She isn't what she was—she has already been hissed in Naples, and that shows the way of the wind. It is quite time we began to hear of somebody else than always Clari—Clari—Clari."

"She is the greatest singer in the world," said Celia, repeating her father's scornful

judgment jealously. "And she always will be. I shall never forget as long as I live what she made me feel. I am not afraid of her. You might as well tell a piping bullfinch to be afraid of a night-ingale."

There was more truth than she guessed in her comparison between her own modest voice, forced by art to be something that otherwise it would never have been, and that of her great rival, whom all the empire of art had not sufficed to crush out of its own full nature. But Ilma stared and wondered a little, while Bessy, with eyes still fixed upon the bonnet, tried to remember the German-Ollendorff for "Will you take a cup of tea?" and could get no farther than, "I have the good shoe of the ugly man." Mademoiselle Krasinski had been for years in the art, as singers call their trade, but never had it happened to her to hear a rival praise a rival before—behind her back, that is to say. Celia was more cunning than she had given her credit for then, after all, or else a greater fool.

"Stuff!" she said. "I know better. Clari is getting old, and knows it, and that puts her into a rage. She is as jealous and as envious—"

"Not of me, I'm sure."

"Yes—of you."

"Oh, don't say that, Ilma! But it is impossible—it is absurd. Why she has heard me herself—she must know that I should never come within a thousand miles of her, if I sang for ever and ever."

"Aren't you glad to hear you have made a woman like Clari jealous already? I know I should be—but luck doesn't come my way. I don't know why; I wasn't the worst at Lindenheim. But this is an envious world. One wants a great deal of luck to find justice anywhere."

"No—you would not be glad. Oh dear—I think everything is just hateful. It would be horrible to fail—now, but can't one just do what one must without that besides? Ilma, if I thought it was true that I could hurt an artist like Clari, and if it was not for the Cleopatra, I should just creep out of her way, and be glad to—anywhere."

No; Celia was not cunning; it was painfully obvious that she was a fool. Ilma had made her experiment upon the quality of her friend's brains, and now knew how to deal with her.

"You are lucky to have got into

Prosper's hands; he made Clari, you know. Really and honestly, she would have found no market without Prosper. He is the cleverest man in Europe, and he never showed himself so clever as when he dropped Clari and took up you. Yes, he knows what he is about, you may be sure. You see, he made Clari such a star at last that he had to give her her own terms—and that could never pay, for she thinks herself a second Malibran. He would have been willing enough to marry her, because then he would have got her for nothing, and made it her interest to play into his hands—but he never could get her to see that, so he made her quarrel with him and so got rid of her. They say the quarrel was about eating oysters—but I know better. So you see what Clari's feelings about you must be. What is your *scrittura*? Of course you need not tell me if you don't mind; but a poor comprimaria likes to know such things."

"Three hundred pounds for the season," said Celia.

"Mon Dieu! Twelve hundred francs! No more?"

"That is all."

"It is ridiculous—it is absurd—it is a humiliation. Why Clari would give you twice that if you got a doctor's certificate on the first night of your Cleopatra—three times, for anything I know. She is very rich—she does not sing for twelve hundred francs a song, even—not to speak of a season. The thing was done once in Prague, when *Banuzaccia*—"

"A doctor's certificate?" asked Celia, puzzled.

"That you have a cold, or a fever, or are indisposed—don't you know? You go to a physician who is your friend, and have his opinion sent round the theatre. That is all."

"You mean," asked Celia, "that Clari would pay me not to sing in the Cleopatra?"

Ilma smiled with sweet scorn. "No," she said. "I mean that Clari, out of her kind heart, would not let you lose by your illness—nothing more. That is natural—is it not? Indeed, she as much as told me so."

"No!" said Celia. "She could not—she is the greatest artist in the world!"

Ilma smiled again—a little more scornfully, a little less sweetly. "What has that to do with it? I suppose she knows her business best, and if she is right to be afraid. Why it would be nothing to what is done every day."

Celia sighed deeply. It is a bitter moment, perhaps, just while it lasts—for it is soon forgotten—the bitterest in life, when the faith of a novice in the loftiness and purity of his chosen calling is first met by such realities as these. She did not love the faith to which her father had vowed her. But her dislike was founded on reverence and humility—not on hatred for it, and far less on scorn. She honoured Clari as a great artist; she trusted Ilma—aus Lindenheim. Such an offer surely could not be serious. She would have been saved from disillusion by setting it down as a very poor joke, if she had been in the habit of living with people who ever jested. But, even then, the jest would have seemed profane as well as poor.

It was no breach of good manners to retire from pretending to take part in a conversation carried on in an unknown tongue; so the curate had for some minutes past fallen back upon his newspaper, while waiting for the call to be over, and Beasy upon a letter to her mother, relieved and inspired by studious glances at the white lace and ostrich feathers.

"And of course you know your own business best too," said Ilma. "Money may not be as much to you as it is to me. You have started at the top of the ladder; you have not had to learn the tricks of it, like those who have to climb. All the same, I would not take a paltry twelve hundred francs, if I had to starve sooner; and anyway I should let Prosper know that he was not the highest bidder. You may be sure he is expecting you to threaten a strike at the eleventh hour, or he would not have cheated you beforehand."

"I hope Prosper knows he can trust me," said Celia, coldly.

"I think he knows you are a fool," thought Ilma, beginning to be angry. It might not, after all, prove quite so easy as she had fancied a moment ago to deal with a fool who was such a fool as not to understand that twice twelve is twenty-four. "The fact is," she said, "I am not older than you, but I have twice as much knowledge of the world. And I don't want to see an old friend ruin herself at the beginning of her career. I am behind the scenes; and I tell you frankly—for I know it—that you have made an enemy." "If money won't move her," she thought, "perhaps fear will."

"An enemy?—I?—who?"

"Clari."

Celia did need a protector; but of another sort than John March or Bessy Gaveston. The very word "enemy" made her turn cold; what had she to do with enemies—she, whose one purpose in life was to sing through an opera, for duty's sake, without breaking down, and had never sought to injure a living soul? She had none of the spirit that makes "enemy" rhyme with "victory" in stouter hearts and keener minds.

"Ilma," she said eagerly, "if it was for me to choose, I would no more sing in this opera than I would try to be the queen."

"Yes; it is dangerous to make enemies; and Clari! You don't know her; I do. She will stop at nothing. If she chooses to crush you under her foot, she will buy up every critic and every newspaper in London; she will ruin your reputation; *Mon Dieu*, she will poison you if nothing else will do. She is the sort of woman who would send you a bouquet just before you went on the stage; you would smell it, and go mad, or die, or lose your voice for ever. It is all true—she has done such things. If you were a mere stranger, it would be my duty to warn you. Clari won't last long now, it is true; and she knows it, and you my depend upon it that she means to die hard. I should not like to be her last rival, Celia; I should not like to have Clari's last stab before she dies."

There was a touch of melodrama in her manner, a stage artifice caught perhaps from Clari herself in one of her coffee-tragedies, that impressed Celia far more than her words. To see this girl in the fine feathers sitting calmly and talking of madness and murder as if they were every day realities, was not likely to keep Celia's courage in at her fingers' ends. It was no scene out of a French comedy to her.

"Very well," she said at last. "Then—" and her brows drew together like her father's while her lips trembled—signs that Ilma misread as thoroughly as only a very clever woman can misread the symptoms of a very foolish one.

"Then you will not set yourself, with that swindler, Prosper, against Clari? Well, you are wise. Whatever Clari may be, she ought not to be at the mercy of this wretched intrigue; for it is nothing more. You are wise, and you are right, too; and you will lose nothing, and have everything to gain."

"You mean that Clari would do all you say?"

"And more."

"She must do it, then."

"Are you mad, Celia?"

"I don't know, and I don't care. I only know that I must go through with the Cleopatra, and I will. I'm sorry for Clari to be my enemy," she said, with a half smile. "But I'll take care not to smell a single flower till the season's gone, and there are no more left to smell—out of Deepweald and Lindenheim."

"There are other ways than poisoned flowers," said Ilma, sharply, and well-nigh showing her hand. "Do you know that Clari is a Jewess from the Roman Ghetto? I do, and that they have secrets there from which the saints guard us," and she made a little gesture that might be meant for the sign of the cross, or might be meant for some heathen guard against witchcraft, or both together; for she was beginning to half believe in her own honesty. "And all this for an imposture—a sham! Do you know what you are doing, Celia?"

"I am going to sing Cleopatra," said Celia, doggedly.

"Ah, it is lucky indeed that I called! My poor friend, I see it all. You think you are going to do something very fine indeed—to sing Clari off the boards—and it does look well. But you shall not leap off a precipice without having your eyes open; you shall not sell yourself to a fraud—and for twelve hundred francs. Pah!"

"A fraud! What fraud?"

"Your innocence is just enough to drive one wild. One would think you had never been behind the scenes in all your days. I suppose you remember Herr Walter—Walter Gordon—at Lindenheim?"

Celia's lips had long ceased trembling; but she seemed to have forgotten her old trick of blushing, and her brows did not unfrown. "Yes," she said shortly, feeling as if the land were floating farther and farther away, and as if she were left alone upon strange waters in the midst of a storm.

"He has been in Italy," said Ilma. "Do you ever see him? Have you seen him since he has been home?"

"No."

"I have seen him," Ilma threw in, with a little jealous triumph for the sake of old times. "I gathered that he saw you before he left England. Is that so?"

"Once."

"Of course you have heard from him?"
 Irma was reading her like a book now.

"No."
 "You have not guessed why?"

"No."

"Ah, then I can tell you, if you care to know. Do you care?"

"No!"

"Then I will tell you, because you ought to care. He is a friend of Clari—a very great friend. Something more than a friend, some people would say. Everybody won't say it was mere accident for a young man and an opera-singer like Clari to meet at a little country-inn last summer, before going on—not together—to my Lady Quorne's next day. Such stories will get about, you know; and this one happens to be true. And it is true, too, that they came back to England in company—in the same packet. And we knew pretty well what Walter Gordon was at Lindenheim. And so, being a friend of Clari's, he set to work, and found out that the Cleopatra was no more composed by the man who calls himself Walter Gordon than I am. There!"

Reginald Gaveston started round from his newspaper; Bessy from her letter. And no wonder; for both thought they knew Celia March as well as St. Anselm's spire. For the first time in her life Celia was in a passion; for the first time in her life Celia had found her tongue.

"I know nothing—I care to know nothing. I don't care to know why you have come to me. You have tried to bribe me, and frighten me, and to threaten me—and all to make me false to the only thing that I was made to live for. I suppose you will see Clari in less than another hour. Tell her, from me, that she may stab me through the heart if she likes, but that I will sing the Cleopatra while I have a note left in me. Yes, I will—now!—with all my heart and soul. I know what my father meant now, when he chose to set us two together against all the world—himself and me, all alone. He may trust me now, you shall see. And tell her that I know what I am doing, and that if she thinks me her enemy, I am her enemy, and the enemy of all her world and all her ways. I may not be much, but I am a stone in my father's hand, and he knows best how to use me; he knows all things best, and Heaven forgive me for

thinking—for feeling; and tell Herr Walter——"

Her eyes lost no light and her cheeks no flame; but her words came to a sudden end.

"Yes—I will tell! Bon jour, mademoiselle," said Irma, with a long curtsy that swept her out of the room. She had lost her own temper; and was wise enough to know that ill-temper is no match for open rage.

"Good gracious! What is the matter?" asked Mrs. Gaveston.

"Nothing," said Celia. "I have been learning the ways of my trade; and something about friendship—that is all."

"Didn't she say something about Walter Gordon? He isn't in Ollendorff—but I thought I caught the name? Why, how you tremble! Who is Mademoiselle Krasinaki?"

"Bessy—please, pray leave me alone. I'm not fit to go out with you to-day. I must stay at home."

"Did you ask Mademoiselle Krasinaki where she got her bonnet? Well, never mind. I shall remember it very well. But—if you really won't go out—and if you really don't want me—I won't lose the day. There, Reginald, you've pulled that whisker quite long enough, and the brougham's been ready these five minutes. Celia," she asked timidly, anxious to escape from the storm, but not feeling sure that she was doing her duty as a chaperon, "can I get you anything when I'm out or before I go?"

"Yes," said Celia. "It's on the piano, there, just behind you. Please give me the score."

It might have been her father himself speaking through her in the familiar words that at last she had made her own. She knew her part but too well; but, closing her ears and eyes against all but the notes and an imaginary orchestra, and her brain against thought, and her heart against all else, she studied as if she had never seen it before. The old dull weary sense of duty over-knew it; the new spirit had to learn it all over again.

In one word, she was fey—that mood when the dumb speak, the patient storm, the timid grow bold, the meek grow proud, and when all, leaving their true selves far behind them, rush forward to meet the end half way.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE MARQUIS MAKES A PROPOSITION.

THE next morning was very weary with Lord George, as he had nothing to do till three o'clock. He was most anxious to know whether his sister-in-law had in truth left London, but he had no means of finding out. He could not ask questions on such a subject from Mrs. Walker and her satellites; and he felt that it would be difficult to ask even his brother. He was aware that his brother had behaved to him badly, and he had determined not to be over-courteous, unless, indeed, he should find his brother to be dangerously ill. But, above all things, he would avoid all semblance of inquisitiveness, which might seem to have a reference to the condition of his own unborn child. He walked up and down St. James's Park thinking of all this, looking up once at the windows of the house which had brought so much trouble on him, the house of his which had hardly been his own, but not caring to knock at the door and enter it. He lunched in solitude at his club, and exactly at three o'clock presented himself at Scumberg's door. The marquis's servant was soon with him, and then again he found himself alone in that dreary sitting-room. How wretched must his brother be, living there from day to day without a friend, or, as far as he was aware, without a companion!

He was there full twenty minutes, walking about the room in exasperated ill-humour, when at last the door was opened and his brother brought in between two

men-servants. He was not actually carried, but was so supported as to appear to be unable to walk. Lord George asked some questions, but received no immediate answers. The marquis was at the moment thinking too much of himself, and of the men who were ministering to him, to pay any attention to his brother. Then by degrees he was fixed in his place, and, after what seemed to be interminable delay, the two men went away. "Ugh!" ejaculated the marquis.

"I am glad to see that you can at any rate leave your room," said Lord George.

"Then let me tell you that it takes deuced little to make you glad."

The beginning was not auspicious, and further progress in conversation seemed to be difficult. "They told me yesterday that Dr. Pullbody was attending you."

"He has this moment left me. I don't in the least believe in him. Your London doctors are such conceited asses that you can't speak to them. Because they can make more money than their brethren in other countries they think that they know everything, and that nobody else knows anything. It is just the same with the English in every branch of life. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the greatest priest going, because he has the greatest income, and the Lord Chancellor the greatest lawyer. All you fellows here are flunkies from top to bottom."

Lord George certainly had not come up to town merely to hear the great dignitaries of his country abused. But he was comforted somewhat, as he reflected that a dying man would hardly turn his mind to such an occupation. When a sick man criticises his doctor severely he is seldom in a very bad way. "Have you had anybody else with you, Brotherton?"

"One is quite enough. But I had another. A fellow named Bolton was here—a baronet, I believe—who told me I ought to walk a mile in Hyde Park every day. When I told him I couldn't, he said I didn't know till I tried. I handed him a five-pound note, upon which he hauled out three pounds nineteen shillings change, and walked off in a huff. I didn't send for him any more."

"Sir James Bolton has a great reputation."

"No doubt. I daresay he could cut off my leg if I asked him, and would then have handed out two pounds eighteen with the same indifference."

"I suppose your back is better?"

"No, it isn't, not a bit. It gets worse and worse."

"What does Dr. Pullbody say?"

"Nothing that anybody can understand. By George! he takes my money freely enough. He tells me to eat beefsteaks and drink port-wine. I'd sooner die at once. I told him so, or something a little stronger, I believe, and he almost jumped out of his shoes."

"He doesn't think there is any—danger?"

"He doesn't know anything about it. I wish I could have your father-in-law in a room by ourselves, with a couple of loaded revolvers. I'd make better work of it than he did."

"God forbid!"

"I daresay he won't give me the chance. He thinks he has done a plucky thing, because he's as strong as a brewer's horse. I call that downright cowardice."

"It depends on how it began, Brotherton."

"Of course there had been words between us. Things always begin in that way."

"You must have driven him very hard."

"Are you going to take his part? Because, if so, there may as well be an end of it. I thought you had found him out and had separated yourself from him. You can't think that he is a gentleman?"

"He is a very liberal man."

"You mean to sell yourself, then, for the money that was made in his father's stables?"

"I have not sold myself at all. I haven't spoken to him for the last month."

"So I understood; therefore I sent for you. You are all back at Manor Cross now?"

"Yes; we are there."

"You wrote me a letter which I didn't think quite the right thing. But, however,

I don't mind telling you that you can have the house, if we can come to terms about it."

"What terms?"

"You can have the house and the park, and Cross Hall Farm too, if you'll pledge yourself that the dean shall never enter your house again, and that you will never enter his house or speak to him. You shall do pretty nearly as you please at Manor Cross. In that event I shall live abroad, or here in London if I come to England. I think that's a fair offer, and I don't suppose that you yourself can be very fond of the man." Lord George sat perfectly silent while the marquis waited for a reply. "After what has passed," continued he, "you can't suppose that I shall choose that he shall be entertained in my dining-room."

"You said the same about my wife before."

"Yes, I did; but a man may separate himself from his father-in-law, when he can't very readily get rid of his wife. I never saw your wife."

"No; and therefore cannot know what she is."

"I don't in the least want to know what she is. You and I, George, haven't been very lucky in our marriages."

"I have."

"Do you think so? You see I speak more frankly of myself. But I am not speaking of your wife. Your wife's father has been a blister to me ever since I came back to this country, and you must make up your mind whether you will take his part or mine. You know what he did, and what he induced you to do about Popenjoy. You know the reports that he has spread abroad. And you know what happened in this room. I expect you to throw him off altogether." Lord George had thrown the dean off altogether. For reasons of his own he had come to the conclusion that the less he had to do with the dean the better for himself; but he certainly could give no such pledge as this now demanded from him. "You won't make me this promise?" said the marquis.

"No; I can't do that."

"Then you'll have to turn out of Manor Cross," said the marquis, smiling.

"You do not mean that my mother must be turned out?"

"You and my mother, I suppose, will live together?"

"It does not follow. I will pay you rent for Cross Hall."

"You shall do no such thing. I will

not let Cross Hall to any friend of the dean's."

"You cannot turn your mother out immediately after telling her to go there?"

"It will be you who turn her out, not I. I have made you a very liberal offer," said the marquis.

"I will have nothing to do with it," said Lord George. "In any house in which I act as master I will be the judge who shall be entertained and who not."

"The first guests you will ask, no doubt, will be the Dean of Brotherton and Captain De Baron." This was so unbearable that he at once made a rush at the door. "You'll find, my friend," said the marquis, "that you'll have to get rid of the dean and of the dean's daughter as well." Then Lord George swore to himself, as he left the room, that he would never willingly be in his brother's company again.

He was rushing down the stairs, thinking about his wife, swearing to himself that all this was calumny, yet confessing to himself that there must have been terrible indiscretion to make the calumny so general, when he was met on the landing by Mrs. Walker in her best silk gown. "Please, my lord, might I take the liberty of asking for one word in my own room?" Lord George followed her and heard the one word. "Please, my lord, what are we to do with the marquis?"

"Do with him?"

"About his going."

"Why should he go? He pays his bills, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, my lord; the marquis pays his bills. There ain't no difficulty there, my lord. He's not quite himself."

"You mean in health?"

"Yes, my lord; in health. He don't give himself—not a chance. He's out every night—in his brougham."

"I thought he was almost confined to his room?"

"Out every night, my lord—and that courier with him on the box. When we gave him to understand that all manner of people couldn't be allowed to come here, we thought he'd go."

"The marchioness has gone?"

"Oh yes; and the poor little boy. It was bad enough when they was here, because things were so uncomfortable; but now—I wish something could be done, my lord." Lord George could only assure her that it was out of his power to do anything. He had no control over his brother, and did not even mean

to come and see him again. "Dearie me!" said Mrs. Walker, "he's a very oddacious nobleman, I fear, is the marquis."

All this was very bad. Lord George had learned, indeed, that the marchioness and Popenjoy were gone, and was able to surmise that the parting had not been pleasant. His brother would probably soon follow them. But what was he to do himself! He could not, in consequence of such a warning, drag his mother and sisters back to Cross Hall, into which house Mr. Price, the farmer, had already moved himself. Nor could he very well leave his mother without explaining to her why he did so. Would it be right that he should take such a threat, uttered as that had been, as a notice to quit the house? He certainly would not live in his brother's house in opposition to his brother. But how was he to obey the orders of such a madman?

When he reached Brotherton he went at once to the Deanery, and was very glad to find his wife without her father. He did not as yet wish to renew his friendly relations with the dean, although he had refused to pledge himself to a quarrel. He still thought it to be his duty to take his wife away from her father, and to censure her to expiate those calumnies as to De Baron by some ascetic mode of life. She had been, since his last visit, in a state of nervous anxiety about the marquis. "How is he, George?" she asked at once.

"I don't know how he is. I think he's mad."

"Mad?"

"He's leading a wretched life."

"But his back? Is he—is he—I am afraid that papa is so unhappy about it! He won't say anything, but I know he is unhappy."

"You may tell your father from me that, as far as I can judge, his illness, if he is ill, has nothing to do with that."

"Oh, George, you have made me so happy."

"I wish I could be happy myself. I sometimes think that we had better go and live abroad."

"Abroad! You and I?"

"Yes. I suppose you would go with me?"

"Of course I would. But your mother?"

"I know there is all manner of trouble about it." He could not tell her of his brother's threat about the house, nor could he, after that threat, again bid her come to Manor Cross. As there was nothing more to be said he soon left her, and went

to the house which he had again been forbidden to call his home.

But he told his sister everything. "I was afraid," she said, "that we should be wrong in coming here."

"It is no use going back to that now."

"Not the least. What ought we to do? It will break mamma's heart to be turned out again."

"I suppose we must ask Mr. Knox."

"It is unreasonable—monstrous! Mr. Price has got all his furniture back again into the Hall! It is terrible that any man should have so much power to do evil."

"I could not pledge myself about the dean, Sarah."

"Certainly not. Nothing could be more wicked than his asking you. Of course, you will not tell mamma."

"Not yet."

"I should take no notice of it whatever. If he means to turn us out of the house let him write to you, or send word by Mr. Knox. Out every night in London! What does he do?" Lord George shook his head. "I don't think he goes into society." Lord George could only shake his head again. There are so many kinds of society! "They said he was coming down to Mr. De Baron's in August."

"I heard that too. I don't know whether he'll come now. To see him brought in between two servants you'd think that he couldn't move."

"But they told you he goes out every night?"

"I've no doubt that is true."

"I don't understand it all," said Lady Sarah. "What is he to gain by pretending? And so they used to quarrel?"

"I tell you what the woman told me."

"I've no doubt it's true. And she has gone and taken Popenjoy? Did he say anything about Popenjoy?"

"Not a word," said Lord George.

"It's quite possible that the dean may have been right all through. What terrible mischief a man may do when he throws all idea of duty to the winds! If I were you, George, I should just go on as though I had not seen him at all."

That was the decision to which Lord George came, but in that he was soon shaken by a letter which he received from Mr. Knox. "I think, if you were to go up to London and see your brother, it would have a good effect," said Mr. Knox. In fact Mr. Knox's letter contained little more than a petition that Lord George

would pay another visit to the marquis. To this request, after consultation with his sister, he gave a positive refusal.

"MY DEAR MR. KNOX," he said, "I saw my brother less than a week ago, and the meeting was so unsatisfactory in every respect that I do not wish to repeat it. If he has anything to say to me as to the occupation of the house, he had better say it through you. I think, however, that my brother should be told that, though I may be subject to his freaks, we cannot allow that my mother should be annoyed by them.—Faithfully yours,

"GEORGE GERMAIN."

At the end of another week Mr. Knox came in person. The marquis was willing that his mother should live at Manor Cross—and his sisters. But he had—so he said—been insulted by his brother, and must insist that Lord George should leave the house. If this order were not obeyed, he should at once put the letting of the place into the hands of a house agent. Then Mr. Knox went on to explain that he was to take back to the marquis a definite reply. "When people are dependent on me I choose that they shall be dependent," the marquis had said.

Now, after a prolonged consultation to which Lady Susanna was admitted—so serious was the thing to be considered—it was found to be necessary to explain the matter to the marchioness. Some step clearly must be taken. They must all go, or Lord George must go. Cross Hall was occupied, and Mr. Price was going to be married on the strength of his occupation. A lease had been executed to Mr. Price, which the dowager herself had been called upon to sign. "Mamma will never be made to understand it," said Lady Susanna.

"No one can understand it," said Lord George. Lord George insisted that the ladies should continue to live at the large house, insinuating that, for himself, he would take some wretched residence, in the most miserable corner of the globe which he could find.

The marchioness was told, and really fell into a very bad way. She literally could not understand it, and aggravated matters by appearing to think that her younger son had been wanting in respect to his elder brother. And it was all that nasty dean! And Mary must have behaved very badly, or Brotherton would not have been so severe! "Mamma," said Lady Sarah, moved beyond her wont,

"you ought not to think such things. George has been true to you all his life, and Mary has done nothing. It is all Brotherton's fault. When did he ever behave well? If we are to be miserable, let us at any rate tell the truth about it." Then the marchioness was put to bed, and remained there for two days.

At last the dean heard of it, first through Lady Alice, and then directly from Lady Sarah, who took the news to the Deanery. Upon which he wrote the following letter to his son-in-law :

"MY DEAR GEORGE,—I think your brother is not quite sane. I never thought that he was. Since I have had the pleasure of knowing you, especially since I have been connected with the family, he has been the cause of all the troubles that have befallen it. It is to be regretted that you should ever have moved back to Manor Cross, because his temper is so uncertain, and his motives so unchristian!

"I think I understand your position now, and will therefore not refer to it further than to say, that, when not in London, I hope you will make the Deanery your home. You have your own house in town, and when here will be close to your mothers and sisters. Anything I can do to make this a comfortable residence for you shall be done; and it will surely go for something with you, that a compliance with this request on your part will make another person the happiest woman in the world."

"In such an emergency as this, am I not justified in saying that any little causes of displeasure that may have existed between you and me should now be forgotten? If you will think of them, they really amount to nothing. For you I have the esteem of a friend and the affection of a father-in-law. A more devoted wife than my daughter does not live. Be a man and come to us, and let us make much of you.

"She knows I am writing, and sends her love; but I have not told her of the subject lest she should be wild with hope.—Affectionately yours,
HENRY LOVELACE."

The letter as he read it moved him to tears, but when he had finished the reading he told himself that it was impossible. There was one phrase in the letter which went sorely against the grain with him. The dean told him to be a man. Did the dean mean to imply that his conduct hitherto had been unmanly?

CHAPTER XLIX. "WOULDN'T YOU COME
HERE—FOR A WEEK?"

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN was very much troubled by the nobility of the dean's offer. He felt sure that he could not accept it, but he felt at the same time that it would be almost as difficult to decline to accept it. What else was he to do? where was he to go? how was he now to exercise authority over his wife? With what face could he call upon her to leave her father's house, when he had no house of his own to which to take her? There was, no doubt, the house in London, but that was her house, and peculiarly disagreeable to him. He might go abroad; but then what would become of his mother and sisters? He had trained himself to think that his presence was necessary to the very existence of the family; and his mother, though she ill-treated him, was quite of the same opinion. There would be a declaration of a break-up made to all the world, if he were to take himself far away from Manor Cross. In his difficulty, of course he consulted Lady Sarah. What other counsellor was possible to him?

He was very fair with his sister, trying to explain everything to her—everything, with one or two exceptions. Of course he said nothing of the Houghton correspondence, nor did he give exactly a true account of the scene at Mrs. Montacute Jones's ball; but he succeeded in making Lady Sarah understand that though he accused his wife of nothing, he felt it to be incumbent on him to make her completely subject to his own authority. "No doubt she was wrong to waltz after what you told her," said Lady Sarah.

"Very wrong."

"But it was simply high spirits, I suppose."

"I don't think she understands how circumspect a young married woman ought to be," said the anxious husband. "She does not see how very much such high spirits may injure me. It enables an enemy to say such terrible things."

"Why should she have an enemy, George?" Then Lord George merely whispered his brother's name. "Why should Brotherton care to be her enemy?"

"Because of the dean."

"She should not suffer for that. Of course, George, Mary and I are very different. She is young and I am old. She has been brought up to the pleasures of

life, which I disregard, perhaps because they never came in my way. She is beautiful and soft, a woman such as men like to have near them. I never was such a one. I see the perils and pitfalls in her way; but I fancy that I am prone to exaggerate them, because I cannot sympathise with her yearnings. I often condemn her frivolity, but at the same time I condemn my own severity. I think she is true of heart, a loving woman. And she is at any rate your wife."

"You don't suppose that I wish to be rid of her?"

"Certainly not; but in keeping her close to you, you must remember that she has a nature of her own. She cannot feel as you do in all things any more than you feel as she does."

"One must give way to the other."

"Each must give way to the other if there is to be any happiness."

"You don't mean to say she ought to waltz, or dance stage-dances?"

"Let all that go for the present. She won't want to dance much for a time now, and when she has a baby in her arms she will be more apt to look at things with your eyes. If I were you I should accept the dean's offer."

There was a certain amount of comfort in this, but there was more pain. His wife had defied him, and it was necessary to his dignity that she should be brought to submission before she was received into his full grace. And the dean had encouraged her in those acts of defiance. They had, of course, come from him. She had been more her father's daughter than her husband's wife, and his pride could not endure that it should be so. Everything had gone against him. Hitherto he had been able to desire her to leave her father and to join him in his own home. Now he had no home to which to take her. He had endeavoured to do his duty—always excepting that disagreeable episode with Mrs. Houghton—and this was the fruit of it. He had tried to serve his brother, because his brother was Marquis of Brotherton, and his brother had used him like an enemy. His mother treated him with steady injustice. And now his sister told him that he was to yield to the dean! He could not bring himself to yield to the dean. At last he answered the dean's letter as follows:

"MY DEAR DEAN,—Your offer is very kind, but I do not think that I can accept it just at present. No doubt I

am very much troubled by my brother's conduct. I have endeavoured to do my duty by him, and have met with but a poor return. What arrangements I shall ultimately make as to a home for myself and Mary, I cannot yet say. When anything is settled I shall, of course, let her know at once. It will always be, at any rate, one of my chief objects to make her comfortable, but I think that this should be done under my roof, and not under yours. I hope to be able to see her in a day or two, when perhaps I shall have been able to settle upon something.—Yours always affectionately, G. GERMAIN."

Then, upon reading this over and feeling that it was cold and almost heartless, he added a postscript. "I do feel your offer to be very generous, but I think you will understand the reasons which make it impossible that I shall accept it." The dean, as he read this, declared to himself that he knew the reasons very well. The reasons were not far to search. The man was pigheaded, foolish, obstinately proud. So the dean thought. As far as he himself was concerned, Lord George's presence in the house would not be a comfort to him. Lord George had never been a pleasant companion to him. But he would have put up with worse than Lord George for the sake of his daughter.

On the very next day Lord George rode into Brotherton, and went direct to the Deanery. Having left his horse at the inn he met the dean in the Close, coming out of a side door of the cathedral close to the Deanery gate. "I thought I would come in to see Mary," he said.

"She will be delighted."

"I did not believe that I should be able to come so soon when I wrote yesterday."

"I hope you are going to tell her that you have thought better of my little plan."

"Well, no; I don't think I can do that. I think she must come to me first, sir."

"But where?"

"I have not yet quite made up my mind. Of course there is a difficulty. My brother's conduct has been so very strange."

"Your brother is a madman, George."

"It is very easy to say so, but that does not make it any better. Though he be ever so mad, the house is his own. If he chooses to turn me out of it he can. I have told Mr. Knox that I would leave it within a month, for my mother's sake; but that, as I had gone there at his express instance, I could not move sooner. I think I was justified in that."

"I don't see why you should go at all."

"He would let the place."

"Or, if you do go, why you should not come here. But, of course, you know your own business best.—How d'ye do, Mr. Groschut? I hope the bishop is better this morning."

At this moment, just as they were entering the Deanery gate, the bishop's chaplain had appeared. He had been very studious in spreading a report, which he had no doubt believed to be true, that all the Germain family, including Lord George, had altogether repudiated the dean, whose daughter, according to his story, was left upon her father's hands because she would not be received at Manor Cross. For Mr. Groschut had also heard of Jack De Baron, and had been cut to the soul by the wickedness of the Kappa-kappa. The general iniquity of Mary's life in London had been heavy on him. Brotherton, upon the whole, had pardoned the dean for knocking the marquis into the fireplace, having heard something of the true story with more or less correctness. But the chaplain's morals were sterner than those of Brotherton at large, and he was still of opinion that the dean was a child of wrath, and poor Mary, therefore, a grandchild. Now, when he saw the dean and his son-in-law apparently on friendly terms, the spirit of righteousness was vexed within him, as he acknowledged this to be another sign that the dean was escaping from that punishment which alone could be of service to him in this world. "His lordship is better this morning. I hope, my lord, I have the pleasure of seeing your lordship quite well." Then Mr. Groschut passed on.

"I'm not quite sure," said the dean, as he opened his own door, "whether any good is ever done by converting a Jew."

"But St. Paul was a converted Jew," said Lord George.

"Well, yes; in those early days Christians were only to be had by converting Jews or Pagans; and in those days they did actually become Christians. But the Groschuts are a mistake." Then he called to Mary, and in a few minutes she was in her husband's arms on the staircase. The dean did not follow them, but went into his own room on the ground-floor; and Lord George did not see him again on that day.

Lord George remained with his wife nearly all the afternoon, going out with her into the town as she did some little shopping, and being seen with her in the

market place and Close. It must be owned of Mary that she was proud thus to be seen with him again, and that in buying her ribbons and gloves she referred to him, smiling as he said this, and pointing and pretending to differ as he said that, with greater urgency than she would have done had there been no breach between them. It had been terrible to her to think that there should be a quarrel—terrible to her that the world should think so. There was a gratification to her in feeling that even the shopkeepers should see her and her husband together. And when she met Canon Pountner, and stopped a moment in the street while that worthy divine shook hands with her husband, that was an additional pleasure to her. The last few weeks had been heavy to her in spite of her father's affectionate care—heavy with a feeling of disgrace from which no well-minded young married woman can quite escape, when she is separated from her husband. She had endeavoured to do right. She thought she was doing right. But it was so sad! She was fond of pleasure, whereas he was little given to any amusement; but no pleasures could be pleasant to her now unless they were in some sort countenanced by him. She had never said such a word to a human being, but, since that dancing of the Kappa-kappa, she had sworn to herself a thousand times that she would never waltz again. And she hourly yearned for his company, having quite got over that first difficulty of her married life—that doubt whether she could ever learn to love her husband. During much of this day she was actually happy, in spite of the great sorrow which still weighed so heavily upon them both.

And he liked it also in his way. He thought that he had never seen her looking more lovely. He was sure that she had never been more gracious to him. The touch of her hand was pleasant to his arm, and even he had sufficient spirit of fun about him to enjoy something of the mirth of her little grimaces. When he told her what her father had said about Mr. Groschut, even he laughed at her face of assumed disgust. "Papa doesn't hate him half as much as I do," she said. "Papa always does forgive at last, but I never can forgive Mr. Groschut."

"What has the poor man done?"

"He is so nasty! Don't you see that his face, always shines? Any man with a shiny face ought to be hated." This was

very well to give as a reason, but Mary entertained a very correct idea as to Mr. Groschut's opinion of herself.

Not a word had been said between the husband and wife as to the great question of residence till they had returned to the Deanery after their walk. Then Lord George found himself unable to conceal from her the offer which the dean had made.

"Oh, George, why don't you come?"

"It would not be—fitting."

"Fitting! Why not fitting? I think it would fit admirably. I know it would fit me." Then she leaned over him, and took his hand and kissed it.

"It was very good of your father."

"I am sure he meant to be good."

"It was very good of your father," Lord George repeated, "very good indeed; but it cannot be. A married woman should live in her husband's house, and not in her father's."

Mary gazed into his face with a perplexed look, not quite understanding the whole question, but still with a clear idea as to a part of it. All that might be very true, but, if a husband didn't happen to have a house, then might not the wife's father's house be a convenience? They had indeed a house, provided no doubt with her money, but not the less now belonging to her husband, in which she would be very willing to live if he pleased it—the house in Munster Court. It was her husband that made objection to their own house. It was her husband who wished to live near Manor Cross, not having a roof of his own under which to do so. Were not these circumstances which ought to have made the Deanery a convenience to him? "Then what will you do?" she asked.

"I cannot say as yet." He had become again gloomy and black-browed.

"Wouldn't you come here, for a week?"

"I think not, my dear."

"Not when you know how happy it would make me to have you with me once again? I do so long to be telling you everything." Then she leant against him and embraced him, and implored him to grant her this favour. But he would not yield. He had told himself that the dean had interfered between him and his wife, and that he must at any rate go through the ceremony of taking his wife away from her father. Let it be accorded to him that he had done that, and then perhaps he might visit the Deanery. As for her, she would have gone with him anywhere now, having fully established her right to visit her father after leaving London.

There was nothing further settled, and very little more said, when Lord George left the Deanery and started back to Manor Cross. But with Mary there had been left a certain comfort. The shopkeepers and Dr. Pountner had seen her with her husband, and Mr. Groschut had met Lord George at the Deanery door.

A BOW-STREET RUNNER.

It was the time of the first French Revolution. Great alarm prevailed in England, because of the general spread of Jacobinism; and crowned heads all over the Continent were unusually uneasy. A neighbour's house was on fire; there was no knowing how far the flames might spread. It was believed that the British Constitution was in danger; it was dreaded that the august persons of their most gracious Majesties King George the Third and Queen Charlotte of blessed memory might become objects of insult and outrage.

Mysterious-looking strangers had been observed haunting Windsor Castle and its precincts; and their Majesties dwelt chiefly at Windsor in those days. The queen was said to be seriously alarmed; the king, to do him justice, felt no fear. It was certain, however, that revolutionary sentiments were gaining strength every day, that disaffection was on the increase, that a section of the community loudly professed republican opinions. The Government decided that something must be done for the personal protection of the king and queen. Accordingly, three of the most active of the Bow Street runners were appointed to be in constant attendance upon royalty.

Dr. Wolcot, who, calling himself Peter Pindar, Esquire, had been long accustomed to pelt the king and queen with satiric and even scurrilous poems, forthwith published an appropriate ode of praise and admonition, addressed to "Messrs. Townsend, Macmanus, and Jealous, the thieftakers and attendants upon majesty." He first congratulates them on their promotion:

Accept the bard's sincere congratulation—
Ye glorious imps, of thief-suppressing spirit,
Elected, for your most heroic merit,
The Guardians of the Rulers of the Nation.

Presently he proceeds:

At midnight, lo! some knave might steal so sly,
In silence, on the royal sleepy eye,
And giving to his sacrilege a loose,
Bear off the mighty monarch on his back,
Just as sly Reynard, in his night attack,
Bears from the farmer's yard a gentle goose!

Ye glorious thief-takers, oh, watch the pair;
We cannot such a precious couple spare.
Oh, cat-like, guard the door against Tom Paine!

I know their majesties are in a fright;
I know they very badly sleep at night;
Tom Paine's, indeed, a most terrific word.

Why should our gracious sovereigns be unblest?
Why by a paltry subject be distressed?

What a bright thought in George and Charlotte,
Who to escape each wicked varlet,
And disappoint Tom Paine's disloyal crew,
Fixed on Macmanus, Townsend, Jealous,
Delightful company, delicious fellows,
To point out, every minute, who is who!
To hustle from before their noble graces,
Rascals with ill looks, designing faces,
Where treason, murder, and sedition dwell;
To give the life of every Newgate wretch,
To say who next the fatal cord shall stretch,
The sweet historian of the pensive cell!

Reference is made to the supposed jealousy of the army, their indignation at the slight to their loyalty involved in the appointment of the new royal body-guard, and the poem concludes:

Laugh the loud world, and let it laugh again!
The great of Windsor shall the laugh disdain;
In days of yore, dull days, insipid things,
Kings trusted only to a people's love,
But modern times in politics improve,
And Bow-STREET RUNNERS are the shields of kings!

Of the three officers, Townsend was the most distinguished. He was credited, too, with a knack of "putting himself forward," and is said to have stepped in front of his co-mates, when they were first admitted to an audience of the king and queen in the library of Windsor Castle.

"Who are you?" demanded the king, surveying the constable through that single-barrelled opera-glass, which was rarely out of the royal hand. "Townsend, eh? Good fellow, Townsend, they tell me, sharp, and steady, and loyal; eh, Townsend? Sharp eye, too, very sharp."

And his Majesty called the queen's attention to that sharp eye, on which Mr. Townsend indeed greatly prided himself, having found it of exceeding service to him.

"Mr. Townsend will have occasion for sharp eyes here." Queen Charlotte was pleased to remark.

"Yes, yes," said the king. "Very good, very good! Sharp eyes, eh, Townsend? Keep 'em open—keep 'em open!"

As Mr. Townsend said of his promotion, he had been sent in a moment "slap up to the top of the tree." He was of very humble origin, and was without education. The son of a coal-heaver, he had been employed as a child in blacking boots and sifting cinders in his Majesty's gaol of

Newgate. He left the prison to take part in his father's trade of coal-heaving; he returned presently, however, having obtained an appointment as turnkey, and was often specially occupied in aiding the condemned prisoners to complete their last toilet. From Newgate he passed to Bow Street as one of the runners, or detective police, enjoying the confidence of Sir Richard Birnie, the magistrate. He was then advanced to the position he occupied until his life ended, and became "the shield," in turn, of Kings George the Third, George the Fourth, and William the Fourth, favoured with their trust and regard, and always in immediate attendance upon them. He has been described as "the consulting friend of all the Lord Chancellors, from Lord Loughborough to Lord Eldon, and the intimate adviser of all cabinet ministers, from Mr. Spencer Percival and Lord Sidmouth down to Sir Robert Peel."

In the good old times when George the Third was king, our police system was in a very undeveloped and unsatisfactory condition. Dogberry and Verges still flourished; the old parish constables, of the pattern introduced by the Saxons, were not, indeed, superseded until 1829. The parochial watchman, who looked a twin-brother of the old hackney-coachman, appeared only at night, armed with a staff, a rattle, and a lantern, when he announced in loud tones the hours and the state of the weather, or ensconced himself out of harm's way in his watch-box. In the day-time, London was altogether denied the protection of the police. The "Charleys," as for unknown reasons the old watchmen were popularly called, did little in the way of hindering crime, or of arresting criminals, while they were favourite objects of assault to the "bucks" and "bloods" of the time: cruelty to the aged and infirm being then a fashionable diversion. Each parish was supposed to look after itself. The watchmen of different parishes did not co-operate against their common enemy, the thief. The constable of one ward would not interfere to prevent the commission of a robbery on the opposite side of the street, supposing it to be one foot beyond his bounds. No wonder crime thrived. A magistrate, Mr. Colquhoun, writing on the subject at the commencement of the century, estimated the annual value of stolen property at that time at one million five hundred thousand pounds.

In addition to the watchmen, there were

thief-takers of the Jonathan Wild class, solely desirous of earning the forty pounds given by the Home Office upon the conviction of every felon. These men were far more anxious to obtain "blood money" than to hinder crime; it was to their interest, indeed, that crime should thrive; the reward was only due upon the completion of a felony. They were accustomed, as they said, to "let the matter ripen," until their fees were secure, and the conviction of the offender a matter of certainty. Intimate relations were thus established between the constabulary and the criminal classes. In the Life of Munden the actor, it is related that, in consequence of a burglary having been committed in his house in Kentish Town, he applied for advice to his friends, Sir William Parsons and Mr. Bond, the sitting magistrate at Bow Street. They enquired the extent of his loss. He admitted it was but trifling—the thieves had been disturbed by the early rising of one of the servants. "Munden," said one of the magistrates, "you must not tell anyone we gave you this advice; but you had better put up with your loss, for to prosecute will cause you a great deal of trouble." He then enquired of one of the officers in attendance, "Who was on the North Road last night?" "Little Jemmy with a party, your worship." "Have you ascertained, Munden," asked Sir William Parsons, "how the robbers gained admission to your house?" "By forcing up the parlour window." "Was there the impression of a very small foot on the mould or the gravel outside?" "There was." "Would you like to see the leader of the gang that robbed your house?" "I should," said the comedian, with rather a bewildered air. "Very well. Go over to The Brown Bear opposite, at one o'clock to-morrow afternoon. Enter the room on the right. You will see Townsend the officer seated at the head of a table, with a large company round. You may be assured that, Townsend excepted, they are all thieves. If he asks you to sit down, do so. The man who sits upon your right hand will be the leader of the robbers who entered your house." The actor entered The Brown Bear at the appointed hour. He duly found Mr. Townsend at the head of a large table, diligently carving a round of beef for a gang of thieves. "I wanted to speak to you, Mr. Townsend," said Munden, looking uneasily about him, "but I see you are engaged." "I shall be at your

service in a minute, Mr. Munden; perhaps you will take a snack with us. Jemmy," said Townsend to a little man sitting upon his right hand, "make room for Mr. Munden." Jemmy, with an uneasy look, did as he was bid. Munden sat down, turning towards his uncomfortable neighbour, and examining his features curiously; the company the while laughing immoderately, for they supposed that Jemmy, for legal purposes, was undergoing the process of identification. Now when the burglars had entered Munden's house, they had attacked a remnant of cold round of beef they had discovered in the larder, helping themselves very freely to it, leaving little pinches of salt upon the table—six in all—denoting the number of the burglars. Apparently, the thieves in the parlour of The Brown Bear were acquainted with the attack upon the beef in Kentish Town. They addressed themselves accordingly with rough jocoseness to their disconcerted comrade. "Jemmy, your appetite is failing. Pray, have some more. You were always fond of boiled beef." Greatly to the relief of Jemmy, however, the actor presently withdrew, after making a low bow to the burglar, who was not long afterwards called upon to undergo the last penalty of the law, on account of some more serious offence. "These," writes Munden's biographer, "were the customs that prevailed half a century ago. The officer had the thieves under his immediate eye, and seldom gave them much trouble until they were worth forty pounds; that is, candidates for the gibbet and the halter. If much stir was made after a lost gold watch, and a handsome reward offered, a hint from the man in office recovered it; and when the final period of retributive justice arrived, this functionary fearlessly entered a room crowded with malefactors, and beckoning with his finger, was followed by his man, who well knew he was wanted. The Brown Bear was as safe a place of retreat for the thief as any other."

The horse-patrol, planned by Sir Richard Ford, and established in 1805, was the first improvement upon the old system of watchmen. Before a Parliamentary Committee which sat in 1806, to enquire into the police of the metropolis, Townsend was required to give evidence. "I remember," he said, "when Serjeant Adair was recorder in 1783, there were forty hung at two executions." The law was severe to savageness at that time; there were one hundred and sixty offences punish-

able by death. "In a week, there would be from ten to fifteen highway robberies. Formerly, there were two, three, or four highwaymen on Hounslow Heath, Wimbledon Common, Finchley Common, and the Romford Road. I have actually come to Bow Street in the morning, and while I have been leaning over the desk, had three or four people come in and say: 'I was robbed by two highwaymen in such a place.' 'I was robbed by a single highwayman in such a place.'"

Townsend was said to have made more arrests with his own hands than all the other Bow Street officers put together, and was specially famous for bringing to justice the notorious highwayman, known as Jerry Abershaw, and George Barrington, the noted pickpocket. Referring to the early part of his career, from 1781 to 1787, "I am positively convinced," he said, "that five were executed then, for one in 1816. We never had an execution," he continued, "wherein we did not grace that unfortunate gibbet at the Old Bailey with ten, twelve, to thirteen, sixteen, and twenty." He was in favour of the system of hanging in chains, by way of warning to others. At this time, it may be noted, it was customary to raise the gallows as near as might be to the scene of the commission of the crime for which the convict was to suffer death. Execution Dock, on the left bank of the Thames at Wapping in the East, is described by Stow as "the usual place of execution for hanging of pirates and sea-rovers at the low-water mark, and there to remain till three tides had overflowed them." Townsend was asked: "Do you think any advantages arise from a man being put on a gibbet after execution?" "Yes, I was always of that opinion, and I recommended Sir William Scott to hang the two men that are now hanging down the river. I will state my reasons. We will take for granted that those men were hanged as this morning for the murder of those revenue-officers; they are by law dissected; the sentence is, that afterwards the body is to go to the surgeon's for dissection; there is an end of it—it dies. But look at this: there are a couple of men now hanging near the Thames, where all the sailors must come up, and one says to the other: 'Pray, what are those two poor fellows there for?' 'Why?' says another, 'I will go and ask.' They ask. 'Why, those two men are hung and gibbeted for murdering his Majesty's revenue-officers.' And so the thing is kept

alive. If it was not for this, people would die and nobody would know anything of it. In Abershaw's case, I said to the sheriff: 'The only difficulty in hanging this fellow, is its being so near Lord Spencer's house.' But we went down and pointed out a particular place; he was hung at the particular pitch of the hill where he used to do the work. If there was one person went to see that man hanging, I am sure there was a hundred thousand. I received information that they meant to cut him down. I said to Sir Richard Ford: 'I will counteract this. In order to have it done right, I will go and sit up all night, and have eight or ten officers at a distance.' . . . But nobody ever came, or else being so close to Kent Street, they would have come down and sawed the gibbet and taken it all away, for Kent Street was a very desperate place, though it is not so now. Lord Chief Justice Eyre once went the home circuit; he began at Hertford, and finished at Kingston. Crimes were so desperate, that in his charge to the grand jury at Hertford, he finished: 'Now, gentlemen of the jury, you have heard my opinion as to the enormity of the offences committed; be careful what bills you find, for whatever bills you find, if the parties are convicted before me for capital offences, I have made up my mind as I go through the circuit to execute every one.' He did so—he never saved man or woman; and a singular circumstance occurred, that stands upon record fresh in my mind. There were seven people convicted for a robbery in Kent Street, for calling in a pedlar, and after robbing the man, he jumped out of window. There were four men and three women concerned; they were all convicted, and all hanged in Kent Street, opposite the door; and I think on Kennington Common eight more, making fifteen; all that were convicted were hung."

We may note that it had long been usual to hang in chains, although an order to that effect formed no part of the legal judgment. By the 25 Geo. II. c. 37, dissection was required to be a part of the sentence. By the 9 Geo. IV. c. 31, dissection might be a part of the sentence; and by this Act, the judge might direct the body to be hung in chains. Acts passed in the reign of William the Fourth repealed the provisions then existing as to dissection and hanging in chains. Mr. Peel having established a Bow Street day patrol, obtained, in 1828, the appointment of a

Committee of the House of Commons, to enquire into the expediency of establishing a uniform system of police in the metropolis. London was curiously conservative in regard to the new constables, whom Peel succeeded at length in introducing; many discovered themselves to be much attached to the old "Charleys" they had so long been accustomed to ridicule and abuse. Even now the police have not altogether escaped from or outlived the slang titles of "Peelers" and "Bobbies," bestowed upon them originally with derisive reference to their political parent.

It was said of old Townsend, or Johnny Townsend, as he was often called, that owing to his long intimacy with crowned heads, he was at last induced to believe himself a member of the royal family, if not, indeed, the immediate heir to the throne of Great Britain. He took pains to dress after the manner of George the Third, and never varied his costume in that respect, always appearing "clean as paint" as he expressed it. He wore, usually, a white hat, broad of brim, and with what was known as a Stuart-shaped crown, a light-coloured suit, knee-breeches, drab gaiters, or top boots, and a flaxen wig; assuming on special occasions a dress-coat of blue broadcloth, buttoned over a neat Marcella waistcoat, and blue-and-white striped silk stockings. He carried a heavy cudgel, or a stout silver-headed Malacca cane. His flaxen scratch-wig became an object of some notoriety, and even formed the theme of a comic ballad, sung to the tune of Nancy Dawson:

Of all the wigs in Brighton town,
The black, the grey, the red, the brown,
So firmly glued upon the crown,
There's none like Johnny Townsend's;
Its silken hair, and flaxen hue,
It is a scratch, and not a queue,
Whene'er it pops upon the view,
Is known for Johnny Townsend's!

He was in the habit of bathing in the Thames, near Millbank, early in the morning. He was greatly infuriated and inconvenienced, upon one occasion, when he discovered that his clothes had been removed by thieves, or practical jokers, it was not clear which, and he was compelled, in an unclad state, to find his way homeward as best he could.

George the Third found great amusement in the society and the stories of Townsend. On Sunday evenings, we are told, the king was to be seen promenading on Windsor Terrace in familiar conversation with the constable, the good-humoured

countenance of royalty being the while crimsoned and convulsed with laughter. For many years the short, thick-set figure of Townsend was to be seen in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall and St. James's Palace, now arm-in-arm with the Duke of York, now chatting familiarly with Lord Sidmouth. George the Third called him "Townsend;" George the Fourth called him "John"—plain "John;" to the princesses and ladies of the court, to whom he often rendered valuable services, he was always "Mr. Townsend." During an installation of the Knights of the Garter, it was observed that the Duchess of Northumberland was glad to accept the arm and the protection of the Bow Street runner, on her way through the mob of nobles and others, to her place in St. George's Chapel. He was a constant attendant at the ancient concerts, whenever they were patronised by the royal family. The late Henry Phillips has recorded his conversation with the constable as he sat behind the orchestra, swinging his short, thick legs to and fro. Asked if he was fond of music, Townsend replied: "No, it ain't much in my way; but my missus is. I can't get her away from them organs in the streets sometimes, she's so awful musical." "Don't you miss his Majesty George the Third very much?" "I believe you, I do," he replied, lifting his hat from his head—a habit with him always when any of the royal family were mentioned; "if it wasn't for my vocation, I'd devote the rest of my life to his memory. Why, bless you," he continued, "his gracious Majesty"—up went the hat again—"and myself were like brothers. Bless you, he wouldn't go nowhere without me. I keeps my place because the young chaps at Bow Street has got to learn their business, and the old 'uns has got to teach 'em; and the business of the state couldn't go on without the help of them as knows the tricks of the town."

Captain Gronow relates that, being on guard at Queen Charlotte's last drawing-room, held in old Buckingham House, he was requested by Townsend to assist a foreign lady, who, owing to the crowding and the intense heat of the rooms, was in a fainting state. The guardsman and the Bow Street runner helped the stranger into the royal presence, receiving the thanks of a French gentleman for the service rendered to his wife, the Duchess of Orleans, afterwards Queen Marie Amélie. The same authority tells us, that Townsend once travelled in a post-chaise with

Joe Manton, the famous gun-maker. They were stopped as they crossed Hounslow Heath by three footpads. Joe Manton was about to try the effect of one of his deadly barrels, when Townsend called out: "Stop, Joe, don't fire; let me talk to the gentlemen." The moment the robbers heard his voice, they took to their heels; he had recognised them, however, and shortly afterwards they were apprehended, and upon Townsend's evidence, convicted and sent to Botany Bay.

An attempt made, in 1827, to represent Townsend upon the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, met with signal discomfiture, for the Bow Street officer, accompanied by a large body of his friends, attended the performance, and secured its condemnation. The play was called *The Two Seconds*, and was supplied with music by Mr. John Barnett, afterwards famous as the composer of the opera of *The Mountain Sylph*.

It was to George the Fourth, in association with Johnny Townsend, that we owe the appointment of a court newsman, and the establishment of that important publication, *The Court Circular*: England being the only country officially provided with information as to the movements of its sovereigns. Before the days of the Regency, the public journals had been left to pick up, as best they could, news of the court, and accepted from all, or any quarters, intelligence touching the proceedings of royalty. The palace was surrounded by spies; the sovereign was watched by reporters, as a race-horse is watched by touts. Under the head of *Royal Movements*, very curious, and often very erroneous and impudent, paragraphs found their way into the newspapers. And the reporter being usually remunerated in relation to the length of his paragraphs, was apt to deal diffusely with his subject, to add to it details of an imaginative character, to serve it up, as it were, richly garnished and redundantly supplied with piquant sauce. It must be added, that royalty was not popular at this time, and that any information which showed the court at a disadvantage, or exposed it to ridicule, was assured of a large public. To the regent, the curiosity of the public in regard to his proceedings was particularly objectionable; whereas, kindly old George the Third had been indifferent on the subject, or had even been gratified by the interest exhibited by his people in his regard. But the prince regent, as he increased in years, and also in size and

weight, became more and more inclined towards privacy and seclusion; his objection to being seen by his subjects, or written about by the newspapers, amounted almost to a mania. During the redecoration and improvement of Carlton House, the indispensable presence of the workmen greatly annoyed the prince; he declared that he did not like to be stared at, and objected to their entering by the gateway. "It is certain," notes Captain Gronow, "that the prince regent kept himself as much aloof as possible from the lower class of his subjects, and was annoyed by the natural curiosity of those who hold that, as a cat may look at a king, permission for that luxury should not be denied to bipeds. I recollect that, having called when on guard upon Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, about the sale of a cob, which he gave me to understand he wanted for the prince regent, while conversing we were interrupted by the entrance of the prince, attended by McMahon and the eccentric 'Tommy Tit.' His royal highness was in an angry humour, and blurted out in his rage: 'I will not allow these maid-servants to look at me when I go in and out; and if I find they do so again, I will have them discharged.' I could hardly believe my ears, that a man born to the highest rank could take umbrage at such pardonable curiosity. But while riding in Hyde Park the next day, I was joined by General Baylie, who, it seemed, had been a spectator of this outburst of wrath. He told me that the prince constantly complained of the servants staring at him, and that strict orders had been given to discharge anyone caught repeating the offence."

The aid of old Townsend was called in, therefore, to suppress the newspaper surveillance of which the regent complained. It was resolved that a proper officer should be appointed to instruct the journals as to the royal movements, and that all editors should be strictly enjoined for the future to say no more than was set down for them to say by the court newsman. Sir John McMahon—an Irish gentleman with a carbuncled nose, in constant attendance upon the prince, filling, indeed, the post of privy purse-bearer and private secretary to his royal highness—enquired of Townsend if he was acquainted with "any writer for the newspapers, any plain, decent fellow," who could be relied upon to discharge the required duties. "I can clap my finger on the very man, Sir John," said Townsend. Presently he introduced an

old crony of his own—an elderly police reporter from Bow Street—who was forthwith installed in office as the first court newsmen. Notices were then sent to all the newspapers that, for the future, the only authentic news of the court would be supplied by its own newly-appointed officer, and they were cautioned against publishing any other; at the same time, the palaces and all the approaches to royalty were strictly guarded against the incursions of the irregular forces of the press, and the old system of peering and spying was brought to an abrupt conclusion.

“So poor Townsend’s gone!” said William the Fourth, on hearing of the demise of the Bow Street runner. Poor Townsend died, however, “full of years, honours, and three per cent. consols:” a portly, prosperous gentleman of three-score and ten, leaving behind him a disconsolate widow and a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. A saving man all his life, he had derived a large income from the presents and Christmas-boxes of the nobility and people of fashion, whose routs and parties he attended, to keep away or detect, as he pretended, the improper persons who might otherwise have been present.

Upon the sudden dissolution of Parliament in 1831, when William the Fourth, enraged with his Master of the Horse, Lord Albemarle, swore that, since the state coach was not in readiness, he would go to the House of Lords in a hackney-coach, Townsend, to the amazement of all present, cried from behind a screen: “Well said, sir; I think your Majesty is quite right.” And he fortified the statement with an oath.

“Is that you, Townsend?” demanded the king, surprised, but highly amused.

“Yes, sir; I am here to see that your Majesty has fair play.”

Certainly, the old Bow Street runner was a very privileged person.

ARTISTS IN THE ROUGH.

It is again pleasant to call attention, with all approval, to the Metropolitan School Board. By means of a gratuitous public exhibition held some little time ago in its own handsome Council Buildings, of its scholars’ drawings, it has given fresh tangible evidence that it is doing new and excellent work in a new and excellent direction; and just as it was heartily

congratulated on a previous exhibition of needlework, mentioned in these columns,* so it must be heartily congratulated now.

As a statement to at once rivet the mind on the importance of this novel art-exhibition, it shall be set down that it consisted of two thousand drawings. Two thousand drawings in a catalogue would take some time to classify—some time, also, to examine, beginning conscientiously at the first and ending only at the last. And when thought is given to getting two thousand drawings out of the gamins of London—out of the real gamins, let it be insisted, the little trousered and jacketed waifs and strays who have played leap-frog over street-posts, have shied road-metal along gutters, have lounged on wall-tops, hung over bridge-edges, been wheels on the pavement, and generally in a state of chivy with all mankind, including the police—for it was for the sweepings of London, it must be recollected, that Board schools were organised and built, and not for the children of well-to-do artisans, already fairly taught and drilled—the result is one to cause deep consideration. Can little street-boys then do just the same as young aristocrats can do, under the golden tuition of a professor, providing only the little street-boys can be trapped and adroitly managed? Let a glance be given at the fair exhibits hung round, “on the line,” and above it, and below, on walls, and screens, and lying in portfolios; we shall soon be assured that they can. As the eye travels, and is arrested, it recognises copies—and exceedingly good copies—of Landseer’s Horse-shoeing, of his Stag at Bay: repeated and repeated, a marked favourite clearly; of The Return from the Fair; of The Post of the Desert; of Raphael’s Madonna della Sedia; of Gainsborough’s Duchess; of “Charge!” of Keep Watch, from Punch; of A Foundling at Prayer. As the eye travels on, and is again arrested, it is by a copy of the bust of Herodotus, of a bust of Minerva; by portraits of Mary Queen of Scots, of Napoleon, of the Shah—set out as His Imperial Majesty, with the appointed inscription in Persian—by an excellent portrait in crayon of Sir Charles Reed, the Board’s chairman, a good, noble work for a little boy of twelve; by views of Conway Castle, of Conway Quay, of the Woolwich Infant, of cottages, of barns, of

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 16, p. 390, “Stitches in Time.”

country lanes, of lake scenery, of snow pieces, of a great deal of similar matter more. All this is diversified also by flowers—in pencil, in chalk, in water-colour—such as camellias, carnations, geraniums, fox-glove, holly, passion-flower, ivy, tulips, roses, flags (or iris), pansies; with fruit, such as grapes and apples—grouped; as in life, growing; or plucked, and arranged on dishes—and with well-posed bulls' heads, lions' heads, dogs, parrots, horses' heads, ostriches, stags, giraffes, trees. An exhibition of British boys' drawings is little likely to exist without ships in it, and ships are here; together with crusaders; with conventional scroll-work, in gilt and colours; with excellent designs of circles, inscribed in triangles, and other geometric figures; with cubes, pyramids, and so forth, in good perspective; with maps, with vases—there was a capital specimen, capitally drawn, by a boy of ten; with columns, pediments, escutcheons—one distinguished as "at Cluny, France," medallions ("Time of Louis the Fourteenth"); with Gothic letters, arranged in texts and mottoes—one reads "Knowledge is Power," with perfect pith and appropriateness—with several subjects chosen in pure fun. Of these, there is a group of boys playing cricket; there is an elephant saving a boy from being drowned; there is a policeman making much ado over his constabular and scholastic task of taking up; there is a comical beggar on crutches, with a patch over his non-winking eye, by an artist aged twelve; there is a boy eating porridge and having no more enjoyment over each spoonful, assuredly, than the little fellow had who sketched him in, and who added his detail stroke by stroke.

"Ah, this is the sort of work we want!" was the cry of one of two visitors to the other, as the pair entered the little exhibition, and there came the surprise of its completeness.

And the work there was the sort of work wanted, eminently. See how human it is—the best quality of all. Culture was in it, happily; colour was in it, happily; form was in it, happily; that beauty was in it that is a joy for ever—and knitting them all together, and overhanging them, was this broad and kind humanity. These little street-boys belonged to the world. In that laid the good lesson. They could laugh with it, could banter it, could show it itself in a merry caricature. They were not outside utterly, being kicked, and

banded, and ever shuffled along on the slope of its round surface, minus the grace of understanding and familiarity. And if it is thought that the flight of this is high for such childish matter, it is because there is forgetfulness of what the children under consideration are. They are the young of that under-stratum of London's population that has little intimacy with picture galleries, with carved and chiselled ornamentation, with nosegays out of warm gardens, with landscape and seashore. It is an immensity to these to learn, even in this secondary fashion, that such things exist, and that they have the power born in them to recognise their loveliness, and write down as much as they have seen.

"I should be pleased that my pupil learned to draw," says Rousseau, in that curiosity of an essay on education that closed Paris and Geneva against him, and in which he declares he should himself pretend to keep pace with his imaginary *Emilius* by "sketching out the figure of a man exactly like the daubing of a school-boy against a wall, with a bar for each leg and arm, and the fingers thicker."

"My *Emilius*," continues Rousseau, "will long be a dauber . . . perhaps never will attain the faculty of discerning the effects of colour or the true taste of design . . . but I am resolved he shall sketch a house from a real house, a tree from a tree, a human figure from a man . . . and he will certainly acquire a nicer eye, a steadier hand, a better knowledge of the true relations of magnitude and figure between animals, plants, and natural bodies, and a much quicker experience of the deception of perspective."

It is clear that if, by the argument, drawing is good for the rich *Emilius*, drawing must be good equally, or in excess, for the poor metropolitan school-boy. The very first to have seen this, and to have admitted it, would have been Rousseau—although Rousseau, the unreliable, the unrebukable, went off into an inexplicable tirade of how he would make his *Emilius* perfect by never punishing him, for he could not be at fault; by never making him ask pardon, for he could not offend; by never giving him lessons to-day that could be deferred till to-morrow; by never flying to him when he cried; by inuring him to masks and vizards, by making them his playthings; to fire-arms, by flashes in the pan; to variability of temperature, by running about in his company of mornings

with naked feet, like his own, in the house and in the garden, taking only the limited precaution of sweeping away bits of glass. And let it be seen why, concurrently with a laugh at so much absurdity, Rousseau gets quotation, and is held up for a certain quantity of following. His Emilius, he says, shall acquire a nicer eye by drawing, a steadier hand, a knowledge of magnitude, a quicker experience. His Emilius, therefore, it may be presumed, was without these—and would want them confessedly, if only to estimate his tutor fitly. Well, and so does a forlorn little Londoner want them; so does a forlorn little Londoner possess an eye that should be nicer, very much; a hand that should be steadier; a knowledge and an experience that should receive magnitude of some sort, and quickness all over; with only this difference between him and Rousseau's pupil, that his need goes beyond the other's largely, exceeding it far and far.

But there is a necessity in the life of a Metropolitan Board school-boy that has to take firmer clutch of him than beauty in the abstract and fine perceptions. He will have to get his living. He has to qualify himself for a trade—and with some definite qualifying outside of the fact, and of all its inferences, that education of every sort qualifies. And so had Emilius, if it were judicious to allude to him again. He was not to be a periwig-maker, said Rousseau; nor a farrier, nor a blacksmith, nor a mason, nor a weaver, a stone-cutter, a tailor, a shoemaker, a bailiff, a spy, an executioner, a musician, a comedian, a scribbler. His was to be a creditable trade, let it be marked; he was not to be an embroiderer, a gilder, a varnisher, as was to be Mr. Locke's fine gentleman. And since distinct preparation for a trade implies distinct preparation for the power of earning food to live—and this, to a metropolitan school-boy, is, to come to practice, useful—it is satisfactory to be able to state that there was proof in this little exhibition under notice that thought had been given to this, and provision very nicely made for it. Take it, for example, that a boy means to be a cabinet-maker, or is the son of a cabinet-maker, with all the hints at home of the calling round him, and his young mind willing to know them at their best. His drawing-lesson, of course, can ease him upon this; and it was excellent to find that scholars had been set to drawings of pieces of furniture, showing floor-line, section, inside elevation, and

so on, proper for working, and accurately drawn to scale. Take it, again, that a boy belongs to engineering, or has a fancy for it. Here are coal-pit engines, locomotives, bevil-wheels—side-view, and in creditable perspective; here are propositions in Euclid, inscribing a circle in or about a given square, describing a hexagon on a given line, and so on, as well-selected preliminary. Take it, also, that boys are not intending to manufacture the objects their fingers are busy over, or, that if they have had the intention, they will become obliged by want of funds, or other pressure, to abandon it. The little knowledge they will gain under their small operations with drawing-pen, and rule, and compass, will not have danger in it; there will be no folly in being wise that much, but, on the contrary, it can scarcely fail to be productive of considerable good. Here is an anatomical drawing, in ink, from a young scholar, as an instance. It shows left carotid artery, left subclavian artery, superior vena cava, ventricle, valves, aorta. There is no supposed unearthing of a rival to Harvey, Hunter, Abernethy, in finding a boy choosing, or submitting, to be exercised in such a subject as this, and there is no suggestion of it; but, with the plasticity of these anatomical items comprehended ever so remotely—as they must be comprehended with even this small contemplation of them—with the vulnerability of these anatomical items impressed with ever so slight a notion on the mind, with their tenderness, their delicate action, their complex relation to the intricate performances of the whole frame, once grasped and received, and surely the result of navvy-boots dug fiercely into them at high pressure will be a little more feelingly conscious to the soul, and there may be occasional hesitation about dealing a knock-down with the fist. Knowledge extends also, from a certain yeast-like quality it has. May it not be that there will remain so little of the bliss of ignorance among Metropolitan Board scholars in time that *The Lancet*, for example, will have no more need to report, as at these presents it has been reporting, that gin and aniseed were administered unprofessionally to a baby of eleven days old, with death the sure consequence, and certain portions of the tiny victim's viscera found to be burnt into holes as large as a split pea? And it need not be concluded, either testily or amusedly, that too large effects are being expected from little

causes, and that these effects are not of the right sort, but are strained. Children do, in truth and in deed, pick up medical knowledge. A young Cassandra, from the pure temple of a doorstep, was heard vehemently admonishing another child the other day—the other child being absorbed in his play on the kerbstone in the glare of a full sun. "You'll get the sunstroke!" ran the young scientist's shrill prophecy. "You'll get the sunstroke—come into the shade!" The Cassandra must have been told of the damage likely to be done by overplus of sunshine to an unprotected brain, and of how it could be evaded; for there is not a scrap of knowledge that has not required its scrap of acquisition, it is sure; and further, there is not a scrap of knowledge that is not transmissible; and there is not an error that is not transmissible just the same. It only remains, therefore, for the Metropolitan School Board to continue to see, as it does already see, that the essential point is to teach true things, fighting away the false; and it is inevitable that great results, and greater and greater results, will arise from the activity, one outcome of which is this original art exhibition.

And now, finally: has the thought come that there has been an attempt to prove that the under-stratum of London boys is full of Opies, Wilkies, Turners, Lawrences, only waiting for this exhibition for all their genius to come out vividly and to the full? The thought is wholly wrong. The two thousand drawings massed for inspection were genuine. Among them there were some of the most horrible contortions the aching eye of an art-critic could imagine. There were squinting eyes and slantwise chins; there was a terrible ruin of Tintern Abbey, far more a ruin of itself than ever an arch-built stone had been, with the terrible sky above it the most terrible ruin of all; there was a heady boy, in vain trying to look at a top spinning on his hand, since, from the line on which his eye was fixed his sight could only go farther and farther away from his toy, and could never get to it till the end of time. And these told their own tale at once and efficiently. But that the gift of brilliance, of accuracy, of fine research and fervour, falls on every class alike, exactly as the rain falls, was proved by this exhibition thoroughly. Given the opportunity for it, it could benefit the lives of such of the owners of these two thousand drawings as had it, exactly as,

given the opportunity, it could benefit the lives of such scholars as have it, at St. Paul's, Merchant Taylors, Christchurch. And another point that was good was that the right people took an interest in these drawings, and came to visit them. Artisan fathers arrived, looking eagerly for work sent in by their sons; lads, not long off school-benches themselves, in the uniform of the Post-office and similar service, arrived, sharply critical for signs of deterioration and advance. In short, with the exception that there was too much pupil-teachers' work exhibited—work done by lads of sixteen and eighteen years of age—this new collection of pictures left nothing to be desired. It is the feeling that exhibitors should be confined to absolute scholars that has withheld any mention of a highly-finished and painstaking view of Bolton Hall, drawn by a pupil-teacher of seventeen. Surprisingly good as this was, it is much more to the purpose to see a pair of scissors yawned out wide, in the centre of a sheet of drawing paper, for a subject; and to see a tub and barrow, with a spade easily poised against them, for another subject, when these, as certified, have been drawn by little boys of ten; and no doubt another year the acting committee will see this also, and will only receive drawings with this restriction.

RUSSIAN RACES.

THOSE who talk of Russia, her immense extent and enormous population, and the formidable force of such an instrument ready to a despot's hand, are apt to ignore, or to forget, what a patchwork thing is, after all, the Czar's empire. Out of seventy-six millions subject to the Russian crown, less than half could be depended on, in case of national need, for real struggles and real self-sacrifice. This, the dominant moiety, consists, of course, of Muscovites proper, inhabiting the two Northern Russias, Black and White. Theirs is the orthodox Church, theirs the official language, and they alone supply the cohesive strength, which holds together the ill-jointed segments of the monstrous monarchy. These Muscovites, or great Russians, the most important branch of the huge Slavonic family, are in many ways a remarkable people. Hating work, bitterly averse to noble and foreigner, and with a strong hereditary bias towards the

crudest forms of Socialism, they yet supply an inexhaustible store of the raw material for foreign conquest and domestic repression. Those eager-eyed young students, who make of every university a hotbed of sedition, and whose glowing day-dreams of political regeneration usually have a dismal awakening in Siberia, are seldom Muscovites. The smart non-commissioned officers, whose keen features contrast so forcibly, on parade or in the battle-field, with the broad flat faces of the patient privates, are Poles, not Russians. Those Nihilist nobles, who dabble in conspiracy from their very boyhood, though born in Muscovy, are not of the Muscovite stock.

Perhaps Europe contains no other example such as the Muscovites present—that of a people born to be the rank and file, in peace and war, of an organised empire, and as devoid of ambition as the bee-workers in a hive. Bitted and bridled, they come into the world the predestined drudges of a foreign dynasty, and of an alien aristocracy. Rarely, if ever, save in the Church, does your genuine Russian rise in the world. The aspiring Menschikoff, the lucky Demidoff, and Potempkin, who exchanged the pastry-board for the imperial council-chamber, were Tartars. Those sudden promotions, which remind us that Russia is, after all, semi-oriental, are not for plain Ivan Ivanowich, who seems likely to stick for ever to his greasy caftan, his bowl of buckwheat and cabbage, the horn of coarse vodka, and the simmering sleep on the hot bricks of the petsch, which constitute his simple luxuries.

Much that seems anomalous in the Russian character may be traced to the long cruel period of Mongol tyranny, when the lords of the soil, like the Zemindars of India, acted the part of splendid task-masters and tax-gatherers for the benefit of the heathen suzerain. The tribute had to be sent, somehow, to be laid at the footstool of the distant Khan; and it could only be raised by wringing it, in no gentle fashion, from the tiller of the ground. Yet even in those dark days the Russian folk-songs were of a glorious past, when mythic monarchs flourished in the gilded halls of Kiew; and there has never been a perceptible slackening in the passionate devotion with which they regard the throned descendant of the Varangian Rurik, an Emperor-Pontiff, who has probably in his veins no drop of Russian blood, but who is dear to them as the "White" Czar, their own prince, as distinguished from the "Black" ruler

of the Mongols, and the "Red" Khan of the Crimea.

Roughly speaking, all Western Russia may be said to have been wrested from the Poles, all Southern Russia to have been won from Turk and Tartar. Red Russia, or Malorossia, is in many respects a more attractive region than the gloomy pine-forests and sandy plains, which extend from the White Sea to the sluggish waters of the Borysthenes. Red, or Little Russia bears a remarkable resemblance to the Prairie States of America, U.S. A citizen of Illinois or Indiana, if suddenly dropped, like a transatlantic copy of Bedreddin Hassan, amidst the grass and wild flowers of the steppe, might fancy, as he rubbed his eyes, that he had been deposited within a day's ride of his own log-built farmhouse. The sight of the copper-sheathed dome of the village church, painted of a lively green, or gleaming metallic, would no doubt disabuse him of his mistake, but the district itself would be strangely like what he had left nine thousand miles away. The soil is rich and deep, and gives heavy corn-crops in return for sorry husbandry. The people—tame Cossacks—are cleaner, more cheerful, more amenable to Western influences and habits of thought, than the sad-eyed natives of Great Russia. Compared with Muscovy, theirs was till very recent times a free country. Even now, it is less severely police-ridden, less a land of spies, and sharp rules, and ruinous prosecutions, than the central circles of the overgrown empire.

The Ruthenians, who cultivate the country south and east of Cracow, and the Lithuanians, farther north—who are often hastily classed together as Little Russians—form a somewhat puzzling contingent to the Russian body-politic. They are really more akin to the East Slavonic than to the Polish or Sarmatian branch of the vast Turanian family; but the great hold upon them is, that they, the Ruthenians in especial, belong to the United Greek Church. Add to this, that their landlords are Poles—nobles—and of the Church of Rome, and the elements of sympathy with Russia and of intestine discord are not far to seek.

Poland, that chronic thorn in the flesh to mighty Muscovy, torn, bleeding, and dismembered, struggles no more; but Poles are what they were when a Polish king was stormily elected by armed horsemen riding up, squadron after squadron, to vote; and those who know them best,

and like them best, scarcely know whether to praise or blame. It is singular that the dull Russian should for a hundred years have been the master of the quick-witted Sarmatian. In a competitive examination the Pole would come in an easy winner. His fiery valour has often borne down the patient courage of his foe. But the Russian at least knows his own mind; while the Pole's more fitful nature changes like an April day; and the one thing certain about him is, that activity will be succeeded by indolence, and feverish hope by the languor of despair.

The Poles supply excellent but distrusted soldiers to the Russian ranks; and indeed the highly-disciplined army, entirely composed of Polish troops, which the half-mad tyrant Constantine raised at Warsaw fifty years ago, outshone the Imperial Guard itself. Even now, a regiment which contains a large Polish element is sure, sooner or later, to prove troublesome. Nothing—not even Siberia and the chain-gang in prospect—can make Demetrius and Ladislas quite forget that blood and language, caste and creed, forbid them to be Russianised. It is difficult for us to realise the feelings and prejudices of these young men—sons, very likely, of the village carpenter and village blacksmith, but still free Polish nobles, whose ancestors helped to elect their king just as did the forefathers of the count in his castle, or of the prince who, in Paris or St. Petersburg, does his best to forget Poland. Then comes the plot, and the betrayal, and the punishment, and the hushing-up of the affair; and so ends the dreary little drama.

A much more manageable people are the Fins, whose wave-washed coast is regarded as the choicest nursery of seamen for the Russian navy. A Fin is simply a Hungarian, whose progenitors somehow strayed to the farther shores of the Baltic; and who, beneath the grey skies of the north, has lost much of the Magyar lightness of heart, and gained instead an obstinate tenacity of purpose like that of the Breton.

The so-called duchies, south of the Baltic, contain three races which, in spite of systematic efforts, have not as yet been assimilated to the Russian pattern. The plastic Letts; the stern, stubborn Estonians, a tribe that clung longer to paganism than any people south of the White Sea; and those German Courlanders, in whom Prince Bismarck is thought to feel a sympathetic interest, have hitherto

shown enough of national vitality to preserve a separate existence. Of less account are the few and poor descendants of those Ingrian fishermen, who used to spread their nets to dry where now gleam the granite palaces and plated cupolas of St. Petersburg.

To the south and east exist the remnants of many a subjugated clan and of many a colony. Near Odessa there are Greeks, whose hereditary instinct has led them to settle by the sea; while, some hundred versts deeper in the steppes, appear the trim cottages and quaint flower-gardens of German colonists. A few Roumans, a sprinkling of Turks, and more Tartars, are to be found in the south-eastern corner of European Russia. These last people are the pedlars and travelling chapmen of the country; and everywhere, from the banks of the Neva to those of the Bug, the Tartar's black tent and line of plodding packhorses may be seen. Most of the chief towns comprise, on their own account, a tiny mosque, the priest of which could reckon on his fingers the resident worshippers.

The far-famed Cossack of romance appears only now to exist in the poetry of Bóranger. Free-trade, and the demands of the English corn-market, have taught the savage lancer of the Don that it is better to grow wheat for shipment from Odessa than to range the waste in quest of spoil. To keep up the legendary force of wild horsemen, the Russian government has to send its agents to Circassia, and to the shores of the Caspian, in search of Mohammedan recruits. Georgia also gives many officers and some soldiers to the imperial service.

Very singular in Russia is the position of the Jew. He is not persecuted, as in Wallachia and Servia; he is not let alone, as in France and Germany. Jews are many, and they grow rich as distillers, as tavern-keepers, as cattle-merchants, as forestallers and regraters of all things that can be eaten, drunk, or worn. There must be something irritating even to the Russian moujik, fine flower of practical philosophy though he be, when he finds that his brandy, and his tea, and his flour, and his horseshoes, and the striped Moscow shawl for his wife's wear on Sundays, are all a trifle dearer because Isaac, and Moses by the bridge, and old Naboth at Alexandropol, have clubbed their wits and funds to buy up meal and iron, dry goods and groceries. But he submits. The Hebrew, he knows, has subtler brains than he; but he takes com-

fort in the reflection that he is orthodox, and the Jew an "imp of hell," as Jews are styled in Russia.

Jews, in the Czar's dominions, are tolerated for very much the same reason which enables them to live on sufferance among the fierce fanatics of Morocco. They are useful. Their knack of bargaining enables them to render a thousand petty services to neighbours too passive or unintelligent to do business with one another. They are, too, the milch-cows of the authorities. Where else could my lord the marshal, or his excellency the governor, or the very worshipful the head of the police, find such admirable sponges, ready to be squeezed, legally and illegally, for the benefit of the imperial treasury and of the private exchequer of the functionary who applies the necessary pressure. Pretexts are not lacking. The brandy monopolies alone are a perfect mine of wealth in a land where ardent spirits are a staple of life; and there exists always a store of obsolete laws ready to be furnished up and held in terrorem over any Jew who hesitates to propitiate the administrative Cerberus with a golden sop.

Jews serve in the army. They are not, however, reckoned as very zealous soldiers. They get through their years of military duty as *dashteks*, or servants to officers, if practicable, and then return to the more congenial pursuits of civil life. A standing order exists at St. Petersburg that Jewish sentinels shall not be posted on Easter Day. This dates from the first year of the reign of the late Emperor Nicholas, when the Czar, having, according to annual custom, greeted the sentry at his palace-gate with the words, "Christ is risen," was astounded at being answered with, instead of the orthodox "Risen indeed," the startling words, "What a lie!" The soldier was a Jew.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VIII. BEFORE THE BATTLE.

NOTHING on earth or in air announced the advent of the great work which was to confound the Philistines, and make true Art live for ever. That day in May should surely have been charged with suppressed thunder, and men and women should have gone about their business with full hearts and troubled minds. But nature has a

perverse way of her own. She will laugh at funerals, and weep at weddings, and refuses to feel in sympathetic excitement, even when a first child cuts its first tooth, or a hen lays an egg, or a young woman says yes—on the whole, she is used to such things. And the world at large has a way of imitating nature in this matter. It is much to be doubted if even Lady Quorne, with all her artistic leanings, ate less breakfast that morning, or left undone anything that she would otherwise have done. Signs and portents come before convulsions and revolutions; and it felt strange to at least one person in the world, that the funds did not become frantic, and that the armies of Philistia did not turn the paving-stones of London into desperate barricades.

In a word, the day of the Cleopatra had come—at last, after six-and-twenty years.

For one man in the world, the Future, with all its golden mysteries, had already come; it was worth having lost a whole lifetime to see this day. After all, great is Truth, and will prevail; and what work was ever worth its salt that does not contain, for a soul, the spirits of black days and fevered nights, and escaped shipwrecks, and starvation of body, and the breaking of heart and mind? Before light there must be chaos; and John March, as he rose that morning of mornings, saw and knew that it had been needful for his work to go through the same furnace that had melted Palisay and Columbus, and a hundred such, into light and victory. His very deafness seemed like the sacrifice that Nemesis demands, lest all things should be too well. He felt strangely calm—so calm, that even he himself consciously wondered. His exaltation of spirit had reached such a point of heat, that it froze. Nothing was left for him to do. In the atmosphere of his masterful enthusiasm, the opera had reached such a climax of finished preparation, that nothing but intrinsic badness could make it fail; and that it was good, he knew, as absolutely as that he lived. What was it for, but to convert the world at once, and by storm? A general may be calm enough before battle when he is assured of a legion of angels to fight on the right side—that is to say, on his own.

Prosper called on him early, and said: "They shall say it is so good than Comus, my friend. They shall say it is fine. Ah, it is marvellous, how well I put my finger on the right thing, and say go—and it goes. Ah, it wants more genius to

make an opera go than to write one, my friend. I would find you a hundred of Verdi; but two of Prosper, no. I will make you a Verdi—two of him, three of him, one hundred thousand of him, if I please; but the Prosper, the impresario, he is born, not made."

John March did not hear a word, but the sight of the man was intolerable to him on a day too great and sacred to be mixed up with the thought that even the highest genius has to work with common tools. Had it been possible, Cleopatra should have been performed in a building that should be theatre and temple in one, without scenery, or stage business, or any vulgar trickery to rob the work of an iota of the glory that should be due to itself alone; he would have had it thus, even though there might be a deeper fitness of things in a triumph gained in the very camp of the enemy.

But, though he was thus calm by very excess of exaltation, he could not rest through the hours that must yet pass before the first throb of the overture could be heard by all ears, except those of him whose heart had heard it for six-and-twenty years. So restless did he feel, that instead of spending the day, as he had planned, in a solitary meditation of thanksgiving, like a true knight before a triumphant ordeal, he put on his hat and went to see his daughter, like any common man. He had avoided seeing her as much as possible, for days, on principle. At least, he believed it was on principle. For he was the last man to understand, though very far from the last to feel, what really kept him from her, and made him leave her alone. But the painter knew very well who made Agamemnon hide his eyes from the sacrifice of Iphigenia. A man may hide away a heart somewhere, and yet condemn a girl to live without love, though it be her whole life, for what he holds to be a just and glorious cause; but he must be a fiend not to know what he is doing, and to feel it sting him now and then.

The curate was out; Bessy was writing letters; Celia was rehearsing silently, with her over-learned part before her for inspiration. Mrs. Gaveston's heart went into her slippers as her old singing-master entered—she no longer thought him mad, since Lady Quorne fully believed him sane, but he was becoming her mental substitute for a certain fancy picture of a being with horns, hoofs, and tail, that had frightened her when she was little. His deafness, too, made her nervous, and it is certainly

uncomfortable to try to talk to a deaf person whose ears are below the level of one's tongue.

He saw what Celia was doing, went up to her, and took away her manuscript from before her.

"I am glad I came. Forget everything—even when the time comes. If you think, you will fail. If your part has become part of you, as I hope, it must take care of itself now, and it will. You—you are a good girl, Celia."

It was the first word of praise she had ever heard from him—the first word that had ever let her know that all her slavery had made her worth something in his eyes. And even this he slurred and hurried over, as if he meant nothing; and his hand touched her hair so slightly that the caress seemed but an accident, and very likely was one. She, too, was quiet enough, but not, like him, with the calm that lies above and beyond fever. He only saw the victory—she was to lead the forlorn hope that must go before.

"Mrs. Gaveston will not leave you to-day," he said, without the least reference to what might be Mrs. Gaveston's own plans. "She will see you to the house, and give you up at the stage-door. I shall not see you again till afterwards. I have no instructions for you—nothing I could say would be of any use now. You know all that depends on you. I don't even know if I shall go to the house—I am sure I shall not, indeed. I won't have the composer of *Comus* pointed out in the middle of the *Cleopatra*; and I did not write the opera for deaf men. You won't sing any the worse for knowing that I am out of the way. And——" he thought of the last time he had entered a theatre—it was when Noëmi had defied him with rebellious song. "No," he said simply, "I shall not go. My being there will not make or mar. It is out of my hands now; and so are you. I shall hear the result; and if I don't, I have done my part. I can do no more. Besides, I know. There can be but one end. Heaven does not seem to fight against the right and the true for nothing, Celia; it is that the true may triumph all the more gloriously. Think of nothing all this day; think only that you are leading in the whole future of Art, and that what that future is to be hangs on you—you only. Think of that; think of that alone. If you do not fail, nothing can fail. But you will not; it is impossible now. Yes, Celia, at last the time is come."

Celia's heart felt full to bursting. Im-

pulse made her hold out her hand; but her father's eyes were far away, where his soul was, and her hand came back to her even more empty than it had gone. She never felt more awfully alone—she, a weak girl, who had just been told that the whole universe depended, henceforth, upon the endurance of her fever of strength for some twelve hours more.

Not only do years pass, but even days, and even hours. And, at last, not only the day but the very hour of the Cleopatra had come.

It is strange, if anything is ever strange, that all things in the lives of so many people should seem planned to keep the great work from the stage, and that all these very things should have resulted in this day and in this hour. John March saw an overruling hand proved by an inevitable triumph, and knew nothing of the motives within motives and wheels within wheels, of which even the hidden actors behind the scenes were cognisant only so far as they themselves were concerned. But even he could not fail to wonder at the separate life which this work seemed to have taken, so that it had apparently produced itself, by an effort of its own will, as soon as it saw that its time had come. It was he who had been the passive machine—the work that had been the master-hand and the informing soul. Perhaps, in strict, literal truth, he had transferred his breath and spirit from himself into the dead work of his hands. Such things have been.

Meanwhile the house was beginning to fill fairly early. There could be no question but that the Cleopatra was of quite enough interest to fill to the brim, if not to overflow, the Parnassus, especially as the composer had no friendly clique to represent the public at large. Prosper knew his business too well to have let boxes or stalls lie fallow on a first night; but those who knew his business just as well could see at a glance that it was Cleopatra herself who had drawn, and not her manager. Or it might have been the prestige of Comus. But, in any case, people had paid to come, and had paid early. Every air in Comus had been whistled and ground for weeks past, and that profitable and honest sort of ear, which seeks out the music that tickles it most easily and pleasantly, was there in unusual force for a first night. But another class also was represented strongly. The old-fashioned critic, whether amateur or professional, who prides him-

self on having heard everything that was, is, or shall be worth hearing before anybody else was born, held to their tradition of the original production of Comus at the old Phoenix Theatre a generation ago as a first and foremost article of their operatic creed, and claimed Andrew Gordon as one of themselves. There were among them many who remembered Comus as having been popular by a sort of accident, and in spite of deserving to become so. His return to the stage was to them the return of dead days.

Then there sat Lady Quorne already, and unfashionably long before there was any need of her presence. She was something more to-night than the mere *fanatica per la musica*. It was she who had discovered the new English prima donna, whose coming success would be a part of her own. It was at her house in Park Lane that the great Prosper had made what was like to prove the crowning hit of the season. In effect, the whole affair was her own; and she had already made Cleopatra the fashion before a note of it had been heard.

Walter Gordon went to the theatre. The days had not been standing still with others, but they had been absolutely standing still with him. It is easy enough, it was easy enough even for himself, to set him down as having failed in strength and courage. But what was any man of merely common human strength and courage to do? It is all very well for a knight-errant to go riding about and saying "I will." There was the woman he loved with all his heart in the hands of an ogre, and she had refused to let him help her. As he was not a hero of fiction, and therefore not gifted with an inordinate capacity for misunderstanding, he was learning to understand Celia better simply by dwelling upon the whole of the past, and reading her last letter to him by its light. What can one do with a heroine, whose father condemns her to a loveless life for Art's sake, and who accepts her destiny with an obstinacy equal to his own? It may be that the daughter of Jephtha had a lover; but if she had, he did not hinder the sacrifice. And then, if, as was most likely, this father of hers was not Andrew Gordon at all, but a robber, or an impostor, who had sold himself for bread to a charlatan like Prosper? That would not make him love Celia less, but it would make it ten times harder to rescue her from the clutches of one who was not only an ogre but a knave. And if he

could prove John March an impostor—as he could not—how, even for the fame's sake of his dead uncle, could he expose the father of Celia? While, on the other hand—but what helps it to go over the hopeless and helpless labyrinth of reason and counter-reason all over again?

Perhaps the opera itself was a sham, and the fragment remembered by Clari only a waif left by his uncle, and incorporated by John March in his own work to give colour to a lie. His passing glance at the score in Saragossa Row had been enough to show him that at any rate the bulk of Cleopatra was as unlike Comus as two operas can well be. But, once more, "perhaps" helps nothing. Perhaps he had better have stayed at home in his studio. And so, though bitterly enough, he went. There is no need to say why.

He, also, arrived rather early; and presently, while looking round the house, he saw himself recognised by the great people: namely, Lady Quorne and the Gavestons. To give her cousins room in her box, if she could not give them a cure of souls, was the least she could do for them; and it is doubtful if Bessy would have felt prouder of a deanery than of being in a real opera-box with a real peeress of the realm. If Miss Hayward could only see her there! But Miss Hayward would hear of it; and to have been in an opera-box with a peeress is not among those joys which lose their flavour by keeping. In that respect it is like that thing of beauty of which she had heard at school. He would have contented himself with bowing; but the countess motioned to him to come to her. He did not remember that he was himself an artistic lion that night—that he was no longer merely Walter Gordon, the portrait-painter, whom a great lady could patronise, but the nephew of his uncle, and therefore in a position to patronise a lady who thought that she thought little of her coronet in comparison with a sprig of laurel. And she was, perhaps, more honest in such a faith than people mostly are.

"We shall have a grand success to-night," she said, as proudly as the bellows-blower to the organist. "I only hope she will be in good voice; if she is, she will be divine. Where is your uncle? I have been looking all round the house for him. He is a wonderful man. Please bring him to see me between the acts, if he will come."

There was nothing for Walter to do but to make some sound which might pass for anything but "No;" since he could not,

then and there say, "I will not bring you the man who calls himself Andrew Gordon." Bessy was studying her libretto, in which the Italian adaptation from Shakespeare was printed beside a re-adaptation into Anglo-librettese, a strange dialect; perhaps the strangest in the world.

"Yes; he is a wonderful man," said the curate. "There was nobody like him in Deepweald—nobody. Nobody could make him out; so I always felt sure he was somebody. It is a pity he is so deaf, or he would be organist there to this day."

"Ah, I forget his deafness," said Lady Quorne. "What an awful affliction! There is no wonder, after all, that he should have kept himself so long retired from the world. I wish I had known all about it sooner; and the idea of his losing his place for a misfortune; but you parsons"—she had become lately something of an esprit fort—"are sometimes very hard-hearted. I mean you, Reginald. You would have turned Bach out of the Thomas Kirche—not that I ever heard of his growing deaf, but Beethoven did; and if you would have turned out Bach, you would have turned out Beethoven. I wish I had known. The Cleopatra would have been out years ago. Who knows what you have made the world lose?"

"It wasn't me," said Gaveston. "It was the dean and chapter. Indeed, I may almost say that he owes his good fortune to me."

"To you? Why, if I had not found out that his daughter had a voice——"

"I should not have brought her to Hinchford otherwise," said Gaveston, since for everybody, from Prosper downwards, to claim the laurels of the Cleopatra seemed the order of the day. "I had always taken the greatest interest in her from a child. She was a most interesting girl."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bessy, quickly, feeling that to contradict a countess on her own ground is scarcely the road that a man of tact should take to her favour. "Who is that lady in black velvet and diamonds—over there, in the box near the stage? I'm certain I've seen her before."

Lady Quorne took aim with her opera-glass.

"Ah, then she is here! Then it is a success indeed. I never knew her to go to hear another artist, at least in England, in my life before."

She bent towards the opposite box graciously, but a little guiltily, for she was there as the patroness of a new star, that is to say, as a rebel to the old. The lady in diamonds bent in return, but haughtily,

thought Bessy, and without the ghost of a smile. She ought to be twice a duchess at least, perhaps a princess, to return so royal a salute to Lady Quorne.

"Who is she?" whispered Bessy to Walter Gordon, who was just then close to her shoulder.

"That is Clari."

"What—whom we heard at Deepweald when I was a girl? Of course it is—to be sure; and the black velvet and all. But she wore pearls then."

It was Clari; and never had even Ilma known the waning star to be in a more bitter mood. She could read the house like a book, and saw that the triumph of Prosper and Celia, of Cleopatra and Andrew Gordon, was a foregone conclusion. She could see that the world had come, not to judge, but to applaud. Jealousy, wrath, and life-long hatred did not compose a mood, but a passion. If the heart can commit murder, she was a murderess, and felt like one. Prosper had conquered her, Celia had eclipsed her; the eagle was about to die of the sting of a wasp and the peck of a sparrow. But that was nothing; she might have swept away these with one wave of her wings. It was that she felt her throat twisted and her heart pressed by the hand that had grasped her life in the beginning, and had only relaxed its hold for awhile to crush her with tenfold force at the end. What mattered it that Andrew Gordon, whether deaf or dead, could not witness his triumph over her with living ears and eyes? She knew well enough that his work was his living soul—demons do not die. She had never dreamed that, when his time came, he could not strike even from beyond the grave. Wasp and sparrow were but the little things that destiny chooses for the instruments of her great ends—always. She sets free a volcano to destroy a hamlet, but she only waves a feather to sweep away a throne.

She, also, looked round the house; but neither man nor ghost could she see—only a crowd of hands that were presently to proclaim her husband's crowning victory. She had only lived in the hope of avenging her life upon his soul, and of destroying his child, his work, for the sake of hers—the only creature whom she ever had a chance of loving in all the world.

"There is Walter Gordon."

She felt ashamed of her mission; but she thought it time for somebody to say something.

It was just then that Clari met the bow of Lady Quorne; but she answered not a word.

"He is with Lady Quorne," said Ilma.

Clari turned her head and seemed to swallow up Mademoiselle Krasinska in the scorn of her great eyes.

"Will Miss Celia appear?" she asked icily.

"She is in the bills," faltered the unfortunate failure. "Yes—for all I know."

"Yes. Will she be in voice?"

"Giulia! How should I know?"

"That is to say, she will. Ilma—you have disappointed me. You are a fool. I always knew that—but fools have their use, and you are a useless fool. Do you want me to speak in words? Prosper is not a fool—he would understand a look, a wave of a fan. Very well. I speak then. This opera shall fail, even now. I can do nothing. Perhaps you can do nothing. I will not blame you if it succeeds. But, per Bacco e la santissima Madonna, if it does succeed, I will punish somebody, and there will be nobody left to punish but you."

"Giulia! I did all I could. I went to Fräulein Celia—"

"Who cares what you did? I don't want to hear. I don't want to know."

"Giulia! It is not fair."

"I do not want to be fair. What is the use," she asked, with double scorn, "of a comprimaria who cannot sing, if she cannot intrigue? Ah, if I could only strike her dumb with a look—but I cannot see to-night; if he is deaf, I am blind. No; I have no help—not even you."

Ilma's diamond hopes had long since faded into air. But it was not loss of hope that made her shudder. She, also, hated the new star; and she felt the vengeance with which she had threatened Celia recoiling upon herself, and her awe of Clari was deepening into superstitious terror under the intense voice and the passionate eyes. It was the eleventh hour—yet could nothing even yet be done?

Nay, it was the twelfth hour. Before she had asked herself half her question, the conductor raised his bâton, and at last, in one sudden, thundering chord, the Score had become Sound!

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER L. RUDHAM PARK.

LORD GEORGE had undertaken to leave Manor Cross by the middle of August, but when the first week of that month had passed away, he had not as yet made up his mind what he would do with himself. Mr. Knox had told him that, should he remain with his mother, the marquis would not, as Mr. Knox thought, take further notice of the matter; but on such terms as these he could not consent to live in his brother's house.

On a certain day early in August, Lord George had gone with a return ticket to a town but a few miles distant from Brotherton, to sit on a committee for the distribution of coals and blankets, and in the afternoon got into a railway carriage on his way home. How great was his consternation when, on taking his seat, he found that his brother was seated alongside of him! There was one other old gentleman in the carriage, and the three passengers were all facing the engine. On two of the seats opposite were spread out the marquis's travelling paraphernalia—his French novel, at which he had not looked, his dressing-bag, the box in which his luncheon had been packed, and his wine-flask. There was a small basket of strawberries, should he be inclined to eat fruit, and an early peach out of a hot-house, with some flowers.

"Why, George, is that you?" he said.

"Where the devil have you been?"

"I've been to Grumby."

"And what are the people doing at Grumby?"

"Much the same as usual. It was the coal and blanket account."

"Oh!—the coal and blanket account! I hope you liked it." Then he folded himself afresh in his cloaks, ate a strawberry, and looked as though he had taken sufficient notice of his brother.

But the matter was very important to Lord George. Nothing ever seemed to be of importance to the marquis. It might be very probable that the marquis, with half-a-dozen servants behind him, should drive up to the door at Manor Cross without having given an hour's notice of his intention. It seemed to be too probable to Lord George that such would be the case now. For what other reason could he be there? And then there was his back. Though they had quarrelled he was bound to ask after his brother's back. When last they two had met, the marquis had been almost carried into the room by two men. "I hope you find yourself better than when I last saw you," he said, after a pause of five minutes.

"I've not much to boast of. I can just travel, and that's all."

"And how is—Popenjoy?"

"Upon my word I can't tell you. He has never seemed to be very well when I've seen him."

"I hope the accounts have been better," said Lord George, with solicitude.

"Coal and blanket accounts!" suggested the marquis. And then the conversation was again brought to an end for five minutes.

But it was essential that Lord George should know whether his brother was going. If to Manor Cross, then, thought Lord George, he himself would stay at an inn at Brotherton. Anything, even the

Deanery, would be better than sitting at table with his brother, with the insults of their last interview unappeased. At the end of five minutes he plucked up his courage, and asked his brother another question. "Are you going to the house, Brotherton?"

"The house! What house? I'm going to a house, I hope."

"I mean to Manor Cross."

"Not if I know it. There is no house in this part of the country in which I should be less likely to show my face." Then there was not another word said till they reached the Brotherton Station, and there the marquis, who was sitting next the door, requested his brother to leave the carriage first. "Get out, will you?" he said. "I must wait for somebody to come and take these things. And don't trample on me more than you can help." This last request had apparently been made, because Lord George was unable to step across him without treading on the cloak.

"I will say good-bye, then," said Lord George, turning round on the platform for a moment.

"Ta, ta," said the marquis, as he gave his attention to the servant who was collecting the fruit, and the flowers, and the flask. Lord George then passed on out of the station, and saw no more of his brother.

"Of course he is going to Rudham," said Lady Susanna, when she heard the story. Rudham Park was the seat of Mr. De Baron, Mrs. Houghton's father, and tidings had reached Manor Cross that the marquis had promised to go there in the autumn. No doubt other circumstances had seemed to make it improbable that the promise should be kept. Popenjoy had gone away ill—as many said, in a dying condition. Then the marquis had been thrown into a fireplace, and report had said that his back had been all but broken. It had certainly been generally thought that the marquis would go nowhere after that affair in the fireplace, till he returned to Italy. But Lady Susanna was, in truth, right. His lordship was on his way to Rudham Park.

Mr. De Baron, of Rudham Park, though a much older man than the marquis, had been the marquis's friend—when the marquis came of age, being then the Popenjoy of those days and a fast young man known as such about England. Mr. De Baron, who was a neighbour, had

taken him by the hand. Mr. De Baron had put him in the way of buying and training race-horses, and had, perhaps, been godfather to his pleasures in other matters. Rudham Park had never been loved at Manor Cross by others than the present lord, and for that reason, perhaps, was dearer to him. He had promised to go there soon after his return to England, and was now keeping his promise. On his arrival there the marquis found a houseful of people. There were Mr. and Mrs. Houghton, and Lord Gibley, who, having engaged himself rashly to Miss Patmore Green, had rushed out of town sooner than usual that he might devise in retirement some means of escaping from his position; and, to Lord Gibley's horror, there was Mrs. Montacute Jones, who, he well knew, would, if possible, keep him to the collar. There was also Aunt Julia, with her niece Gnas, and of course, there was Jack De Baron. The marquis was rather glad to meet Jack, as to whom he had some hope that he might be induced to run away with Lord George's wife, and thus free the Germain family from that little annoyance. But the guest who surprised the marquis the most, was the Baroness Banmann, whose name and occupation he did not at first learn very distinctly.

"All right again, my lord?" asked Mr. De Baron, as he welcomed his noble guest.

"Upon my word I'm not, then. That coal-heaving brute of a parson pretty nearly did for me."

"A terrible outrage it was."

"Outrage! I should think so. There's nothing so bad as a clerical bully. What was I do with him? Of course he was the stronger. I don't pretend to be a Samson. One doesn't expect that kind of thing among gentlemen."

"No, indeed."

"I wish I could have him somewhere with a pair of foils with the buttons off. His black coat shouldn't save his intestines. I don't know what the devil the country is come to, when such a fellow as that is admitted into people's houses."

"You won't meet him here, Brotherton."

"I wish I might. I think I'd manage to be even with him before he got away. Who's the baroness you have got?"

"I don't know much about her. My daughter Adelaide—Mrs. Houghton you know—has brought her down. There's been some row among the women up in

London. This is one of the prophets, and I think she is brought here to spite Lady Selina Protest, who has taken an American prophetic by the hand. She won't annoy you, I hope ?”

“Not in the least. I like strange wild beasts. And so that is Captain De Baron, of whom I have heard ?”

“That is my nephew, Jack. He has a small fortune of his own, which he is spending fast. As long as it lasts one has to be civil to him.”

“I am delighted to meet him. Don't they say he is sweet on a certain young woman ?”

“A dozen, I believe.”

“Ah—but one I know something of.”

“I don't think there is anything in that, Brotherton. I don't, indeed, or I shouldn't have brought him here.”

“I do, though. And as to not bringing him here, why shouldn't you bring him ? If she don't go off with him, she will with somebody else, and the sooner the better, according to my ideas.” This was a matter upon which Mr. De Baron was not prepared to dilate, and he therefore changed the subject.

“My dear Lord Giblet, it is such a pleasure to me to meet you here,” old Mrs. Jones said to that young nobleman. “When I was told you were to be at Rudham, it determined me at once.” This was true, for there was no more persistent friend living than old Mrs. Jones, though it might be doubted whether, on this occasion, Lord Giblet was the friend on whose behalf she had come to Rudham.

“It's very nice, isn't it ?” said Lord Giblet, gasping.

“Hadn't we a pleasant time of it with our little parties in Grosvenor Place ?”

“Never liked anything so much in my life; only I don't think that fellow Jack De Baron dances so much better than other people, after all ?”

“Who says he does ? But I'll tell you who dances well. Olivia Green was charming in the Kappa-kappa. Don't you think so ?”

“Uncommon pretty.” Lord Giblet was quite willing to be understood to admire Miss Patmore Green, though he thought it hard that people should hurry him on into matrimony.

“The most graceful girl I ever saw in my life, certainly,” said Mrs. Montacute Jones. “His Royal Highness, when he heard of the engagement, said that you were the happiest man in London.”

Lord Giblet could not satisfy himself by declaring that H.R.H. was an old fool, as poor Mary had done on a certain occasion—but at the present moment he did not feel at all loyal to the royal family generally. Nor did he, in the least, know how to answer Mrs. Jones. She had declared the engagement as a fact, and he did not quite dare to deny it altogether. He had, in an unguarded moment, when the weather had been warm and the champagne cool, said a word with so definite a meaning that the lady had been justified in not allowing it to pass by as idle. The lady had accepted him, and on the following morning he had found the lock of hair and the little stud which she had given him, and had feverish reminiscences of a kiss. But surely he was not a bird to be caught with so small a grain of salt as that ! He had not as yet seen Mr. Patmore Green, having escaped from London at once. He had answered a note from Olivia, which had called him “Dearest Charlie” by a counter note, in which he had called her “Dear O.,” and had signed himself “ever yours, G.,” promising to meet her up the river. But of course he had not gone up the river. The rest of the season might certainly be done without assistance from him. He knew that he would be pursued. He could not hope not to be pursued. But he had not thought that Mrs. Montacute Jones would be so quick upon him. It was impossible that H.R.H. should have heard of any engagement as yet. What a nasty, false, wicked old woman she was ! He blushed red as a rose, and stammered out that he “didn't know.” He was only four-and-twenty, and perhaps he didn't know.

“I never saw a girl so much in love in my life,” continued Mrs. Jones. “I know her just as well as if she were my own, and she speaks to me as she doesn't dare to speak to you at present. Though she is barely twenty-one, she has been very much sought after already, and the very day she marries she has ten thousand pounds in her own hands. That isn't a large fortune, and of course you don't want a large fortune, but it isn't every girl can pay such a sum straight into her husband's bank the moment she marries !”

“No, indeed,” said Lord Giblet. He was still determined that nothing should induce him to marry Miss Green; but nevertheless, behind that resolution there was a feeling, that if anything should bring about the marriage, such a sum of

ready money would be a consolation. His father, the Earl of Jopling, though a very rich man, kept him a little close, and ten thousand pounds would be nice. But then, perhaps the old woman was lying.

"Now I'll tell you what I want you to do," said Mrs. Jones, who was resolved that if the game were not landed it should not be her fault. "We go from here to Killancodlem next week. You must come and join us."

"I've got to go and grouse at Stranbracket's," said Lord Giblet, happy in an excuse.

"It couldn't be better. They're both within eight miles of Dunkeld." If so, then ropes shouldn't take him to Stranbracket's that year. "Of course you'll come. It's the prettiest place in Perth, though I say it, as oughtn't. And she will be there. If you really want to know a girl, see her in a country house."

But he didn't really want to know the girl. She was very nice, and he liked her uncommonly, but he didn't want to know anything more about her. By George! Was a man to be persecuted this way, because he had once spooned a girl a little too fiercely? As he thought of this he almost plucked up his courage sufficiently to tell Mrs. Jones that she had better pick out some other young man for deportation to Killancodlem. "I should like it ever so," he said.

"I'll take care that you shall like it, Lord Giblet. I think I may boast that when I put my wits to work I can make my house agreeable. I'm very fond of young people, but there's no one I love as I do Olivia Green. There isn't a young woman in London has so much to be loved for. Of course you'll come: What day shall we name?"

"I don't think I could name a day."

"Let us say the 27th. That will give you nearly a week at the grouse first. Be with us to dinner on the 27th."

"Well—perhaps I will."

"Of course you will. I shall write to Olivia to-night, and I daresay you will do so also."

Lord Giblet, when he was let to go, tried to suck consolation from the ten thousand pounds. Though he was still resolved, he almost believed that Mrs. Montacute Jones would conquer him. Write to Olivia to-night! Lying, false old woman! Of course she knew that there was hardly a lady in England to whom it was so little likely that he should write as to Miss

Patmore Green. How could an old woman, with one foot in the grave, be so wicked? And why should she persecute him? What had he done to her? Olivia Green was not her daughter, or even her niece.

"So you are going to Killancodlem?" Mrs. Houghton said to him that afternoon.

"She has asked me," said Lord Giblet.

"It's simply the most comfortable house in all Scotland, and they tell me some of the best deer-stalking. Everybody likes to get to Killancodlem. Don't you love old Mrs. Jones?"

"Charming old woman!"

"And such a friend! If she once takes to you she never drops you."

"Sticks like wax, I should say."

"Quite like wax, Lord Giblet. And when she makes up her mind to do a thing she always does it. It's quite wonderful; but she never gets beaten."

"Doesn't she now?"

"Never. She hasn't asked us to Killancodlem yet, but I hope she will." A manly resolution now roused itself in Lord Giblet's bosom that he would be the person to beat Mrs. Jones at last. But yet he doubted. If he were asked the question by anyone having a right to ask, he would not deny that he had proposed to marry Miss Patmore Green.

"So you've come down to singe your wings again?" said Mrs. Houghton to her cousin Jack.

"My wings have been burned clean away already; and, in point of fact, I am not half so near to Lady George here as I am in London."

"It's only ten miles."

"If it were five it would be the same. We're not in the same set down in Barse-shire."

"I suppose you can have yourself taken to Brotherton if you please?"

"Yes. I can call at the Deanery, but I shouldn't know what to say when I got there."

"You've become very mealy-mouthed of a sudden."

"Not with you, my sweet cousin. With you I can discuss the devil and all his works as freely as ever; but with Lady George, at her father's house, I think I should be dumb. In truth, I haven't got anything to say to her."

"I thought you had."

"I know you think so; but I haven't. It is quite on the card that I may ride over some day, as I would to see my sister."

"Your sister!"

"And that I shall make eager enquiries after her horse, her pet dog, and her husband."

"You will be wrong there, for she has quarrelled with her husband altogether."

"I hope not."

"They are not living together, and never even see each other. He's at Manor Cross and she's at the Deanery. She's a divinity to you, but Lord George seems to have found her so human that he's tired of her already."

"Then it must be his own fault."

"Or perhaps yours, Jack. You don't suppose a husband goes through a little scene like that at Mrs. Jones's without feeling it."

"He made an ass of himself, and a man generally feels that afterwards," said Jack.

"The truth is, they're tired of each other. There isn't very much in Lord George, but there is something. He is slow, but there is a certain manliness at the bottom of it. But there isn't very much in her!"

"That's all you know about it."

"Perhaps you may know her better, but I never could find anything. You confess to being in love, and of course a lover is blind. But where you are most wrong is in supposing that she is something so much better than other women. She flirted with you so frankly that she made you think her a goddess."

"She never flirted with me in her life."

"Exactly—because flirting is bad, and she being a goddess cannot do evil. And therefore you're not in the way to learn that she's a woman just the same as other women. Will Mrs. Jones succeed with that stupid young man?"

"With Gible? I hope so. It can't make any difference to him whether it's this one or another; and I do like Mrs. Jones."

"Would they let me have just a little lecture in the dining-room?" asked the baroness of her friend, Aunt Ju. There had been certain changes among the Disabilities up in London. Lady Selina Protest had taken Dr. Olivia Q. Fleabody altogether by the hand, and had appointed her chief professor at the Institute—perhaps without sufficient authority. Aunt Ju had been cast into the shade, and had consequently been driven to throw herself into the arms of the baroness. At present there was a terrible feud, in which Aunt Ju was being much worsted; for the baroness was an Old Man of the Sea, and

having got herself on to Aunt Ju's shoulders could not be shaken off. In the meantime Dr. Fleabody was filling the Institute, reaping a golden harvest, and breaking the heart of the poor baroness, who had fallen into much trouble, and was now altogether penniless.

"I'm afraid not," said Aunt Ju. "I'm afraid we can't do that."

"Perhaps de marquis would like it?"

"I hardly think so."

"He did say a word to me, and I think he would like it. He want to understand."

"My dear baroness, I'm sure the Marquis of Brotherton does not care about it in the least. He is quite in the dark on such subjects—quite benighted." What was the use, thought the baroness, of bringing her down to a house in which people were so benighted that she could not be allowed to open her mouth or carry on her profession? Had she not been enticed over from her own country in order that she might open her mouth, and preach her doctrine, and become a great and a wealthy woman? There was a fraud in this enforced silence which cut her to the very quick. "I think I shall try," she said, separating herself in her wrath from her friend.

BIRD LORE.

AMONGST the various superstitions relating to the animal creation, our feathered friends play an important part, and it may not be uninteresting to retail some of the principal traditions and popular beliefs concerning them.

We will begin with the raven, who takes the place of the eagle in northern mythology. He was sacred to Wodan, and was believed to be his especial companion. Wodan had two ravens, named Huginn and Muninn, who reported to him all the news of the world; and, furthermore, announced to heroes their approaching death. Thence arises the universal belief that the croaking of a raven portends a death. In the Middle Ages, evil spirits were supposed to assume the form of ravens, for when Christianity transformed Wodan into the devil, his winged messengers also became uncanny. Sometimes the sight of a raven brings ill-fortune, and sometimes it betokens good; but whoever finds a feather will have luck.

In Swabia, a flight of ravens foretells war, and in the Tyrolese Oetz-Thal, people say that, when the ravens fly around some

particular pasture, and suddenly dart to the ground, a cow will die within three days. The Tyrolese peasantry declare that the ravens are so clever, that "they scent the powder in the gun," and that is the reason it is so difficult to shoot them. According to a Tyrol legend, the ravens and crows once had snow-white plumage, and were beautiful birds, very proud of their appearance. They were especially fond of frequenting the neighbourhood of streams, and bathed a great deal. One day they were thus engaged, when the Holy Child drew near to quench His burning thirst, but the ravens splashing in the water made it quite thick and muddy. Then the Holy Boys said: "Because ye are so ungrateful and so vain of your dazzling white plumage, ye shall henceforth have nought but black feathers unto the end of the world."

In the Lech Valley, there is a belief that the ravens never drink during June, because in that month they fed the prophet Elijah. In North Germany, Swabia, and Tyrol, a superstition prevails, that if the eggs are taken from a raven's nest, boiled, and replaced, the old raven will bring a root or stone to the nest, which he fetches from the sea. This "raven stone" is very valuable, for it confers great good fortune on its owner, and has likewise the power of rendering him invisible when worn on the arm. The stone is found in the nests of magpies as well as ravens, and as it makes the nest itself invisible, it must be sought with the aid of a mirror.

In Pomerania and Rügen, the method is somewhat different. The parent birds must have attained the age of a hundred years, and the would-be possessor of the precious "stone" must climb up and kill one of the young ravens, who must be a cock bird, and not over six weeks old. Then the aggressor descends, taking careful note of the tree. The old raven immediately returns with the stone, which he puts in his son's beak, and, thereupon, both tree and nest become invisible. The man, however, feels for the tree, and on reaching the nest he carries off the stone in triumph. Rügen folks declare that this feat can only be accomplished by the help of the devil, and that the man's soul is the price paid for such assistance.

The Swabian peasantry maintain that the young ravens are nourished solely by the dew from heaven during the first nine days of their existence. As they are naked, and of a light colour, the old birds do not

believe they are their progeny, and consequently neglect to feed them; but they occasionally cast a glance at the nest, and when the young ones begin to show a little black down on their breasts by the tenth day, the parents bring them the first carrion.

The magpie shares the raven's reputation for sorcery in many places, and he is also supposed to bring bad luck. Silesia is the only exception, for there people think that the chattering of a magpie foretells the arrival of esteemed visitors. In Tyrol, on the contrary, its screaming denotes famine or pestilence. Whenever a magpie screams outside a house in West Prussia or Hesse, it is regarded as a sure token of strife within that same day. A magpie, boiled down into soup, makes him who eats it lose his senses.

In the Lech Valley a curious notion exists, that when nine magpies are seen together, one of them is sure to be a witch. It is unlucky to shoot a magpie in Prussia; and in the Wetteran, the same theory is held respecting the water-wagtails, who are much given to frequenting the neighbourhood of cows, "because they were formerly cows themselves!"

Popular tradition states that magpies were originally white birds, and that they owe their black feathers to some enchantment. But the time will come when they will cast off the spell, and resume once more their snowy plumage, and then happy days will dawn on the earth. The Emperor Barbarossa sleeps within the mountain so long as the magpies wear their parti-coloured plumage; but when they regain their former white hue, he will awake, and will emerge from his subterranean cavern, to reign triumphantly over a great united Fatherland. In Uhland's well-known ballad of the Emperor Barbarossa, it is the ravens who encircle the Kyffhäuser mountain where the Kaiser reposes.

Other ill-omened birds are the jackdaws, whose appearance in flights betokens either tempest or war; and the owl, whose hooting portends death; while in the Prussian Mark, Silesia, and Austria, the same quality is ascribed to the cock when he crows into the house. A crowing hen means ill-fortune; but it can be averted by immediately wringing the neck of the evil prophet. A white cock is a good omen. The Tyrolese peasantry say that, when a cock is seven years old, he lays an egg which produces a dragon.

The cuckoo is universally regarded as a

soothsayer. It is believed that he foretells the number of years a person will live, according to his cries of "cuckoo." Swedish maidens enquire of him how long they will remain unmarried, but if he responds more than ten times, they say he is sitting on a bewitched bough, and no longer heed his prophecies. It is very important to note the direction whence his call is first heard, for if it be the north, the auditor will have woe and mourning in the course of the year; the east and west signify happiness; and the south, prosperity. A German legend relates that the cuckoo is an enchanted baker, or miller, which accounts for the dusty hue of his plumage. When times were hard, he stole the dough belonging to poor people; and when the dough rose up in the oven, he took it out, and plucked off a large piece, exclaiming: "Gukuk!" "Oh, look!" God punished him for his theft by transforming him into a bird of prey, incessantly repeating this cry. In Servia, the cuckoo is believed to be a maiden, who mourned the death of her brother until she was changed into this bird. The Russians have a similar legend.

In olden times, the first day on which the call of the prophetic bird was heard, was kept as a festival in Westphalia. Whoever brought the joyful intelligence was rewarded with an egg, which he at once proceeded to fry and eat. He then greeted all he met with the words: "The cuckoo has called!" instead of bidding "Good-day." At Hilchenbach, in Westphalia, the fortunate person rolled on the grass, and this ceremony prevented back-ache during the ensuing year.

At Pill, in Tyrol, there is a strange theory that the cuckoo is hatched by robin-redbreasts, and begins by being a cuckoo for the first twelvemonth; then he becomes a hawk, during which period he devours his foster-brothers; and, finally, the third year, a sparrow-hawk.

The plover, the jay, the snipe, and the woodpecker, are all weather-prophets, particularly as regards thunderstorms. Plovers go by the name of "Our Lady's Doves." Their heads were used as a talisman against sorcery, and their eggs as a cure for witchcraft.

An old tradition declares that the jay falls into a trance during a thunderstorm. His flesh was considered beneficial in consumption, whilst his wings were believed to be the ornaments worn by witches at their diabolical gatherings. According to village

tales, the jay is always the jester amongst the birds, and his appearance is a good omen.

The snipe is sometimes called "the thunder goat," and his head is likewise used as a charm.

The speckled woodpecker was considered sacred by other nations, as well as the Germans. Virgil and Ovid say that Picus, the son of Saturn, and father of Faunus, was transformed into a woodpecker. The Romans told how he assisted the wolf in feeding Romulus and Remus, and they believed him to be the favourite and companion of the God of War, which belief was shared by the Teutonic race. His tapping reminded them of Thor's hammer, whence he derives his peasant-name of "the carpenter," and his incessant screaming before a storm naturally connected him with the Thunderer.

The flesh of the green woodpecker was good to eat, and was reckoned to be a remedy against epilepsy, and his gay plumage was evidently considered an especial distinction. He appears in popular tales and traditions as the heavenly messenger, and the fairies were wont to assume his form. Formerly, the grey woodpecker was laid beneath the pillow of a child suffering from convulsions.

In Norway, the woodpecker is called "Gertrude's bird," from the following legend: "One day our Lord was walking with St. Peter, when they fell in with a woman named Gertrude, who wore a red cap, and was busy baking. Our Lord, being tired and hungry, begged for a piece of cake. Accordingly, the woman took a little dough and set it in the oven, but it rose up so high that it filled the whole pan. Then she thought the cake was too large for an alms, and taking less dough, she recommenced baking. Again the cake rose up to its former dimensions, and was again refused to the weary wayfarers. When the same thing happened at the third attempt, Gertrude said: 'Ye must e'en go your ways without alms, for all my cakes are too large for beggars.' Thereupon, our Lord replied: 'As thou wilt give me naught, thou shalt be punished by being changed into a little bird, thou shalt seek thy scanty food in the bark of trees, and thou shalt only drink when it rains.'"

Scarcely had these words been spoken, when the woman was transformed into the "Gertrude's bird," and flew out by the chimney. Up to the present day she wears her red cap, but the rest of her body is

black, from the soot of the chimney. She is always pecking the bark of the trees and screaming for rainy weather, because she is tormented by perpetual thirst.

The turtle-dove is a sacred bird. Swabian peasants call it "God's bird," and say that the house where doves are kept cannot be struck by lightning. If there be a sick person in the house, the turtle-dove grieves and will not coo. Sometimes it mourns for years over a death. People who suffer from erysipelas generally keep doves, declaring that they draw the illness to themselves, and, as a proof of this, the bird's feet become scarlet.

The stork has always been regarded as the herald of spring. A very old tradition, recorded as early as the thirteenth century, states that the storks only adopt the form of birds when with us; but in the distant countries, whither they wend their way every autumn, they are human beings, and merely undergo an annual transformation into storks on visiting our northern climes. The Swabian peasantry say that if a stork had a tongue he would speak, and then he would betray everybody's secrets, because he hears and sees everything. However, as it is, he manages to give notice of any special occurrence by chattering with his beak. These birds protect the house from lightning, and must therefore never be disturbed.

There is a theory in North Germany and Swabia that, when a nest is manufactured for the stork, which is occasionally done by putting up an old cart-wheel with boughs twined round the spokes, he will testify his gratitude to the owner of the house by throwing down a feather the first year, an egg the second year, and the third year a young stork. Then he recommences with the feather, and so on.

The demeanour of the stork on his first appearance is very important. Should he be chattering, the spectator will break a great deal of crockery during the ensuing twelvemonth; if silent, he will be lazy; if flying, he will be diligent. Thus say the peasants of Hanover and Mecklenberg. In the Altmark, a stork on the wing signifies to a maiden that she will soon enter the bonds of wedlock; but if stationary, she will be asked to act as sponsor. Whoever has money in his pocket on first beholding the stork, will never lack during the year, nor will he suffer from toothache.

The superstition that the stork brings the children is current all over Germany. In Silesia the flight of a stork over a

house denotes the speedy arrival of a baby; while, in the island of Rügen, they say that, unless the stork lays eggs, the house will also be childless, and, as the young storks thrive, so will the children. Nobody dare shoot a stork in Rügen, for then he weeps large tears, and each tear portends a great misfortune. The stork is very particular about domestic peace in the dwelling where he takes up his abode, and strife soon drives him away. Swabian peasants say that when the storks assemble for their winter migration, the males and females all pair off, and should there be an odd one, he or she is pecked to death by the rest. The Westphalians declare that the old storks always throw one of their brood out of the nest if the number be uneven. In Oldenburg there is a curious theory that the autumnal gatherings of the storks are in reality Freemasons' meetings. The pious monk, Cesarius von Heisterbach, remarks in an ancient chronicle, that the storks are models of conjugal fidelity; and when a female stork attempts flirtation with any other than her lawful husband, she is brought before a jury of storks, and if found guilty, they hack her to pieces with their long bills.

Amongst birds of good omen, the swallow occupies the most prominent position, and fully shares the popularity of the stork. In Swabia, swallows are called "God's birds," and in Silesia, "Our Lady's birds," because at break of day they twitter a song in her praise; whilst in the Ober Inn Valley, in the Tyrol, it is said that the swallows assisted the Almighty to construct heaven. At Meran they time their arrival and departure by the festivals of the Blessed Virgin. They appear at the Feast of the Annunciation, and on the Eighth of September:

At Mary's birth
The swallows fly off.

There is a general belief throughout Germany, that the house where they build their nests is blessed and protected from all evil. In the Ober Inn Valley people say there is no strife where swallows build, and in the Oetz Valley their presence makes a village wealthy, and prosperity departs with them. It is customary in some parts of Westphalia to leave the windows open day and night in summer, in order that the birds may have undisturbed access.

In olden days, at the time when the swallows were expected, a solemn procession was formed by the whole house-

hold to the gate of the farm ; then, at the first glimpse of the welcome visitors, the barn-door was joyfully thrown open for them. It was believed that the swallows took a great interest in domestic affairs, and examined everything closely on their arrival. If they found untidiness and mismanagement, they sang :

Boxes and chests were full when away we went,
Now we are back, they are empty ; all is spent.

Various ceremonies must be performed the first time of beholding a swallow. In the Neu Mark, the person must wash his face, to preserve it from sunburn during the year. In Tyrol, he must stop directly, and dig with his knife below his left foot ; he will then find a coal in the ground which will cure ague. When the swallows have been constant to one nest for seven years, they leave behind them a small stone of great healing properties, especially for diseases of the eyes.

Tyrolese peasants of the Unter Valley say that the wondrous magic root which opens all doors and fastenings may be obtained as follows : A swallow's nest is bound round with strong string, so as effectually to close the opening. Then the old swallow comes with the root, opens the nest, and lets the root fall. In another part of Tyrol the same story is told of the woodpecker.

The natives of Lippe Detmold have not quite such a favourable opinion of the swallows as their neighbours. They hold that no calves can be reared where swallows build ; and in Westphalian villages one sometimes hears that a cow gives blood instead of milk, if a swallow chances to fly under her.

Killing a swallow is a crime which brings its own punishment ; but the penalty varies. In the Pusterthal, Swabia, and the Lechrain the slayer will have misfortunes with his cattle, for the cows will give red milk. At Nauders, in Tyrol, the criminal will lose his father or mother, and in the neighbouring Telfs " the heavens will open," i.e. it will lighten. In the Ober Inn Valley the murderer's house will be burnt down ; and at Sarsans, in the Oetz Valley, the destruction or removal of a swallow's nest will cost the life of the best cow of the herd. The Westphalians say that the slaughter of a swallow causes four weeks' rain ; and, if they are driven away, all the vegetables in the garden will be cut off by the frost.

Whoever bids farewell to the swallows

at their autumnal departure will be free from chilblains through the winter.

Swallows also have the gift of prophecy. In some parts of Westphalia, the peasants tell you to look under your feet on the appearance of the first swallow, for if there should chance to be a hair, it will be of the same colour as that of your future wife. A flight of swallows over a house in the Unter Inn Valley signifies a death.

The crossbill and the robin are likewise looked on as lucky birds. Everybody knows the pretty legends concerning both birds, and how the one is supposed to have crossed his bill, and the other reddened his breast, by endeavouring to pluck out the nails which fastened Our Lord to the Cross. In Spain a somewhat similar act of piety is attributed to the nightingale and goldfinch :

When Christ for us on Golgotha,
Gave up His latest breath,
The nightingale and goldfinch sang
The mournful song of death.

In the Harz Mountains, and in Tyrol, the crossbill is highly valued, as it is believed that this bird will take to itself diseases which would otherwise befall the family. He has possessed this virtue ever since his efforts to release Our Lord from the Cross. The presence of a crossbill drives away gout and rheumatism, and even the water which he drinks, or in which he bathes, is used as a remedy for these complaints. Moreover, the Tyrolese crossbill counteracts witchcraft, and protects a home from evil spells and lightning.

The robin is likewise a protection against lightning, but woe betide the rash person who ventures to molest the robin or its nest. He will either be struck by lightning, or, as in the Zillertal, he will become epileptic, or, in the Ober Inn Thal, his cattle will all give red milk, and even the water in his house will assume a ruddy hue. The despoiler of a robin's nest will lose as many relations in the course of the year as the number of young birds stolen. Absam and Schwaz are the only Tyrolese exceptions to the universal estimation in which this bird is held. At Absam it is said that the nest attracts the lightning, and at Schwaz a robin flying over a house foretells a death.

The bullfinch also possesses good qualities. At Schwaz the water in which a bullfinch has bathed is reckoned a cure for epilepsy, and at Lienz nobody will suffer from erysipelas in the house where a bullfinch is kept.

In the valleys of the Unter Inn and the Lech the siskins are believed to have stones in their nests which render the owner invisible. It can therefore only be discovered by means of placing a pail of water beneath the tree where the nest is supposed to be located, and then the water will reflect it. According to the Bavarian peasantry the eggs and nest of the siskin have the same qualifications as the stone.

The quail has the gift of prophecy. In some parts of Tyrol the number of his calls is believed to denote the price of corn, each call signifying a gulden. In other parts, if he calls six times, the year will be a bad one; if eight times, it will be tolerably prosperous; but should he call ten times, or beyond that number, everything will flourish.

Sparrows, on the contrary, have no special virtues, and whoever eats them will have St. Vitus's dance.

The tiny titmice were held in great estimation by our forefathers, and heavy penalties fell on any who entrapped or otherwise injured them.

Starlings and other small birds often appear in legends as messengers of the deities, and prophesy accordingly. They speak a language of their own, and discuss the affairs of mankind; so that whoever understands their tongue hears many wonderful things. The starlings were especially considered to be the companions and messengers of the elves.

Amongst our chief songsters tradition relates the following superstitions regarding the lark, the blackbird, and the nightingale. The former is under the peculiar patronage of the Blessed Virgin. The lark commences singing at Candlemas, the Feast of the Purification. In former times it was considered a crime to kill a lark; but, on the other hand, if a child eats as his first meat the flesh of a roast lark, it will make him virtuous and pious. A rising lark is a good omen to the peasant as he enters the meadow, and he calls it "the pious lark," because it never omits to praise and thank God before and after a meal. He who points at a lark is sure to be punished for his want of respect by a gathering on the offending finger.

The blackbird is sometimes called "Göttling," or "little god." It preserves the house from lightning and also possesses soothsaying powers. If it sings before March, corn will be dear. Much information may be gained from its first

spring carol by those who are learned in such matters. The Good Samaritans who feed the blackbirds through the winter months will be rewarded with prosperity in all their undertakings, and will never suffer from fever.

The Westphalian chaffinch at Iserlohn sings:

Sük, sük, sük!
In the two and twentieth year,
In the two and twentieth year,
The Prussian soldiers will be here.

Probably this refers to some ancient prophecy.

A legend is told on the island of Rügen that the nightingale is an enchanted shepherdess, who treated her sweetheart, a shepherd, badly, by making him tend her sheep as well as his own till far into the night. She had long promised to wed him, but was continually postponing the ceremony. At last the youth lost his patience, and angrily exclaimed one day that he wished she might be unable to sleep until the Day of Judgment. His wish was fulfilled, for the nightingale never rests at night, and warbles her plaintive song when all the world is still. The peasantry say that the name of her dog and the peculiar call used for the sheep may be plainly distinguished.

In the Bavarian Lechrain the nightingale enjoys a better reputation, and one more befitting the "queen of song." People lying at the point of death, suffering great pain, often sigh for the nightingale to come and release them. Then the gentle bird flies on the window sill and pours forth a melody of such surpassing sweetness that the pain ceases, and the sick person either recovers, or else he passes away, lulled to his last sleep by the sweet notes.

APPLE-BLOSSOMS.

THE orchard grass is sunshine-bared,
And starry-white upon the sward
The pretty daisies lie;
I rest beneath a mossy tree,
And through its waving branches see
The sapphires of the sky.

I feel the balmy breeze of May
Soft-blowing down the grassy way,
And in the boughs above
The little birds break into song,
And praise, in thrilling strains and strong,
Spring's halcyon days of love.

The apple-blossoms fall around,
And fleck the daisy-chequered ground
As breezes softly blow;
I stretch a lazy hand aloft,
And grasp a cluster silken-soft,
Like rosy-tinted snow.

I look at every tender leaf,
And marvel why a life so brief,
To such sweet things is given;
Why not for them a longer space
To blossom gaily in their place,
Beneath the summer heaven?

Why not for them a longer time
To feel the sun at morning prime,
To see the moon at night?
To quiver by soft breezes stirred;
To listen when God's morning-bird
Sings heavenward his delight.

Ah me, my heart! it must be so,
The blossom drops that fruit may grow,
The sweetness of the flower
Dies early on the vernal breeze,
That autumn-time may bless the trees
With gold and crimson dower.

Ah me, my heart! so must thou see
The flowery hopes that gladden thee
In this thy morning prime,
Faded in the fair place where they grow,
Drop round thee swiftly like the snow
Of apple-blossom time.

But if they leave thee good and true,
And pure as when they blossomed new,
Then gladly let them go;
Where now these fairy blossoms be,
In God's good time thine eyes shall see
Thy life's fair harvest glow!

THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It was the narrowest street imaginable, a mere flagged passage indeed, protected by little posts and chains from suspicion even of being anything so vulgar as a thoroughfare; and opening into one of those quaint old Bloomsbury squares at one end, and a quainter old crescent at the other. There was a church at the corner, old too, with a square Gothic tower, built in grey stone, green with damp, and black with age and soot, and abutting directly on the pavement, without any intervening space of grass or gravel to give it dignity and seclusion. The house stood close beside it, a little back in the shadow of the big tower, and divided from the sidewalk by a flight of stone steps and an iron railing; a tall, narrow, dark red building of the time of Queen Anne, with a ponderous brazen knocker, and a couple of antiquated iron extinguishers, set at either side of the gateway: extinguishers which the link-boys were wont to use to quench their flaring torches, in the old days, after their mistress had emerged, powdered and hooped, and with dainty patches set cunningly on cheek and chin, from the sedan-chair which had borne her to a night's festivity at Ranelagh or Vauxhall; and had been handed by her brocaded and bagwigged lord up the tall flight of steps aforementioned.

I wonder was ever a damsel among those high-heeled and delicate-featured belles of the eighteenth century, one-tenth part as lovely as she who reigned in the old red house when I lived over the way? Ah me! how often I have sat and watched her, doing nothing, thinking nothing, only taking in the mere sight of her grace and beauty, as if they were rest and refreshment to the wearied mind and worn-out body!

I was only a London surgeon, a plain, middle-aged bachelor, with a large practice, and a big, dingy house, facing the old, red-brick tenement over the way; a house in which I snatched my hasty hours of rest, and devoured hurried meals, and saw servant-girls and other impecunious patients for a couple of hours in the morning; but which had never been sanctified by a woman's loving smile, or gladdened by the patter of baby feet; or made beautiful by the flowers, and needlework, and thousand and one trifles which make even the homeliest "home" so different from the mere house in which a man lives. The house across the street was of far more interest to me than my own.

I suppose Miss Robarts must have been about one-and-twenty when she and her father first came to live there. She attracted my attention at once, a tall, slim, delicate-looking girl, chiefly noticeable for the languor of bearing and movement, in contrast to the noble lines of her face and form, as she sallied out of a morning to early service at the grey old church; the bloomy whiteness of her cheek showing whiter near her plain black dress and the red edges of her big prayer-book. The book seemed too heavy for the slender fingers which carried it. Doctors notice these things, you see; but I am glad to think I began to take an interest in her, even then.

The interest grew, however, even when the cause for it was gone; for, before many months, I saw that the sweet face, with its crown of nut-brown hair, looking out over a fence of mignonette for her father's return of an evening, had gained a delicate rose-tint, which showed brighter for the olive-green background of the heavy window curtains, against which her small head took a golden tinge.

I think her father was very fond of her. He was a thin, stiff-looking, white-haired man, and used to scold her sometimes for coming out into the evening air with nothing on her head, when she met him at the door in the summer twilight; and

sometimes I could hear his voice sounding sharp and peevish, as he sallied forth to business of a morning. But you could not see his face when he came out with her on his arm on Sunday, or the way in which he glared at any man bold enough to lift his eyes to her, without telling in a moment that she was the very pride and joy of his heart.

I don't know when I first began to watch for my fair neighbour, and note her doings. You see I had not much to amuse me in my own home, and gradually I grew to know her habits so well, that it would have made anyone laugh to see how I watched for bright spring or summer mornings; for then I knew she would come out on a little piece of leads between their house and the body of the church, which she had cleverly converted into a garden for herself. I believe that in reality it was the roof of the vestry, but she gained access to it by a staircase window and a couple of steps; and there of an early morning I used to see her, her tall figure outlined against an oblong patch of pale blue sky, great coarse red pots of yellow daffodils and big purple flags about her feet, sometimes her head thrown back and her arms lifted, the wind blowing little soft locks about her brow, and ruffling the drapery of her simple morning gown, as she nailed some truant bough of Virginia creeper back against the dingy red-brick wall where she had trained it; sometimes standing with bent head, and beautiful white hands clasped round a pot of tall white narcissus, drinking in the sweetness and fragrance with a delight which never guessed at possible on-lookers. Now and then, too, a long slanting ray of sunlight would steal out across the housetops, and fall athwart her pretty head and the yellow daffodils about her feet; or a great clang of bells would burst from the clustered grey pinnacles of the old church-tower overhead, startling a whole cloud of sparrows from their nests in grimly leering gargoyles, or floriated niches, into the blue expanse above; and all the while the roar of the great thoroughfares beyond could be heard, like the muffled beatings of a mighty heart, pulsing over grey house-roofs and church-towers and the vivid green glimmer of trees in the old square at the corner—a ceaseless echo of all the toil, and pain, and sin, and turmoil seething ever higher and higher in the great city beyond.

That brief morning vision was like a little poem to me; but it was not only then that I saw her.

The Robartses had a custom, unlike most Londoners, of not drawing down their parlour blinds or shutting the shutters till bedtime. Perhaps they had lived in the country, where people are not so anxious to shut out the sweet blue night and stars. Anyway, it was a habit of theirs; and I, sitting in the old armchair in my dusky parlour over the way, and often too tired after a long day's toil even to read, used to find quite a home-like reflection in the warm glow of the parlour-window opposite—the old man's white hair and her white dress gleaming out against the dull green walls, the glimmer of gold from the picture-frames, and her head bent over the keys of the tall ebony harmonium, with the orange light from the fire making a warm aureole about it, till the grand notes of the instrument, subdued by distance, and mingling with her voice, poured out in Schubert's matchless *Addio*, or the grander cadence of a *Credo* by Mozart. At those times I was glad to shut my eyes and listen only—listen till the music and the glow and the gold green brightness about the two heads grew into one harmonious whole, and became in my fancy a part of me; as though it were my room that held them, and she were in it singing to me. I wonder if it would have angered her if she had known; but she never did. I never even saw her glance across the way.

At last I came to know her.

They had been living nearly five years in the old red house, when one day Mr. Robarts was taken suddenly ill. It was a kind of fit; and in their anxiety to get the nearest assistance they sent across to me. Of course I went, and it was Magdalen who met me in the hall, put her hand in mine, and saying: "Thank you for coming; my father is very ill, and our doctor is away on the Continent," led me straight upstairs to the room where the old gentleman was lying insensible.

By the time I came down again he was not only conscious, but declaring himself so much better that, if I had not absolutely forbidden it, he would have dressed and gone out as usual. There were grateful tears in Magdalen's eyes when she thanked me this time; and, sweet as her voice had sounded when it floated across the street in Schubert and Mozart, I never thought the low rich tones half so full of

melody as now when I heard them speaking—as in my dreams I had sometimes fancied them speaking—to me. It went to my heart to chill her gratitude by bad news, but truth must out where health is in question, and I had to tell her that I was afraid her father would not be quite well for some time yet; and to ask if his medical man would be long away.

"I don't know—months perhaps. He was very ill himself when he went. Doctor, do you mean that there is anything the matter with papa—anything more than weakness and this hot weather?"

There was such a look of appeal in her eyes that involuntarily I laid my hand on hers, as if I were soothing a child.

"You know there must always be some cause for weakness when a man is not naturally feeble, my dear young lady; and even a little cause ought to be taken in time to prevent its getting greater. I don't think there is any reason for you to be frightened about him, but he ought to have advice, and the sooner the better."

That evening I got a note from Mr. Robarts asking me to call on him on the following morning, and adding:

"My own doctor is away, as you know. I detest his partner, and put no faith in bigwigs. If you think you can put me to rights, I shall be very glad."

I sent word that I would do as he wished; and from that day no other person attended him till his death. He had an internal malady, which had grown by neglect into even graver proportions than I had at first supposed. It was that which made him irritable and captious, and inclined at times to tyrannise even over the one being he loved, his only child; but he was quite aware of it, and in his better moments would tell me: "I am afraid pain makes me testy, doctor. I was harsh with Magdalen when you were here yesterday; but she's a good girl, a very good girl. She loves her old father, and never gives him back a sharp word or sour look."

And I don't believe she ever did. We were good friends now, and I saw her often and in many moods—sad, and gay, and playful, and dreamy—but never with a frown on the smooth fair brow or bitter words on the lips.

Yet she had known trouble in her life, and had been crossed in her dearest wishes by the old man to whom she devoted her life. He told me all about it one evening, when, Magdalen having gone to the opera

with a friend, I was playing piquet with him in her stead.

The talk had turned upon her. I don't think the tea was strong enough, and he began to grumble at her absence. I thought of the various sorts of tea—cold, smoky, and flavourless—with which my cook was in the habit of favouring me, and asked him what he would do when she was married, adding, with an absurd anxiety for the answer which even struck myself, that I supposed he did not expect to keep her long with him. He looked up from his cards, frowning.

"What do you mean, doctor? You don't think— But, pshaw! She sees no one here who would take her fancy; and the old affair was over long ago. I don't believe she even remembers it now. Come, you doctors have a way of looking into people's feelings through their faces. Don't you think she looks as well and happy as any girl you know?"

"Quite happy and very well," I answered decidedly, and he smiled. My words evidently pleased him.

"Ha! so I say. I am glad you agree with me, for it's all owing to me. She wouldn't have looked well or happy if she had married some ne'er-do-well who would have brought her to beggary, and run away from her in a twelvemonth. Eh, what do you think?"

"I think such a fate would have killed her. Was there ever—any chance of it?"

It was not a fair question, and I hesitated before putting it. The old man only laughed, however.

"Chance! It was touch and go. She wasn't twenty-one, when a fellow, a younger son with a heap of debts at his back, and not a farthing to bless himself with, fell in love with her, and succeeded in entrapping her into a promise. I was away at the time; and, unfortunately, her letter enclosing one from him missed me; and she interpreted something in the next I wrote her into consent; and positively considered herself engaged to the scamp. Egad! I promise you the engagement didn't last long after I returned! She was under age, so that I could have claimed her obedience, anyhow; but my Magdalen's a good girl, and I had been father and mother both to her since my poor wife's death. She didn't need to be forced into her duty; and, as to the young adventurer, I warrant you I didn't waste soft words on him, when I showed him to the door. He begged hard for a last

interview; but I said: 'No, you've made my child unhappy enough as it is. I won't have you make her more so;' and I didn't."

"Then that was the end of it? They never met again?"

"Never. I took her away next day; and, though he wrote to her on the following one, I thought it was one of those cases where a father has a right to exercise his discretion. The letter is there now," nodding his head to a tall escribitor in the corner of the room. "I'm an honourable man, and I never even opened it. I dare say it's full of ranting and love-sick vows; but they'll do no harm there, and as for Magdalen—look at her!"

Yes, she was very calm and fair to look at. Yet, with the glad feeling that it was so, and that the girlish love of six years back was, as the old man said, a dream scarcely remembered, I could not repress a shudder at the pitiless way in which it had been stamped out, and an emotion of pity for the poor boy, who for a few days had thought to possess a treasure, which, in that moment, I knew it would have been death to me to lose. And she? Up in my mind rose a vision of her as I had first seen her, frail and white, with drooping head and languid step. Surely, she too must have suffered; but, at least, it was over now—and, doubtless, it was for her happiness. From my heart—a heart still aching from the discovery of how precious she was to me—I hoped that it might be so. Mr. Roberts took up his cards again with a serene air.

"I hardly think Magdalen will marry," he said cheerfully. "She is difficult, very difficult to please; and, as you see, she loves me, and is quite happy in her home. Perhaps, when I am gone indeed . . . but it is your lead, I think?" and he returned to the game with renewed interest.

"A man habituated to selfishness," I said to myself; but I had no right to pursue the subject, and there it might have rested for ever if an incident had not recalled it. I had promised to lend Magdalen a book she wanted, and on the evening following this I went across the street to give it her, and, hearing she was in the dining-room, passed in there unannounced. The next moment, however, I was sorry that I had done so, for, to my great surprise and distress, I found her crying.

Of course she started up at my entrance, brushing the tears from her eyes, and I don't know which of us felt most em-

barrassment. I fear I showed mine and the concern I felt very visibly; for she recovered herself almost at once, and there was something so sweet and gracious in the way in which she received my bungling apology, seeming to put her own annoyance completely out of sight in the effort to set me at ease, that I was surprised when, just as I was leaving, she stopped me by saying with more girlish agitation than I had ever seen in her, and yet with a frank dignity which always seemed a part of her nature:

"Dr. Elliot, you were surprised to find me crying just now; but I am not in any trouble. You look so sorry that I must tell you so."

I suppose I did not look satisfied; for she tried to smile and came nearer, leaning her clasped hands on the table.

"You were speaking last night to papa about my marrying. He was not so well this morning, and—and the idea fretted him. Pray do not do so again, ever. I do not mean to marry. He wants me. He could not do without me; and he is right in what he told you. I am quite happy, perfectly happy, and contented here with him—happier than I could be with anyone or anywhere else."

"You are young to say that, my dear," I said gently.

You see I was past forty, an old man compared to her; and the tears in her eyes made me feel more tenderly to her.

"I am not too young to know what is right and good for me," she answered. "My father has only me in the world, and I——" Her eyes wandered out to the green-blue of the twilight sky, and fixed themselves there with a strange, wistful look, as if she were appealing to someone far, far away. There was a little cheap ring on the third finger of her left hand. She covered it gently with the other, stroking it backwards and forwards softly. "How could I have had any happiness apart from his? And he has been so tender to me always. Other girls have mothers; but I—the study of his life has been that I should not miss mine. Think what it would be to him now to miss me! And pray, pray, never say anything to him to make him fear that he will."

"My dear," I said again, "you may trust me. Your father has a good daughter. I hope Heaven will bless her."

I hardly thought she heard me, for her eyes were still fixed on the sky in that far-away gaze; only, after a moment, a grave

sweet smile came into them, and she held out her hand to me, saying :

"Thank you, doctor; I do trust you already. Indeed, I think you are one of the best friends I have." And then she added, with a little laugh, as if trying to shake off the least remains of her sadness: "It seems strange that we should have grown to know each other so well after only six months' acquaintance, when for five years we have been living with only this narrow street between us, and never even dreaming of each other's existence. Why, the one thing I knew of your house was that it had a brass-plate on the door, and I don't once recollect taking the trouble to look across, or to ask whether it belonged to a doctor or a dancing-mistress, until the day papa had that fit."

Not once! And all those five years her house had been the one home-spot in my toilsome life! Yet, after all, it was only natural. What was there on my side of the way? An ugly middle-aged man and a dingy house. It was she who made her side what it was to me. For the rest, I was content enough at learning from her own lips that she was as happy as she looked, and would not change her lot for that which had once been offered her, if she had had the opportunity.

"Poor lad! But I daresay he, too, has consoled himself," I said to myself as I went away.

IN CHATHAM DOCKYARD.

If I happened to know a foreign potentate, whose post-prandial imaginings took the form of a desire for picking a quarrel with England, I should like to take that suffering sovereign for a little stroll round Chatham Dockyard. Of course, there is no such dyspeptic potentate, and even if there were, my acquaintance with foreign potentates, dyspeptic and otherwise, is carried on chiefly through the medium of that universal ambassador, Baron Julius Reuter, and that, perhaps, would hardly be considered a sufficient introduction. But it is a pity, and I couldn't help thinking so the other day, as I passed through the severely tidy little lodge, where some half-dozen or so of more than usually solemn and civil gentlemen in blue keep careful watch over the secrets of naval construction. So absorbed was I, indeed, in the thought of what might perchance be the effect of such a visit upon the events of the

next quarter of a century or so, that I was very near writing down in the grim-looking album spread out before me, by the most civil and most solemn of the blue-coated functionaries, name, A. R.—ff; residence, S. P.—g; profession, E—r. I wonder what those civil and solemn functionaries would have said—or done—to me, if I had?

Fortunately, I recover myself in good time, and duly enrich the collection instead with my own comparatively humble autograph, even resisting the temptation, involuntarily suggested by reminiscences of similar proceedings in summer holiday-time among the mountains and glaciers, to add to its value by the appending of some appropriate, or other reflection, in prose or verse. Which forbearance is presently rewarded with a tiny little scrap of paper, duly authorising me to inspect her Majesty's dockyard.

I am proceeding somewhat leisurely upon my mission, and am standing before a huge empty "slip," quaintly suggestive of a cast turtle-shell of more than Brobdingnagian proportions, speculating as to the probable future of the yet unborn infant, for whom the "cradle" to which it serves as shelter is being actively prepared. A curious contrast it will be, no doubt, to many even of its not very remote ancestors, whose start in life has taken place from the same spot. The old Vanguard, for instance—not the recent Vanguard of grievous memory, but the good old line-of-battle-ship that once carried Nelson's flag, and whose sometime figure-head, in the likeness of the hero of Trafalgar himself, stands sentry over the huge empty slip, and points with uplifted hand to the store where still repose the topsails of his beloved old Victory—the old Vanguard, I say to myself, was rather a different-looking craft from the Devastation, or the Alexandra, or the Monarch.

"If you want to see the Monarch, young man," interrupted a gruff voice at my elbow, "you'd best bear a hand;" and without waiting for any reply, the speaker stamped sturdily on, at a pace which showed that he, at all events, was not minded to sacrifice any opportunity of an audience.

I was a little startled. A visit to the Monarch had been one of the chief objects of my run to Chatham, and when I had last heard of her two days before, she was lying quietly enough in the repairing basin, with no more immediate prospect of any change of quarters, than the figure-head of

the old Vanguard itself. Surely she could not have got into any mischief there; could not have involved herself in any complication with her neighbours' rams, or her own torpedoes, or anything of that kind, and so came to an untimely end, just when there seemed so imminent a prospect of her services being called into requisition? I resolve to "bear a hand" forthwith, and bidding his wooden lordship a respectful adieu, crowd all sail in chase of my late interlocutor, already nearly hull-down in the direction of the repairing basin.

I come up with him at last, after a struggle. My legs are long, and there are two of them. The sturdy thick-set figure, in short blue pilot coat and low glazed hat, jammed well down on the very back of the head, could never have stood much above five feet in its shoes, even when it had a pair of shoes to stand in. Now their owner has, as he himself would probably phrase it, but one sea-leg and one stick-leg, while the latter is so worn away by the energy with which he brings it down upon the macadam at every step, that it has no longer any occasion for the usual semi-circular mode of progression, and comes to the front at each call of duty as promptly and as straight as the gallant little owner himself. But crippled as the worthy veteran is in his lower spars, and altogether of a build more calculated for safe riding in a seaway than fast sailing on a wind, there is a vigour and determination about his movements, which carry him over the ground in really surprising style; and were it not that, in a fortunate moment he jams his peg-leg between the rails of one of the innumerable little tramways which form a network about the yard in all directions, and so broaches-to with a suddenness that very nearly brings everything by the board, I am not at all sure but I should have been reduced to the humiliation of a run.

"Awkward things, trams, sir," I observe soothingly, hoping to conciliate.

The old fellow is not conciliated in the least. Turns up to me for a moment a gnarled mahogany face, where the two keen little weather-shot eyes peer restlessly from under a deep penthouse of shaggy white eyebrow, and growls out as he stumps sturdily away again:

"Awk'ard things, old fools, as don't look wheer they're a-steering."

I was a little staggered. Surely this very old salt—old enough and salt enough,

to all appearance, to have carried the silver call on board the great admiral's own flagship, if not to have piped all hands from the fore-castle of Captain Noah himself—could not really have given in his adhesion to these new-fangled modern ways!

"I wonder what Nelson would have said to that kind of craft?" I continued, pointing to a huge unwieldy monster of an iron-clad hard by, and making one more bid for popularity.

A futile one, however. In his eager repudiation of the depreciative suggestion, my old salt even forgets for a moment the errand on which his heart is bent, and pulling short up, props his shortened stump upon a handy piece of coal that has dropped from some passing waggon, and looks me sternly in the face.

"Young man," he says severely, "do you take Hadmiral Lord Viscount Nelson for a fool?"

I admit cheerfully that, from a professional point of view, at all events, I have not been accustomed so to regard him.

"Then," he retorts, not in the least degree softened by the promptitude of my admission, "what do you suppose as he'd ha' thought on her? Didn't I hear him say myself as how the old Bell Pull was the smartest frigate afloat; and if he could make up his mind to say that much of a vessel as was built and rigged from truck to kelson by a parcel of Frenchmen, do you think as he'd go and turn up his nose at a good, sound, wholesome craft out of her Majesty's dockyard?"

"And you really think," I urge, determined to push the old fellow fairly home, "you really think that Lord Nelson would have been content to go to sea in an iron kettle?"

"Kettle!" replies he, with an indignant contempt, that might almost have brought a blush upon the cheek of that impassive article itself. "If Hadmiral Lord Viscount Nelson had seen his way to laying himself alongside of the henemy five minutes sooner, he'd ha' gone to sea in a sarsepan—with the lid on."

And with that he looks me fiercely in the face for a few moments, then turning disdainfully away, flattens the piece of coal, on which his stump has been resting, with one vicious dig, into impalpable dust, and is away again at higher speed than ever. It is some time before I can so far overcome the antagonism so unexpectedly aroused by my mistaken attempt at conservatism, as to induce the

old fellow to enter into any sort of parley. When at length, however, I do succeed in getting out of him anything more encouraging or instructive than a grunt, I learn to my astonishment, that something has indeed happened to the Monarch, but that so far from its having been an accident of any kind, it has been nothing less than a sudden call into active life.

"Monday mornin', sir," says my wooden-legged friend, slapping his sound thigh energetically, as he stumps along more vigorously than before—"Monday mornin' it was—day afore yesterday, no longer ago than that—as word came from the Admiralty to put her in commission, and there she is now; that's her pennant as you see there a-flyin' out over the clock-tower yonder, and them's her spars a-moving. Ay, she's away!" And breaking short off in his story, the old fellow went off in a wild career of hop, step, and stump, that fairly left me in the lurch, and for a time seemed to make no contemptible running against the fussy little tramway-engine, which at this moment came puffing and rattling by. A few seconds more, and he had scrambled "on board," scarcely waiting for the friendly driver to slacken speed; and before I had time even to shout out a request for similar accommodation, the fussy little locomotive was away again, the well-worn stump projecting over the low hand-rail in somewhat disrespectful caricature of the attitude of Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, as he appeared in the favourite character of figure-head of the old Vanguard.

It was a quarter of an hour, at least, before I saw wooden-leg again. I had made my way, after all, to the entrance of the repairing basin in time to see the big ship leave, and a fine sight it was. The Monarch is indeed one of the finest ships afloat—one stalwart dockyard "matey" in rusty canvas jumper and overalls, went so far as to swear under his breath, with many strange and full-flavoured oaths, that she was the finest vessel of our whole ironclad fleet. And to all appearances, her crew of between five and six hundred men, got together though they had been at less than forty-eight hours' notice, were by no means unworthy of her. I did indeed hear an old tar, twin-brother he might have been of my progressive friend, in the days when he too could boast his fair proportion of lower spars, mutter growlingly behind his nubbly red hand to a third old tar, plainly pickled in the same cask, that

in his day a lot of lubbers wasn't allowed on her Majesty's quarter-deck with iron heels to their boots, and I looked involuntarily round for my old friend "Timber-toes," to learn if this too were one of the innovations of which he was so stoutly convinced that Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson would have approved. But at this moment the ship, which had been waiting for some score or so of lagging marines, detained by mysterious errands in various distant corners of the yard, began to haul in the gangway, up which the last lingering "jolly" was still footing his somewhat precarious way, and with a snort from her blowhole at the water's edge, set out in earnest towards the open water.

To anyone not acquainted with the ways of modern machinery, there might have been something a little startling in her manner of starting. The huge hawsers were already made fast as usual to the mighty capstan, by which it was obvious to the least nautical eye that she was ultimately to be towed out to meet the two fussy little tugs, which for the last half-hour and more had been fuming, and fretting, and clamouring for her to come out to them before the tide should turn; but of the hundred or two of stalwart tars by whom said capstan should be manned, there was not anywhere the faintest trace. To all appearance the ship, for any aid that it could lend, might remain blocking the entrance of the great basin till the river outside ran dry. When suddenly a quiet little signal is made from the ship, a quiet little order given by the dockyard official in charge, and without the slightest warning the great capstan begins to turn solemnly round and round all by itself, the huge hawser comes home coil after coil, and the big ship glides steadily out into the open river, where the fussy little tugs pounce upon her as their lawful prey and hustle her off seawards, as perfectly regardless of the eleven hundred or so horse-power with which her own giant screw is already revolving, as though that were the mere ordinary attribute of any new-born infant quite incapable of guiding its own tottering steps. After this the bearded athlete in the forechains, ready with lead and line in hand to take the soundings of the unknown and unbuoyed channel of the Medway; the officers on deck and bridge, with drawn telescopes beneath their arms, ready at a moment's notice to reconnoitre every approaching billyboy and hay-barge;

and the look-out man on the foretop-gallant-crossrees, prompt to report the first sign of a hostile train in the most distant offing of the Chatham and Dover line, are all mere minor marvels of what is fast becoming a somewhat dreamlike and uncertain experience.

And quite in keeping with this slightly fantastic effect is the appearance of the ship herself. Not that there is anything unreal about her. Far from it. A more substantial fact in the way of ironwork has not often been turned off mortal anvil; yet there is something dreamlike about her too. A handsome craft she is, unquestionably; an astonishingly handsome craft to anyone without that not uncommon prepossession against her class, the expression of which so aroused the ire of my progressive little friend with the peg-leg. I am not in the least surprised when my friend himself, whom I have by this time discovered leaning on a timberhead at the very edge of the wharf, and following the retiring monster with all his eager eyes, emphatically declares her to be a greater beauty than the old Bell Pull herself. Yet anything like the old Belle Poule, or any of her dashing, saucy consorts, it would be difficult for anything with three lofty masts and a shapely hull to be. There was something frank and jaunty about those old sailing frigates, a sort of friendly, human look, that seemed to take away the rough edge even from the chase and the conflict itself, and mixed up as it were the battle and the breeze in a way that gave a perhaps somewhat fictitious charm to both. There is nothing of this about the modern champion. There is nothing friendly about her looks, and nothing human; or rather something which irresistibly reminds one of that famous picture of the votaries of Circe. A quaint resemblance which is not wholly due to the long black snout, trending outwards as it approaches the water, which has taken the place of the former graceful, dashing prow; but gains an accidental strength from the one small port half open in her bow, which seems to twinkle at you, as she glides away, like a wicked little eye. A lovely monster truly, but a monster for all that—hard, cruel, cold; a monster who will crash savagely through the waves, instead of dancing gaily over them, and to whom war itself will be, not a fierce delight, but a grim business grimly done.

I wonder whether any thoughts of this

kind are working-in the mind of my energetic old friend, as the big ship glides finally out of sight, and he raises himself at length from his leaning position against the timberhead, and stumps away silently by my side. Something seems to have sobered him considerably, and I could almost fancy that there is a half-wistful look on the weather-beaten features as though, in spite of all his triumph in this magnificent specimen of England's naval might, there was something in his heart not quite in tune.

It came out at last. For ten minutes at least I plied him with questions, with criticisms, with "fishing interrogatories" of every kind, but in vain. The little man stumped along stolidly by my side, the set lips emitting forth now and then an occasional grunt, which might be taken in a sense either of acquiescence or of disapproval, according to the taste and fancy of the hearer. I was beginning to think that his wild enthusiasm had somehow in its reaction stricken him physically dumb, when at last I touched upon the question of the Monarch's armaments, and a light came into his eyes, and he opened his lips as if to speak. Then suddenly, with a louder grunt than usual, they closed again, and slapping his right fist into the open palm of his left hand, he stumped on a little faster than before, muttering to himself excitedly.

I seemed to be on the right track, however, at last, and followed it up with a question as to her guns.

"Two twelve-ton in bows, four twenty-five-ton in turrets, one seven-and-a-half-ton stern-chaser," came the answer pat enough, and though not quite, as it seemed to me, with the usual enthusiasm.

"And torpedoes?" I asked again.

I have made a hit this time beyond mistake.

"And why not torpedoes?" the old fellow burst out, and I could see the beads of perspiration gathering thickly on his weather-beaten forehead. "Why not torpedoes? I suppose, if other folks uses torpedoes, we've got a right to use them too, haven't we? Torpedoes! What is torpedoes? Nothing but—but—bigshells fired through the water." Then suddenly the cloud cleared away from his face, and every feature relaxed in one broad grin of triumphant delight. He had answered himself without even intending it, and in his relief he for the moment seemed quite to forget me and my assumed objection,

and slapping his fist into his palm again, murmured with a chuckle: "Surely—surely—nothing but big shells fired through the water. Ho, ho, ho! Nothing but big shells fired through the water."

The cloud had cleared off altogether, and the very stick-leg, which for the last quarter of an hour had been stumping by my side with a dogged but spiritless persistence, seemed to feel the change, and strode away again over the stones as though it had suddenly been set on springs.

"Have ye seen the Euryalus, young man?" he asks gaily, and on my replying that I have only just arrived in the yard, carries me off triumphantly on board that noble corvette, high and dry just now in the graving-dock, with a hundred or so of cunning artificers in brass and iron banging and clanging away above deck and below, with a din that is simply deafening. How my companion, with his stick-leg, stamps his way over the narrow springing gangway, and up this perpendicular ladder and down that, and through, and over, and under a dozen different places, where my two legs feel keenly the necessity for cautious treading, and where a false step would precipitate the taker thereof upon the iron ribs which form the bottom of the ship some thirty or forty feet below, is a thing to see. Every hole and corner of the ship are clearly, as he triumphantly informs me, as familiar to him as his own back-yard, and he chuckles pleasantly as I shout into his ear the involuntary comment that, under present circumstances, the holes are perhaps of more importance than the corners. As for Pegg-leg, he seems to have no need to shout. His sturdy old voice, somewhat husky and worn in ordinary conversation, with some eighty years or so of pretty constant struggle with the salt sea-breeze, seems all at once to recover its old lusty tone, and every syllable reaches me through the din, as clearly as though I were myself stationed on the foretopgallant-yard, and he quietly hailing me from the deck.

"Look at that now, young man," he exclaims, as we reach the Euryalus's gun-deck, and catch sight, in the semi-darkness, of the long rows of ninety-hundred-weight guns ranged cheek by jowl in the old broadside fashion. "If you like the old style—and mind you, I don't say but what, speaking as a seaman, you know, and for a ship as a man would wish to turn in comfortably aboard of, blow high, blow low, and sure to find her there in the morning, you ain't

someways right—look at that for a row of teeth!"

I admire to his heart's content, and he chuckles complacently as I draw his attention to the curious "peering" expression of the long, lean-muzzled monsters as they thrust their sharp snouts under the half-closed ports, as though anxiously enquiring what had become of the bright blue water that used to flash past them as they looked out.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he laughs, "so they do, lad, so they do. And look ye there, master!" pointing to the foremost gun, not trained exactly parallel with the rest, but lifting its muzzle slightly upwards, and turning towards its neighbour as though about to speak. "Look ye there, master. Do you know what she's a-sayin' to 'em, eh?"

I smile enquiringly, and the little man grips my arm hard, and stands on tiptoe to whisper hoarsely in my ear:

"She's a-sayin' as they'll all be in blue water again soon, and perhaps—perhaps, lad, with something to say for themselves—something to say for themselves, eh?"

And then with a sudden increase of energy, as though time were really becoming very precious, and as though it were necessary to look up everything without a moment's delay, lest the call to war should take us unawares, the eager little man hurries me away on board the Belle Isle, deep sunk in another huge dock close alongside, and with more men banging and clanging away above deck and below deck; where, down in the remote darkenesses of the hold, and away in distant corners, a man has to work, trussed, as it were, like a fowl for roasting, and where the dim candle, by whose light he is screwing, or riveting, or hammering home, shows nothing but now the shadow of a doubled-up leg, now gleams of a bright hammer, or bare brawny arm, to mark his whereabouts.

"One of the two new 'uns," he tells me. "Just bought of the Turks—poor beggars! Fine ship, eh? Four twenty-five tonners; twelve-inch armour; close on five thousand tons. Not bad, eh, for a little 'un?"

And so with a fresh chuckle he hurries me off again aboard the Penelope, with her double bottom and her double sow, and her double sides and everything double about her, and her eleven guns—all ready to be sent into action at forty-eight hours' notice, like the Monarch, which only an hour or two since was berthed by her side; aboard the Garnet and the Cormorant, un-

moured like the Euryalus, but swift as batrosses, with steam and sail power, and ready either to play at long bowls with any adversary of, let us say, not more than twice their own weight of metal, or to show a clean pair of heels to an adversary fairly beyond their strength; aboard the Northampton and the Nelson, onclads of another type from any we have yet seen, or, indeed, from any yet built, with their massive cuirasses, to protect the big guns at either end, and their savage spurs, to crash with the whole weight of the huge ship the vessel's deck that shall be too strong for her guns to penetrate; and, finally, on board the appropriately-named Superb, huge floating alace-fortress of nine thousand tons, just purchased, like the Belle Isle, from the Turks, the biggest and most powerful onclad ever yet launched.

Everywhere banging and clanging, and bringing bright augur-holes through solid plates of complaining iron, and driving bolts, and fitting and refitting plates and rivets and girders, till my unaccustomed head grows dizzy with the bustle and the din. Everywhere, too, stanchions are being moved, and hatchways enlarged, and vast new portholes cut for the newly-developed torpedo service, and every time we pass by any place where these especial preparations are going on, my little guide chuckles fresh, and dashes ahead with fiercer energy than before. Once we come upon a skeleton model of an actual Whitehead torpedo itself, and then the little man pauses for a moment, to pat it affectionately on the neck, and I hear him murmur to himself: "Ha, ha, ha! only a big shell fired under water—only a big shell fired under water, surely!"

And now, at last, the tour of inspection is ended, and even the inexhaustible Pegg-wipes his brow with the air of a man who has done his day's work, and stamps along with something less than his usual fiery energy, as we wend our way back towards the tidy little lodge-gate. As we pass by the slip where the effigy of Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson still points with outstretched arm, my little friend pulls up, holds his arms across his chest, and sets his lips firmly, as he stands for a few moments silently gazing upon the smiling wooden face. Then I hear him murmuring under his breath:

"Ah!" he says, "if you could only have lived to see all this, I'd ha' giv' my other ower spar, I would, free and hearty. Blow me, if I wouldn't!"

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. M. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER IX. THE WEIGHT OF A BOUQUET.

If the Cleopatra was in truth a living creature, with the whole soul of a man in her, it must have been a wonderful sensation when, after all those past years of patient darkness, she felt herself at last throb out into daylight; when she stretched out her limbs, as it were, and heard herself, and could say at last, I am. The overture was not precisely the sort of music that people had come to hear. It was not in the least degree like the introduction to *Comus*, of which it was fully expected to be a repetition. But then nobody, in those simple, pre-æsthetic days, listened to an overture—any more than one would think of reading a preface to a story-book—until it had been well ground into their ears by the street-bands. The overture to *Cleopatra* may be recommended to modern audiences, and may be revived with advantage, for it is as old, as strong, and yet for always as young as the hills. The most æsthetic may profess enthusiasm and inward comprehension over the results of its elaborate science, without being guilty of any very criminal amount of hypocrisy, or being driven to find beauty in ugliness to save themselves from the charge of Philistinism. But those were dark and evil days, before form and tune had come to be held the accursed things which the children of light are bound to believe them. The *Cleopatra* had both; but in such wise as to be a set challenge to all existing ideas of either. This is its secret history—not its criticism. It was as if the composer had thrown it down before the world, saying: "This is good, right, and true; if you like it, all the better for art; if you don't like it, so much the worse for you." One or two critics noted a severe self-denial about this opening, as though the maker of it had, instead of seeking anxiously after striking effects, deliberately avoided them even when they were most obvious, so that it might consist in all of art and in nothing of artifice. But, with these one or two exceptions, it passed—just as might have been expected. The house applauded at the end to show its sense of relief that the fiddling was over, and that the singing and seeing was going to begin, and justified its applause by saying "splendid," and "beautiful."

The librettist, no doubt inspired by the composer, had followed the English tragedy with such severe fidelity as to double the difficulties that his master had to encounter; for of all the great plays, perhaps Antony and Cleopatra is the last that a modern musician would choose, as it stands, to work upon. Perhaps for that very reason it had been chosen by Andrew Gordon. His purpose had been, not to combine a series of detached airs and concerted pieces by means of an interesting story, but to express one great passion by all the resources of music, and to show all that art can do when concentrated upon one single end.

To any one present—and there was not one—who could have read the secret history of the opera in the overture, it must, according to his temper, either have been a colossal joke, or a profound stroke of pathos, or both combined, that all this artistic passion, with the whole blood of a man's whole life in it, should have been brought with such a flourishing of trumpets and beating of drums before such an audience, and just as a mere piece of theatrical claptrap and operatic intrigue. Everybody was waiting patiently for the first catching tune and, a little impatiently, for the *débutante*; for a living woman, whom one can hear with one's eyes, is naturally more interesting than what one can only hear with one's ears. And, presently, she appeared.

That operatic manager must know his trade a great deal worse than Prosper, who cannot secure a triumphant entry for his *prima donna*, even in London, where the claque, as an organised institution, is unknown. But, to a *prima donna* herself, all applause is genuine, however it comes; and Clari turned pale while her rival stood trembling in the middle of the stage. Ilma felt as if she were enveloped in a frown; and Celia's welcome was not the less gall to her because to her the new star was no rival. To Celia herself, all was pitch darkness; she neither saw nor heard. She needed all her strength, and found none.

But it was not stage fright. No soldier ever led the way into a breach with more self-forgetfulness. It was only that a greater burden was laid upon her than any creature could guess or bear: without a hope or wish for herself, without confidence in her power, without the élan of high spirits, to have to justify her father's whole life to the world, while morbidly conscious all the while that the

slightest failure was the only sin she had ever been taught to fear. It had seemed an easy thing for her father, with whom to wish meant to will, and to will meant to do, to bid her send thought to sleep until its proper hour for waking. She had tried to obey, and the result was a tension of brain, throat, and heart, that would have been a divine fuel to genius, but felt like despair to Celia, who had never known how to rise to any occasion since she was born. She had but the fuel without the fire, and knew it only too well.

But there was no time to yield, and she opened her throat with the precision of a machine. She could have sung her part in her sleep, and she had just escaped the point where memory relieves nature by taking flight altogether. Had John March himself been there, and could he have heard, not even his exigent ear could have detected a flaw. There was none to detect; not even a waver in the first note that came from her. But a chill fell over the house at the very first bar. Ilma's eyes were hanging on the face of her offended patroness, and saw the frown relax for a moment, but only to deepen again.

"I'm afraid she is nervous," said Lady Quorne, at the end of the recitative. But nobody answered. Bessy was absorbed in thinking how she would feel in her friend's place, and Walter Gordon was actively hating the whole world and himself for being there, or anywhere. He began to know what she must be suffering, now that he was beginning to understand.

But presently matters began to mend. After all, the flame of genius is not so common a thing as to be missed when it does not come, and those who failed to be pleased with the *débutante* must have been hard to please. Not much has been said of Celia's voice, either in singing or in speaking, because there was not much to say beyond the not uncommon facts that it was strong enough to fill a moderately-sized house like the Parnassus, was very sweet, very clear, and as true as gold ought to be. She was not much of an actress, and looked very little like Cleopatra—that is to say, like a woman whose very presence is a fascination. She could no more carry away a house metaphorically than she could literally. But her style was faultless; she was no more Cleopatra than she was Clari, but nobody could say that she did not know how to sing. And so, in spite of her heavy heart, things went better and better till the first act was over.

Beyond question, Cleopatra was to be

no failure. But the music was over the world's head, and the prima donna outside its heart—that also was clear. In critical slang, the history of Andrew Gordon's two operas would be recorded as a succès d'enthousiasme followed by a succès d'estime; it was as if a giant, after boasting that he was going to kill a thousand at a blow, should succeed in killing three—which would have been a triumph if he had confined his boast to the killing of two. It is a failure when a work intended to effect a revolution is simply—praised.

But, meanwhile, and for the moment, success was success; and as yet nobody was bold enough to whisper: "But we came to hear a second Comus; and this is not a second Comus, after all."

Walter Gordon's heart sighed with relief when the curtain fell. There was one act gone out of the four. He was just about to return from Lady Quorne's box to his stall, when he caught the eye of Ilma Krasinski from the other side. She made the most of the meeting of eyes by beckoning to him unmistakably; and, not being in a mood for resisting straws, he changed one box for another, simply because he was bidden.

"After all," Ilma was saying, "I don't know that Fräulein Celia's failing would have done much, one way or the other. If the opera had broken down to-night, it would have been mended again. There are a dozen women who could make as much effect as she is doing."

"No!" said Clari. "There is not one—not one in the world. There is not one but she who would not have broken down at the third bar—no, not one in the whole world. I know what she has gone through to sing the notes; it is everything to sing it at all. You think anybody could sing what sounds so easy? That is because you are a fool, and because they are all fools. Try to sing it, and see. Do you think Prosper would have found another soprano in an hour—in a month—in a hundred years? It does not do to sing that part at sight—and he has not three slaves. I tell you if she had not sung—but it is too late now. I will not any more tell you you are a fool. I am tired. I am glad to see you, monsieur," she said to Walter as he came forward. "It is kind of you to come to say good-bye."

"Good-bye?"

"Why not? It is a common word. Yes; I cannot afford Como, or Lago Maggiore, but I shall retire. I shall not

sing this new music; I am too old to learn, and I do not care to be hissed in London. I shall go where they are behind the age, and will not want a worn-out old woman to break her throat in pieces to please them. Thank you, monsieur. It is good of you to come and see me on your way to where your heart is. Yes—I know. You need not stay longer than you please."

"I certainly expected more voice," said Ilma to Walter, thinking to throw a sop to jealousy. "They would not think much of her at la Scala."

"Voice!" said Clari, bitterly. "Andrew Gordon treats voices as he treats lives—what do you think he cares for either, if it is a woman's, so long as it can sing one note for him? It is a miracle she has a voice at all. And I am told she was not taught by Andrew Gordon!—bah!—as if I did not know every trick and every turn. Ah, he may be dead a hundred years, for I am a hundred; but he was her master, dead or alive."

Walter thought himself too well acquainted with the natural history of the musical profession to take heed of a prima donna's jealous fit, or of any words she might say therein. Indeed, he was not heeding any words, or the theory that Andrew Gordon alone could have been Celia's master might have struck him more forcibly. As it was, it hardly even passed through his ears.

"Lend me a pencil, if you have one," said Ilma, suddenly. He handed her his pencilcase, and she leaned back idly in her chair, and for some minutes amused herself by scribbling with it on a fly-leaf of her libretto, while he occupied himself with feeling himself helpless, even in so slight a thing as speaking some commonplace word to Clari. Presently Ilma, without returning the pencilcase, handed him a little folded-up note, torn from the fly-leaf, and left the box. He read: "She is in a temper, but please stay in the box through the next act; I'll tell you why, after." It was the same to him in what part of the house he might be, and he stayed.

Ilma had not come back to the box when the bell rang and the curtain rose upon act the second, and upon the determination of the audience to find in it all that they had looked for from act the first and had not found. The new act was a crisis; the success of Cleopatra was assured, but the scales to weigh its triumph were balanced so exactly that a straw would turn them. And anything short of

overwhelming triumph would mean failure, from the composer's point of view.

But this second act had not proceeded very far before the chill returned. It became less like *Comus* than ever. It was all divine art, and as stern and cold as it was divine. It contained, or seemed to contain, not one throb of the passion that made Cleopatra herself the mistress of the master of the world. Was it the composer's fault, or Celia's? That, there were no means to tell. Perhaps it was body without soul; perhaps too purely spirit without some voice-genius to give it human heart's blood. The composer, and his librettist, threw the burden more and more upon the soprano as the opera went on, and Celia never flinched or wavered in her strict faithfulness to every note and every shadow of tone. Every accent received precisely its just emphasis, and every phrase its due proportion. There was absolutely no fault to be found in her—and faultlessness is the unpardonable sin. Difficulties had been piled up sky-high for her to conquer, and she conquered. But the difficulties had been so cunningly hidden by the artist's hand that made them, that the hearers knew nothing of them or of the equal art that had conquered them, and only felt that one lapse into simple song would be worth them all.

Celia only felt that she was doing her duty, resolutely, to the end. She was recalled, but carried off no bouquets. The time for those which had been bought with Prosper's money had not yet come, and Lady Quorne's friends and followers did not feel enthusiastic enough to spare their own.

Ilma had returned to the box when the curtain fell for the second time.

Prosper received Celia behind the scenes.

"That woman is in the house," he said fiercely. "She is come here for harm; I know her; and I know not how, the things go not well. You must do better this next act, mademoiselle. You must make the house to tumble down. You shall not mind the music—you shall stamp, you shall go mad, you shall make a noise. Who is this Mademoiselle Krasinski who comes to wig me the ear while you sing? With her stupid questions—bah! as if I stand here to chatter. I thought it should be a challenge to the box with pistols from madame—*foi de gentilhomme*; I keep not the list of her lovers for her, *La Donna è mobile—bien fou qui s'y fie.*" He seemed to be speaking of Clari, whose name, alone among prime donne, had never been

coupled with a lover's until Ilma had spoken scandal of her to Celia about Walter Gordon. But his mongrel rendering of the villainous old couplet was plainly enough directed to Celia herself, to tell her that he, Prosper, had been leaning on a broken reed. For a manager, who feels that he has made a mistake, is strangely like ordinary mortals in passing on the blame.

"What exquisite phrasing!" said Lady Quorne, true to her colours.

"What exquisite lace!" said Bessy. "Why, it must have cost a fortune a yard."

"Lace?" said Lady Quorne. "Surely, no. But—yes, it is. It is the lace she wore in Park Lane; though she wore it in the Spanish fashion then. But it's not very correct, I am afraid. I don't think Cleopatra could have worn lace made by Spanish nuns."

Bessy appealed to her encyclopædia. "Could they?"

Gaveston pulled his whiskers, and thought of the Mahrattas. "They might have found it in the Pyramids; they find all sorts of old things in things of that kind. And there was Penelope."

And Celia's lace, worn scarf-wise, might have been Penelope's own web for beauty. Prosper did not think much of an anachronism that interfered with such an addition to the charm of song as a piece of costume that would have befitted a queen who drank solution of pearls; Celia was no chronologist; and her father looked down upon costume as one of the vulgarities and profanations to be swept away. It was not everybody who understood lace, but they were more than those who only understood music, and the lace sang to them, while the wearer, in the third act as in the second, continued to do her duty bravely.

But not quite so unflinchingly. Ilma Krasinski had been behind the scenes; and, though nothing seemed to have come of it, it was certain that she had not been there for nothing. Celia, for no reason, and therefore all the more intensely, felt herself wandering among unknown pitfalls; the opera was not over yet, and there was many a bar yet to come before the climax that would save or destroy it once and for all. She was beginning to feel terribly alone; even the face of her father, could she have met it, would have given her some sort of desperate strength—at least, she fancied so. She instinctively put out her hand, not as a stage gesture, but as if she hoped to find

some support in the air. It seemed as if she were singing herself out of life, and fading away with the score into the flare and glare of the footlights. Once she seemed to be in Lindenheim—it was a vision, not a fancy; and it seemed to her as if she had never been there in the flesh, but had dropped into it for the first time. She could even see Walter's face above her in the air; but it was beside Clari's.

Suddenly she was startled by a burst of applause.

What had she done? Nothing, surely, beyond singing the close of an air. She turned and bowed, seeing nothing. Then the first orchestral chords came that preluded the scena upon which all hung, and called for all her strength of throat and mind.

It was preceded by a long symphony which gave her space for the recovery of her senses. No wonder they were waning—their strain had known no real relief since she had been born. She drew back, after her bow, towards the back of the stage.

As she moved backwards, her first bouquet flew over the orchestra, side-ways, and fell just before her. The tenor raised it, and handed it to her with a bow and a smile.

"Un biglietto? Eccolo quà!" he hummed sotto voce from the Barber of Seville as he gave her at the same time a three-cornered note, on paper that seemed torn from a book, which had fallen from among the red and white flowers. Instead of putting it into her bosom with an answering smile she opened it; read it; the orchestral symphony guided her back into song; and the score, which she knew in her sleep, became as blank as if no John March or Andrew Gordon had ever been born. A sharp, swelling pain drew the sides of her throat together; and her eyes, drawn upwards among the gods, where none would dream of seeking him, saw the face of John March meeting hers with a look, not of anxiety, not of reproach, but of despair, while she stood in dead, helpless silence, with the bouquet at her feet and the unfolded note in her hand.

The conductor's bâton called Halt, and beat backward. Such mischances will happen now and then. But Celia was as dumb as stone; and though the white, despairing face far above her could not hear the silence, it could see.

What more can be said? It was his own soul that had been struck dumb.

Clari turned round to Ilma—a look of malicious pride told her that her tool had proved sharp in her hand after all. Neither malice nor pride came into the face of the prima donna, but a sullen calm. She fanned herself slowly and royally, as she took the whole house into one steady gaze.

"Ah!"

She, too, in that sweeping look caught the agonised face of her master—the face she had not seen since it had glared at her the first time she had ever sung, and had stung her into fatal rebellion. Here eyes seemed to hang upon its torture. No matter what had been the means, she was grandly avenged. His soul had been killed before her very eyes, and by her own hand.

"Celia!" hissed Walter from behind her. He had been comprehending more and more. "I must go to her. And there is her father!" The dead-white face drew his quick eyes too.

"Her father?" asked Clari.

"Yes, there. But I must go."

"Her father?"

"Yes, there."

"Andrew Gordon?" The fan was closed, her hand was on his arm, and the question was like a cry. She turned fiercely round to the stage, and leaned forward with her whole life in her eyes. It was she herself who had last worn the lost lace of Il Purgatorio upon the stage; and it was Andrew Gordon's child who was wearing it now. The face above her said: "You robbed me of the only love I ever gave to woman; you have crushed the only creature you ever loved. I am avenged."

Meanwhile Celia read, in the air, between her father's face and her own, the words that had struck her dumb: "You shall not sing. You are Andrew Gordon's daughter. Ask Prosper who was Andrew Gordon's wife; he tells me she was named Giulia Clari. She is here. Look at your mother while you sing; and sing if you dare."

"I don't think you need be much afraid of Cleopatra now," said Ilma, with sweet stupidity.

Clari threw Walter's arm away from her, and, without thanking Ilma by so much as a look, swept out before him into the corridor.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LI. GUSS MILDMAY'S SUCCESS.

THE treatment which the marquis received at Rudham did not certainly imply any feeling that he had disgraced himself by what he had done, either at Manor Cross or up in London. Perhaps the ladies there did not know as much of his habits as did Mrs. Walker at Scumberg's. Perhaps the feeling was strong that Popenjoy was Popenjoy, and that therefore the marquis had been injured. If a child be born in British purple—true purple, though it may have been stained by circumstances—that purple is very sacred. Perhaps it was thought that under no circumstances should a marquis be knocked into the fireplace by a clergyman. There was still a good deal of mystery, both as to Popenjoy and as to the fireplace, and the marquis was the hero of these mysteries. Everyone at Rudham was anxious to sit by his side, and to be allowed to talk to him. When he abused the dean, which he did freely, those who heard him assented to all he said. The Baroness Banmann held up her hands in horror when she heard the tale, and declared the Church to be one grand *bêtise*. Mrs. Houghton, who was very attentive to the marquis, and whom the marquis liked, was pertinacious in her enquiries after Popenjoy, and cruelly sarcastic upon the dean. "Think what was his bringing up!" said Mrs. Houghton.

"In a stable," said the marquis.

"I always felt it to be a great pity that Lord George should have made that

match; not but what she is a good creature in her way."

"She is no better than she should be," said the marquis. Then Mrs. Houghton found herself able to insinuate that perhaps, after all, Mary was not a good creature, even in her own way. But the marquis's chief friend was Jack De Baron. He talked to Jack about races, and billiards, and women—but though he did not refrain from abusing the dean, he said no word to Jack against Mary. If it might be that the dean should receive his punishment in that direction he would do nothing to prevent it. "They tell me she's a beautiful woman. I have never seen her myself," said the marquis.

"She is very beautiful," said Jack.

"Why the devil she should have married George, I can't think. She doesn't care for him the least."

"Don't you think she does?"

"I'm sure she don't. I suppose her pestilent father thought it was the nearest way to a coronet. I don't know why men should marry at all. They always get into trouble by it."

"Somebody must have children," suggested Jack.

"I don't see the necessity. It's nothing to me what becomes of the property after I'm gone. What is it, madam?" They were sitting out on the lawn after lunch, and Jack and the marquis were both smoking. As they were talking the baroness had come up to them, and made her little proposition. "What! a lecture! If Mr. De Baron pleases, of course. I never listen to lectures myself—except from my wife."

"Ah! dat is vat I vant to prevent."

"I have prevented it already by sending

her to Italy. Oh, rights of women! Very interesting; but I don't think I'm well enough myself. Here is Captain De Baron, a young man as strong as a horse and very fond of women. He'll sit it out."

"I beg your pardon; what is it?" Then the baroness, with rapid words, told her own sad story. She had been deluded, defrauded, and ruined by those wicked females, Lady Selina Protest and Dr. Fleabody. The marquis was a nobleman whom all England, nay, all Europe, delighted to honour. Could not the marquis do something for her? She was rapid and eloquent, but not always intelligible. "What is it she wants?" asked the marquis, turning to Jack.

"Pecuniary assistance, I think, my lord."

"Ja, ja. I have been bamboozled of everything, my lord marquis."

"Oh hang it, De Baron shouldn't have let me in for this. Would you mind telling my fellow to give her a ten-pound note?" Jack said that he would not mind; and the baroness stuck to him pertinaciously, not leaving his side a moment till she had got the money. Of course there was no lecture. The baroness was made to understand that visitors at a country house in England could not be made to endure such an infliction; but she succeeded in levying a contribution from Mrs. Montacute Jones, and there were rumours afloat that she got a sovereign out of Mr. Houghton.

Lord Giblet had come with the intention of staying a week, but the day after the attack made upon him by Mrs. Montacute Jones news arrived which made it absolutely necessary that he should go to Castle Gossling at once. "We shall be so sorry to miss you," said Mrs. Montacute Jones, whom he tried to avoid in making his general adieux, but who was a great deal too clever not to catch him.

"My father wants to see me about the property, you know."

"Of course. There must be a great deal to do between you." Everybody who knew the affairs of the family was aware that the old earl never thought of consulting his son; and Mrs. Montacute Jones knew everything.

"Ever so much; therefore I must be off at once. My fellow is packing my things now; and there is a train in an hour's time."

"Did you hear from Olivia this morning?"

"Not to-day."

"I hope you are as proud as you ought

to be of having such a sweet girl belonging to you." Nasty old woman! What right had she to say these things? "I told Mrs. Green that you were here, and that you were coming to meet Olivia on the 27th."

"What did she say?"

"She thinks you ought to see Mr. Green as you go through London. He is the easiest, most good-natured man in the world. Don't you think you might as well speak to him?" Who was Mrs. Montacute Jones that she should talk to him in this way? "I would send a telegram if I were you, to say I would be there to-night."

"Perhaps it would be best," said Lord Giblet.

"Oh, certainly. Now mind, we expect you to dinner on the 27th. Is there anybody else you'd specially like me to ask?"

"Nobody in particular, thank ye."

"Isn't Jack De Baron a friend of yours?"

"Yes, I like Jack pretty well. He thinks a great deal of himself, you know."

"All the young men do that now. At any rate I'll ask Jack to meet you." Unfortunately for Lord Giblet, Jack appeared in sight at this very moment. "Captain De Baron, Lord Giblet has been good enough to say that he'll come to my little place at Killancodlem on the 27th. Can you meet him there?"

"Delighted, Mrs. Jones. Who ever refuses to go to Killancodlem?"

"It isn't Killancodlem and its little comforts that are bringing his lordship. We shall be delighted to see him; but he is coming to see—— Well, I suppose it's no secret now, Lord Giblet?" Jack bowed his congratulations, and Lord Giblet again blushed as red as a rose.

Detestable old woman! Whither should he take himself? In what farthest part of the Rocky Mountains should he spend the coming autumn? If neither Mr. nor Mrs. Green called upon him for an explanation, what possible right could this abominable old harpy have to prey upon him? Just at the end of a cotillon he had said one word! He knew men who had done ten times as much, and had not been as severely handled. And he was sure that Jack De Baron had had something to do with it. Jack had been hand in hand with Mrs. Jones at the making up of the Kappa-kappa. But as he went to the station he reflected that Olivia Green was a very nice girl. If those ten thousand pounds were true they would be a great

comfort to him. His mother was always bothering him to get married. If he could bring himself to accept this as his fate he would be saved a deal of trouble. Spooning at Killancodlem, after all, would not be bad fun. He almost told himself that he would marry Miss Green, were it not that he was determined not to be dictated to by that old harridan.

Many people came and went at Rudham Park, but among those who did not go was Guss Mildmay. Aunt Julia, who had become thoroughly ashamed of the baroness, had wished to take her departure on the third day; but Guss had managed to stop her. "What's the good of coming to a house for three days? You said you meant to stay a week. They know what she is now, and the harm's done. It was your own fault for bringing her. I don't see why I'm to be thrown over because you've made a mistake about a vulgar old woman. We've nowhere to go to till November, and now we are out of town for Heaven's sake let us stay as long as we can." In this way Guss carried her point, watching her opportunity for a little conversation with her former lover.

At last the opportunity came. It was not that Jack had avoided her, but that it was necessary that she should be sure of having half-an-hour alone with him. At last she made the opportunity, calling upon him to walk with her on Sunday morning when all other folk were in church—or, perhaps, in bed. "No; I won't go to church," she had said to Aunt Ju. "What is the use of your asking 'why not?' I won't go. They are quite accustomed at Rudham to people not going to church. I always go in a stiff house, but I won't go here. When you are at Rome you should do as the Romans do. I don't suppose there'll be half-a-dozen there out of the whole party." Aunt Ju went to church as a matter of course, and the opportunity of walking in the grounds with Jack was accomplished. "Are you going to Killancodlem?" she said.

"I suppose I shall, for a few days."

"Have you got anything to say before you go?"

"Nothing particular."

"Of course I don't mean to me."

"I've nothing particular to say to anybody just at present. Since I've been here that wretched old marquis has been my chief fate. It's quite a pleasure to hear him abuse the dean."

"And the dean's daughter?"

"He has not much good to say about her either."

"I'm not surprised at that, Jack. And what do you say to him about the dean's daughter?"

"Very little, Guss."

"And what are you going to say to me about her?"

"Nothing at all, Guss."

"She's all the world to you, I suppose?"

"What's the use of your saying that?"

In one sense she's nothing to me. My belief is that the only man she'll ever care a pin about is her husband. At any rate she does not care a straw for me."

"Nor you for her?"

"Well, yes I do. She's one of my pet friends. There's nobody I like being with better."

"And if she were not married?"

"Heaven knows what might have happened. I might have asked her to have me, because she has got money of her own. What's the use of coming back to the old thing, Guss?"

"Money, money, money!"

"Nothing more unfair was ever said to anyone. Have I given any signs of selling myself for money? Have I been a fortune-hunter? No one has ever found me guilty of so much prudence. All I say is that having found out the way to go to the devil myself, I won't take any young woman I like with me by marrying her. Heavens and earth! I can fancy myself returned from a wedding-tour with some charmer, like you, without a shilling at my banker's, and beginning life at lodgings, somewhere down at Chelsea. Have you no imagination? Can't you see what it would be? Can't you fancy the stuffy sitting-room with the horsehair chairs, and the hashed matton, and the cradle in the corner before long?"

"No I can't," said Guss.

"I can; two cradles, and very little of the hashed mutton; and my lady wife with no one to pin her dress for her but the maid-of-all-work with black fingers."

"It wouldn't be like that."

"It very soon would, if I were to marry a girl without a fortune. And I know myself. I'm a very good fellow while the sun shines, but I couldn't stand hardship. I shouldn't come home to the hashed mutton. I should dine at the club, even though I had to borrow the money. I should come to hate the cradle and its occupant, and the mother of its occupant. I should take

to drink, and should blow my brains out just as the second cradle came. I can see it all as plain as a pikestaff. I often lie awake the whole night and look at it. You and I, Guss, have made a mistake from the beginning. Being poor people we have lived as though we were rich."

"I have never done so."

"Oh yes, you have. Instead of dining out in Fitzroy Square and drinking tea in Tavistock Place, you have gone to balls in Grosvenor Square and been presented at Court."

"It wasn't my fault."

"It has been so, and therefore you should have made up your mind to marry a rich man."

"Who was it asked me to love him?"

"Say that I did, if you please. Upon my word I forget how it began, but say that it was my fault. Of course it was my fault. Are you going to blow me up for that? I see a girl, and first I like her, and then I love her, and then I tell her so; or else she finds it out without my telling. Was that a sin you can't forgive?"

"I never said it was a sin."

"I don't mind being a worm, but I won't be trodden upon overmuch. Was there ever a moment in which you thought that I thought of marrying you?"

"A great many, Jack."

"Did I ever say so?"

"Never. I'll do you justice there. You have been very cautious."

"Of course you can be severe, and of course I am bound to bear it. I have been cautious, for your sake!"

"Oh Jack!"

"For your sake. When I first saw how it was going to be—how it might be between you and me—I took care to say outright that I couldn't marry unless a girl had money."

"There will be something, when papa dies."

"The most healthy middle-aged gentleman in London! There might be half-a-dozen cradles, Guss, before that day. If it will do you good, you shall say I'm the greatest rascal walking."

"That will do me no good."

"But I don't know that I can give you any other privilege."

Then there was a long pause during which they were sauntering together under an old oak tree in the park. "Do you love me, Jack?" she then asked, standing close up to him.

"Lord bless my soul! that's going back to the beginning."

"You are heartless, absolutely heartless. It has come to that with you, that any real idea of love is out of the question."

"I can't afford it, my dear."

"But is there no such thing as love that you can't help? Can you drop a girl out of your heart altogether, simply because she has got no money? I suppose you did love me once?" Here Jack scratched his head. "You did love me once?" she said, persevering with her question.

"Of course I did," said Jack, who had no objection to making assurances of the past.

"And you don't now?"

"Whoever said so? What's the good of talking about it?"

"Do you think you owe me nothing?"

"What's the good of owing, if a man can't pay his debts?"

"You will own nothing then?"

"Yes, I will. If anyone left me twenty thousand pounds to-morrow, then I should owe you something."

"What would you owe me?"

"Half of it."

"And how would you pay me?" He thought awhile before he made his answer. He knew that in that case he would not wish to pay the debt in the only way in which it would be payable.

"You mean then that you would—marry me?"

"I shouldn't be afraid of the hashed mutton and cradles."

"In that case you—would marry me?"

"A man has no right to take so much on himself as to say that."

"Paha!"

"I suppose I should. I should make a devilish bad husband even then."

"Why should you be worse than others?"

"I don't know. Perhaps, I was made worse. I can't fancy myself doing any duty well. If I had a wife of my own I should be sure to fall in love with somebody else's."

"Lady George, for instance."

"No; not Lady George. It would not be with somebody whom I had learned to think the very best woman in all the world. I am very bad, but I'm not just bad enough to make love to her. Or rather I am very foolish, but not just foolish enough to think that I could win her."

"I suppose she's just the same as others, Jack."

"She's not just the same to me. But I'd rather not talk about her, Guss. I'm going to Killancodlem in a day or two, and I shall leave this to-morrow!"

"To-morrow!"

"Well—yes; to-morrow. I must be a day or two in town, and there is not much doing here. I'm tired of the old marquis, who is the most ill-natured brute I ever came across in my life, and there's no more fun to be made of the baroness. I'm not sure but that she has the best of the fun. I didn't think there was an old woman in the world who could get a five-pound note out of me; but she has."

"How could you be so foolish?"

"How indeed! You'll go back to London?"

"I suppose so. Unless I drown myself."

"Don't do that, Guss."

"I often think it will be best. You don't know what my life is—how wretched. And you made it so."

"Is that fair, Guss?"

"Quite fair! Quite true! You have made it miserable. You know you have. Of course you know it."

"Can I help it now?"

"Yes you can. I can be patient if you will say that it shall be some day. I could put up with anything if you would let me hope. When you have got that twenty thousand pounds——?"

"But I shall never have it."

"If you do—will you marry me then? Will you promise me that you will never marry anybody else?"

"I never shall."

"But will you promise me? If you will not say so much as that to me you must be false indeed. When you have the twenty thousand pounds will you marry me?"

"Oh, certainly."

"And you can laugh about such a matter when I am pouring out my very soul to you? You can make a joke of it when it is all my life to me! Jack, if you will say that it shall happen some day—some day—I will be happy. If you won't—I can only die. It may be play to you, but it's death to me." He looked at her, and saw that she was quite in earnest. She was not weeping, but there was a drawn, heavy look about her face which, in truth, touched his heart. Whatever might be his faults, he was not a cruel man. He had defended himself without

any scruples of conscience when she had seemed to attack him, but now he did not know how to refuse her request. It amounted to so little. "I don't suppose it will ever take place, but I think I ought to allow myself to consider myself as engaged to you," she said.

"As it is, you are free to marry anyone else," he replied.

"I don't care for such freedom. I don't want it. I couldn't marry a man whom I didn't love."

"Nobody knows what they can do till they're tried."

"Do you suppose, sir, I've never been tried? But I can't bring myself to laugh now, Jack. Don't joke now. Heaven knows when we may see each other again. You will promise me that, Jack?"

"Yes; if you wish it." And so at last she had got a promise from him. She said nothing more to fix it, fearing that in doing so she might lose it; but she threw herself into his arms, and buried her face upon his bosom.

Afterwards, when she was leaving him, she was very solemn in her manner to him. "I will say good-bye now, Jack, for I shall hardly see you again to speak to. You do love me?"

"You know I do."

"I am so true to you! I have always been true to you. God bless you, Jack! Write me a line sometimes." Then he escaped, having brought her back to the garden among the flowers, and he wandered away by himself across the park. At last he had engaged himself. He knew that it was so, and he knew that she would tell all her friends. Adelaide Houghton would know, and would, of course, congratulate him. There never could be a marriage. That would, of course, be out of the question. But, instead of being the Jack De Baron of old, at any rate free as air, he would be the young man engaged to marry Augusta Mildmay. And then he could hardly now refuse to answer the letters which she would be sure to write to him, at least twice a week. There had been a previous period of letter-writing, but that had died a natural death, through utter neglect on his part. But now—It might be as well that he should take advantage of the new law, and exchange into an Indian regiment.

But, even in his present condition, his mind was not wholly occupied with Augusta Mildmay. The evil words which had been spoken to him of Mary had not been

altogether fruitless. His cousin Adelaide had told him over and over again that Lady George was as other women—by which his cousin had intended to say that Lady George was the same as herself. Augusta Mildmay had spoken of his Phoenix in the same strain. The marquis had declared her to be utterly worthless. It was not that he wished to think of her as they thought, or that he could be brought so to think; but these suggestions, coming as they did from those who knew how much he liked the woman, amounted to ridicule aimed against the purity of his worship. They told him—almost told him—that he was afraid to speak of love to Lady George. Indeed he was afraid, and within his own breast he was in some sort proud of his fear. But nevertheless he was touched by their ridicule. He and Mary had certainly been dear friends. Certainly that friendship had given great umbrage to her husband. Was he bound to keep away from her because of her husband's anger? He knew that they two were not living together. He knew that the dean would at any rate welcome him. And he knew, too, that there was no human being he wished to see again so much as Lady George. He had no purpose as to anything that he would say to her, but he was resolved that he would see her. If, then, some word warmer than any he had yet spoken should fall from him, he would gather from her answer what her feelings were towards him. In going back to London on the morrow he must pass by Brotherton, and he would make his arrangements so as to remain there for an hour or two.

CHAPTER LII. ANOTHER LOVER.

The party at Rudham Park had hardly been a success; nor was it much improved in wit or gaiety when Mrs. Montacute Jones, Lord Giblet, and Jack de Baron had gone away, and Canon Holdenough and his wife, with Mr. Groschut, had come in their places. This black influx, as Lord Brotherton called it, had all been due to consideration for his lordship. Mr. De Baron thought that his guest would like to see, at any rate, one of his own family, and Lady Alice Holdenough was the only one whom he could meet. As to Mr. Groschut, he was the dean's bitterest enemy, and would, therefore, it was thought, be welcome. The bishop had been asked, as Mr. De Baron was one who found it expedient to make sacrifices to respect-

ability; but, as was well known, the bishop never went anywhere except to clerical houses. Mr. Groschut, who was a younger man, knew that it behoved him to be all things to all men, and that he could not be efficacious among sinners unless he would allow himself to be seen in their paths. Care was, of course, taken that Lady Alice should find herself alone with her brother. It was probably expected that the marquis would be regarded as less of an ogre in the country if it were known that he had had communication with one of the family without quarrelling with her. "So you're come here," he said. "I didn't know that people so pious would enter De Baron's doors."

"Mr. De Baron is a very old friend of the canon's. I hope he isn't very wicked, and I'm afraid we are not very pious."

"If you don't object, of course I don't. So they've all gone back to the old house?"

"Mamma is there."

"And George?" he asked in a sharp tone.

"And George—at present."

"George is, I think, the biggest fool I ever came across in my life. He is so cowed by that man whose daughter he has married that he doesn't know how to call his soul his own."

"I don't think that, Brotherton. He never goes to the Deanery to stay there."

"Then what makes him quarrel with me? He ought to know on which side his bread is buttered."

"He had a great deal of money with her, you know."

"If he thinks his bread is buttered on that side, let him stick to that side, and say so. I will regard none of my family as on friendly terms with me, who associate with the Dean of Brotherton or his daughter after what took place up in London." Lady Alice felt this to be a distinct threat to herself, but she allowed it to pass by without notice. She was quite sure that the canon would not quarrel with the dean out of deference to his brother-in-law. "The fact is, they should all have gone away as I told them, and especially when George had married the girl and got her money. It don't make much difference to me, but it will make a deal to him."

"How is Popenjoy, Brotherton?" asked Lady Alice, anxious to change the conversation.

"I don't know anything about him."

"What?"

"He has gone back to Italy with his mother. How can I tell? Ask the dean. I don't doubt that he knows all about him. He has people following them about, and watching every mouthful they eat."

"I think he has given all that up."

"Not he. He'll have to, unless he means to spend more money than I think he has got."

"George is quite satisfied about Popenjoy now," said Lady Alice.

"I fancy George didn't like the expense. But he began it, and I'll never forgive him. I fancy it was he and Sarah between them. They'll find that they will have had the worst of it. The poor little beggar hadn't much life in him. Why couldn't they wait?"

"Is it so bad as that, Brotherton?"

"They tell me he is not a young Hercules. Oh yes—you can give my love to my mother. Tell her that if I don't see her it is all George's fault. I am not going to the house while he's there." To the canon he hardly spoke a word; nor was the canon very anxious to talk to him. But it became known throughout the country that the marquis had met his sister at Rudham Park, and the general effect was supposed to be good.

"I shall go back to-morrow, De Baron," he said to his host that same afternoon. This was the day on which Jack had gone to Brotherton.

"We shall be sorry to lose you. I'm afraid it has been rather dull."

"Not more dull than usual. Everything is dull after a certain time of life, unless a man has made some fixed line for himself. Some men can eat and drink a great deal, but I haven't got stomach for that. Some men play cards, but I didn't begin early enough to win money, and I don't like losing it. The sort of things that a man does care for die away from him, and of course it becomes dull."

"I wonder you don't have a few horses in training."

"I hate horses, and I hate being cheated."

"They don't cheat me," said Mr. De Baron.

"Ah, very likely. They would me. I think I made a mistake, De Baron, in not staying at home and looking after the property."

"It's not too late now."

"Yes, it is. I could not do it. I could not remember the tenants' names, and I

don't care about game. I can't throw myself into a litter of young foxes, or get into a fury of passion about pheasants' eggs. It's all beastly nonsense, but if a fellow could only bring himself to care about it, that wouldn't matter. I don't care about anything."

"You read."

"No, I don't. I pretend to read—a little. If they had left me alone I think I should have had myself bled to death in a warm bath. But I won't now. That man's daughter shan't be Lady Brotherton, if I can help it. I have rather liked being here, on the whole, though, why the deuce you should have a German impostor in your house, and a poor clergyman, I can't make out."

"He's the deputy bishop of the diocese."

"But why have the bishop himself, unless he happen to be a friend? Does your daughter like her marriage?"

"I hope so. She does not complain."

"He's an awful ass—and always was. I remember when you used always to finish up your books by making him bet as you pleased."

"He always won."

"And now you've made him marry your daughter. Perhaps he has won there. I like her. If my wife would die, and he would die, we might get up another match, and cut out Lord George after all." This speculation was too deep even for Mr. De Baron, who laughed and shuffled himself about, and got out of the room.

"Wouldn't you have liked to be a marchioness," he said, some hours afterwards, to Mrs. Houghton. She was in the habit of sitting by him and talking to him late in the evening, while he was sipping his curaçoa and soda-water, and had become accustomed to hear odd things from him. He liked her because he could say what he pleased to her, and she would laugh and listen, and show no offence. But this last question was very odd. Of course she thought that he referred to the old overtures made to her by Lord George; but in that case, had she married Lord George, she could only have been made a marchioness by his own death—by that and by the death of the little Popenjoy of whom she had heard so much.

"If it had come in my way fairly," she said with an arch smile.

"I don't mean that you should have murdered anybody. Suppose you had married me?"

"You never asked me, my lord."

"You were only eight or nine years old when I saw you last."

"Isn't it a pity you didn't get yourself engaged to me then? Such things have been done."

"If the coast were clear I wonder whether you'd take me now."

"The coast isn't clear, Lord Brotherton."

"No, by George. I wish it were; and so do you too, if you'd dare to say so."

"You think I should be sure to take you."

"I think you would. I should ask you, at any rate. I'm not so old by ten years as Houghton."

"Your age would not be the stumbling-block."

"What then?"

"I didn't say there would be any. I don't say that there would not. It's a kind of thing that a woman doesn't think of."

"It's just the kind of thing that women do think of."

"Then they don't talk about it, Lord Brotherton. Your brother, you know, did want me to marry him."

"What, George? Before Houghton?"

"Certainly. Before I had thought of Mr. Houghton."

"Why the deuce did you refuse him? Why did you let him take that little—"

He did not fill up the blank, but Mrs. Houghton quite understood that she was to suppose everything that was bad. "I never heard of this before."

"It wasn't for me to tell you."

"What an ass you were."

"Perhaps so. What should we have lived upon? Papa would not have given us an income."

"I could."

"But you wouldn't. You didn't know me then."

"Perhaps you'd have been just as keen as she is to rob my boy of his name. And so George wanted to marry you! Was he very much in love?"

"I was bound to suppose so, my lord?"

"And you didn't care for him!"

"I didn't say that. But I certainly did not care to set up housekeeping without a house, or without the money to get one. Was I wrong?"

"I suppose a fellow ought to have money when he wants to marry. Well, my dear, there is no knowing what may come yet. Won't it be odd, if, after all, you should be Marchioness of Brotherton

some day? After that, won't you give me a kiss before you say good-night."

"I would have done if you had been my brother-in-law—or, perhaps, if the people were not all moving about in the next room. Good-night, marquis."

"Good-night. Perhaps you'll regret some day that you haven't done what I asked."

"I might regret it more if I did." Then she took herself off, enquiring in her own mind whether it might still be possible that she should ever preside in the drawing-room at Manor Cross. Had he not been very much in love with her, surely he would not have talked to her like that.

"I think I'll say good-bye to you, De Baron," the marquis said to his host that night.

"You won't be going early."

"No; I never do anything early. But I don't like a fuss just as I am going. I'll get down and drive away to catch some train. My man will manage it all."

"You go to London?"

"I shall be in Italy within a week. I hate Italy, but I think I hate England worse. If I believed in heaven, and thought I were going there, what a hurry I should be in to die."

"Let us know how Popenjoy is."

"You'll be sure to know whether he is dead or alive. There's nothing else to tell. I never write letters except to Knox, and very few to him. Good-night."

When the marquis was in his room, his courier, or the man so called, came to undress him. "Have you heard anything to-day?" he asked in Italian. The man said that he had heard. A letter had reached him that afternoon from London. The letter declared that little Popenjoy was sinking. "That will do, Bonni," he said. "I will get into bed by myself." Then he sat down and thought of himself, and his life, and his prospects—and of the prospects of his enemies.

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

ON TRENT.

It is, if not a very new, yet a very true observation, that few natural objects possess more individual character than rivers. Mountains also have character—individuality of a marked kind. The eye must be endowed with but little speculation, which cannot recognise the difference between the friendly mountain, sloping

gently to its attendant valleys, glittering with streamlets hanging like silvery scarves to its richly-wooded sides, and the austere Alpine peak lifting its lonely head above a shroud of eternal snow. It is, in the parlance of the day, a "far cry" from the Righi to the Finsteraarhorn, and farther still, from the purple hills of England to the haughty Cervin. There are mountains hospitable, sheltering cabins and hamlets under their protecting wing; and mountains sternly inhospitable, frowning the wayfarer back, nay, hurling him at times to depths immeasurable. But they labour under one disadvantage. They pay a heavy penalty for the majesty of repose. Mountains, bating volcanoes, exercise their power without movement. They collect clouds, and hurl down torrents, but without any sacrifice of their sublime immobility. Wherefore, to know a mountain, is to know it, despite the assertion of Alpine climbers, that a mountain—that is, with regard to ascents over the changing snow surfaces—is "never the same on two different days." It has its moods, of course, its spring and autumn, its summer and winter aspect. But the outline of a hill remains the same. Its profile cuts the sky with the well-known line, unalterable, at least in any space of time easily realised by ordinary human beings.

With a river it is far otherwise. The same stream may, with advance in life, change its character a score of times. In the ordinary course of things it enjoys a boisterous youth among the moors and fells, dancing merrily along and laughing as it goes. In middle age, it broadens into sober respectability; and as it nears the sea, savours of weak old age, checked by tides, and uncertain of course, carrying with it diseases, such as sand-banks and the like, and blocking up its own mouth with one last effort of blundering, impotent senility. But this routine river-life is by no means led by all. Vast streams, like the Orinoco and the Amazon, hurl into the astonished sea a world of waters, which changes its complexion, and rolls back its feeble tide. Roaring Missouri scoops away its banks, and thick with mud drags the clearer Mississippi to the sea, breaking down levees, flooding the surrounding country, and asserting its own individuality, till spent of fury it slinks into the Gulf by almost unnavigable channels. We have the authority of Goldsmith for the wandering proclivities of the Po, but the Po is a home-keeping river compared with the

Indus. This last mighty stream has a queer habit of striking out, or rather constructing, new paths for itself. Charged with earthy spoils, it speeds southward on a species of causeway, built from the accumulation of silt. Bit by bit, this causeway rises above the level of the surrounding plain, until the fretful stream rends the banks it has made for itself, and takes a new course towards the sea. During historic times, the Indus has shifted its course over and over again, its total variation to the westward having been about three hundred miles. Once fertile regions are now arid for want of the fertilising but fugitive stream, and sandy deserts have bloomed into life at its welcome presence. The Hoangho is another river famous for its vagaries, by turns devastating and fertilising a vast area of country, and the freaks of the Nerbudda are too well known to need recapitulation. In this green England of ours, rivers exhibit none of the grand and vastly inconvenient peculiarities of their tropical congeners, but they have their characteristics nevertheless. Not one rivals Thames and Severn in the enjoyment of pastoral, metropolitan, and industrial life, but many have chosen a groove of their own. Mole, Colne, and Derwent are as unlike Dove, Tees, and Ribble as can be imagined. Differing from all of these, Trent has a speciality peculiarly its own. It is, par excellence, an industrial river; not beautiful, perhaps, save here and there by fits and starts, but sternly practical, serious, and useful, now and then losing patience with the frivolity of anglers, and overflowing its banks in sudden rage, but in the main a model stream—a river of facts.

Born in Staffordshire, the Trent is not long before it gets to business. Passing close to Stoke-on-Trent, it "drains," as geographers have it, the so-called "potteries," no very savoury task, and then laboriously hies onward past busy Burton and industrial Nottingham, through historic Newark, Gainsborough, and Crowle, to the Humber; a line of country to which until recently a waterway was of the last importance. To none of these towns was the Trent, for awhile, more helpful than to Burton—a spot which, for a hard work-a-day look, has no match in the three kingdoms. There is no temptation at Burton to linger by the way. The very houses wear a repellent air, and almost say to the visitor: "No loitering allowed. Transact your business, and go about

your business. Everything here must be barrelled up and headed down, and forwarded forthwith. It is of no use to think you can sit down or hang about. There is no place to sit down, and there is the railway ready to take you somewhere else."

This is the bleak kind of welcome conveyed by the aspect of Burton-on-Trent; which, although joyless in itself, contributes in no small degree to the happiness of the world at large. It is a town of railway tracks and sidings, of vats and of barrels. I do not know whether they make anything but beer there. I tried one morning to find out, and addressed myself to the work with all seriousness and earnestness of purpose; but all the information I elicited was that Mr. Gretton's horses would surely run at Shrewsbury, that it was "good business" to back them, and that, if I made haste I might get to the racecourse in time to speculate on the hope of Burton-on-Trent. This was the only indication of a tendency towards dissipation that I observed during a short residence at Burton. To a person who has passed the town portion of his existence in capital cities, it is a matter of wonder how people pass their evenings in country towns of the size of Burton—in towns, that is to say, containing some twenty or thirty thousand inhabitants. Even when another hundred thousand is added to their number the question is no nearer solution. It once happened to me to pass a few days in a great city in Canada. It was early spring. The rink and the theatre, which enjoy but a spasmodic life, were closed, and there was absolutely not a nigger minstrel or a learned pig in the place. I asked a resident, a Scot, what on earth people did of an evening. "Eh!" replied my friend, "what should they do? They drink whisky-toddy, man." What could they do at Burton, I wondered. They could not drink beer, that was quite certain. It was ridiculous to suppose that people who during working hours never escaped the idea of beer for an instant; who looked on beer, smelt beer, thought of beer, and wrote about beer; who either made barrels, or filled them, or branded them, or totted them up and charged for them; who dwelt in an atmosphere of malt and hops from morning till night, could experience that physical and intellectual refreshment enjoyed by Prince Bismarck and some other celebrated personages in the consumption of beer. And where were they to drink it? It strikes me that if any strange person were to establish a

beer-garden at Burton, the place would forthwith be dubbed "Green's Folly"—after the amiable and appreciative method of country folk in naming what they do not understand. Nobody would, I should think, go near it, except on the dreadful occasion of one of those brass band competitions, which make northern country towns additionally hideous for two or three days in the year. It was once my fate to pass a day in Chesterfield, famous for its twisted church steeple, on the occasion of a brass band competition. From Sheffield and other Yorkshire towns came crowds of esger hornblowers, waking the echoes of the market-place as they strutted along. Chesterfield itself being either sympathetic or timorous, I am not certain which, had closed its shutters and given up business for the day. It became a species of Sunday, made noisy by the blare of trumpet and cornet, bugle and French horn. On an occasion like that even Burton might be made lively in a ghastly kind of way, and a beer-garden might flourish for an instant; but at other times it would be a dreary waste.

There is, then, no amusement of any kind at Burton-on-Trent—that is to say, of a public character. As I sought farther, I found that Mr. Bass has established a club for his clerks. I paid a visit to that institution, and found it well supplied with books and newspapers, billiards, chess, and other engines of innocent dissipation. This is a great advantage for Mr. Bass's clerks, and, as the firm good-naturedly think, for them also. In the club, a youngster, given to the colouring of meerschaum pipes, and the steady practice of his "middle-pockets," lives in the fierce light of public opinion. He moves under the eyes of his fellows, be they seniors or juniors. He may not bet, to drink he is ashamed. Far better is this for young Burton than glass after glass of bad whisky at the bar of a public-house, where the only attraction is a barmaid, equally remarkable for the pertness of her manners, and the splendour of her ribands.

As Burton signifies then, not mainly, but wholly beer, let us look at Burton and its beery origin. It was not much of a place before hops came into England. Whether an Irish lady, Modwen by name, did or did not found the abbey of Burton, on the island of Andressey, and live to the age of one hundred and thirty years, and whether the soundness of the liquor brewed in the neighbourhood conduced to the lon-

gevity of that pious foundress, is, to us who live a thousand years after her, but a small matter. It imports far more that Burton, either from the water drawn from its wells—for it is needless to say that Trent does not provide the liquid constituents of bitter beer—or from other causes, has long been a centre of the brewing interest. Tutbury Castle, during the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots, was supplied with beer from Burton, and Burton ale was well known in London as early as 1680, when it was sold at the sign of The Peacock in Gray's Inn Lane. Strong Burton ale long continued a popular drink, even among persons of quality, for The Spectator mentions it as being in great demand among the visitors to Vauxhall Gardens. The trade of Burton was much helped by the opening up of the Trent navigation by the Act of 1698. Brought into water communication with Gainsborough, Hull, and the Baltic Ports, the little Staffordshire town sent forth its beer to Northern Europe, where it obtained a ready sale at high prices. Both the Czar Peter and the Empress Catherine were much addicted to Burton ale, which being strong, sweet, and plentiful, was admirably adapted to the Russian palate. All through the last century, Burton increased in wealth. Its breweries grew in number and size; but it was not till after the invention of "India Pale Ale" that it rose to its present importance. This famous beer was neither invented at Burton, nor by Bass or Allsopp. It was the happy thought of a London brewer, named Hodgson, who first brewed ale specially for India at the Old Bow Brewery, then carried on by the firm of Abbott and Hodgson. For several years "Hodgson's best" was a household word in India, and wonderful stories were told of the quantity of this choice ale consumed under the shade of the "pagoda tree," by that time pretty well denuded of its fruit. The great demand for ale in India caused a captain in the service of John Company, named Chapman, to suggest the brewing of a special brand at Burton-on-Trent. This was in 1823, and during the past half century the names of Bass and Allsopp have become known wherever the human throat experiences the pangs of thirst. These two firms have by no means a monopoly of the Burton trade in ale, strong, bitter, or mild, which is shared by a couple of dozen of great brewers. Messrs: Bass, Ratcliff, and Gretton may,

however, be accepted as the typical house. The founder was a Mr. William Bass, who must have been a man of considerable business talent, inasmuch as, besides brewing ale, he was just a century and a year ago the proprietor of a large carrying business, which he transferred to the celebrated house of Pickford and Co., when he found that the brewery required his undivided attention.

A great change has come over Bass's brewery since the time of this clever and energetic gentleman. The works, which now cover nearly two hundred acres, are one vast network of railway tracks, along which speed numerous locomotives. Jumping on one of these at the bidding of my courteous guide, I am whisked past huge ranges of buildings devoted to the brewing of beer, and to the numerous handicrafts involved in barrelling and storing. Arrived at our journey's end, I notice an array of barrels, the like whereof has never gladdened my eyes. As round shot was in the old time piled at the royal arsenals, so now are legions of barrels piled on the "ale bank," as it is called, waiting for transport to the ends of the earth. Beyond these pyramids of casks lie the new malt-houses—the last expression of skill in this particular vein of construction. The barley for malting is carefully selected, and—as I am informed by a young gentleman dressed in a light suit of fashionable build, who, I am told, is the maltster—is drawn from many sources, English and foreign. As I walk through the enormous range of buildings dedicated to barley and malt, I pass mountains of grain, bought by local agents, forwarded to Burton, and there screened, in order to remove all extraneous fragments and broken grain. The operation takes place on the top floor of the malt-houses, which communicate with one another by means of iron bridges and galleries, from which I look down on the wilderness of cask-mountains beyond. Below are the steeping-cisterns, in which the barley remains for forty-eight hours or more, according to the character of the grain, and various other conditions of temperature and so forth, carefully scanned by the fashionable young gentleman aforementioned, whom, from his conversation, I find to be not only courteous and elegant in manner, but thoroughly conversant with every branch of science bearing upon malt and brewing. In the cisterns—about the size of swimming-baths—the barley loses the few impurities,

such as dust and broken husk, which have escaped the screen; and after its bath in water of crystal clearness is transferred to the couching-frames, when Britannia sends the proper officer to gauge their contents and calculate her dues. Once more I trudge up endless stairs, and note great seas of barley undergoing the process of "flooring," during which germination takes place. Another walk upstairs, and donning a pair of maltman's shoes, I find myself in the kiln. Beneath are vast furnaces, but the heat from them is nicely graduated, commencing from ninety degrees of Fahrenheit and increasing to one hundred and sixty-five degrees, and diminishing again gradually. All these floors of the malting-houses are ventilated with the greatest care. It would be thought that the great doors and windows opening out on every side would supply ample ventilation, but it is explained to me that draughts from the sides would not ventilate the middle of the floor, which, therefore, must be provided for by special arrangement. When the malt is finished in the kiln it is again screened, to remove the rootlets or "comb," and is then ready for the brewer. This malt-comb is by no means considered as waste; it is much coveted for feeding stock, and finds a ready market. Even the dust which falls through the perforations in the kiln-tiles is sold for money as manure for pasture land. It has already been told in ALL THE YEAR ROUND* how beer is made, and I therefore merely stroll through the great brewing-houses, marking by the way the exquisite new machinery of every kind, and chatting with my guide as to the disposition of the enormous quantity of "grains" resulting from the great brewing operations. These grains are a regular article of commerce, are "sold forward" to customers, and are distributed as secondary food for stock over a large area of country by the North Staffordshire and the Midland Railways. In like manner the hops, after being boiled with the sweet wort, are subjected to hydraulic pressure, which extracts the whole of the wort, and leaves them in a dry compressed mass, worth some few shillings per ton for manure and as bedding for stock.

Turning out in a brewing season some eight hundred thousand barrels of ale of various kinds, consuming a quarter of a

million quarters of malt, between thirty and forty thousand hundredweight of hops, and doing an annual business of about two-and-a-half millions sterling, Messrs. Bass employ few short of two thousand hands in their vast establishment. Providing a club for their clerks, and taking care of their workpeople to an extent which has earned them well-deserved popularity, they are yet thorough men of business, and know how to protect themselves against combinations of skilled workmen.

To those interested in the relations between capital and labour, it is most curious to note that this house of Bass and Co.—perhaps the most popular in England among its workpeople—is yet remarkable for the regular and systematic introduction of machine work, and the reduction of skilled labour to its lowest terms. The great brewers have by degrees so organised every department of their works that they stand in no fear of a strike. In the present condition of the labour market their position is almost unique. It has not been secured without much thought, and large outlay in labour-saving machinery of all kinds. Persistent efforts in this direction have produced an establishment working like one vast machine, and in no wise dependent on the freaks and schemes of the leaders and advisers of the working-man. Saving the chemist-in-chief, his assistant, the three chief brewers and their staff of eighteen assistants, and the chief maltster and his staff, all of whom are gentlemen of considerable scientific attainments, there is very little of skilled labour among the two thousand persons employed by Messrs. Bass. So admirably has the almost automatic system of working been organised, that men can be taken from the plough and set to work in almost any—save the chemical—department of this vast brewing and malting machine. The steam cooerage is in itself a marvel, and is regarded with permissible pride by its organisers.

Now a barrel is not, at first sight, a thing likely to be made well by machinery, but I soon see that it can be done, if capital for the purchase of sufficient skilfully-made "plant" be forthcoming. The material, Baltic oak, arrives in the form of staves, and the hoops come mainly from South Staffordshire. The staves, when properly seasoned, are sorted, cut to the proper length, and arranged in quantities sufficient to make a cask—be it hogshead, barrel, or kilderkin. Passing

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 16, p. 180, May 6, 1876, "Hops and Beer."

rapidly from hand to hand, these staves are put into machines which cut them to the required shape, shave them to the proper thickness, and smooth their edges, so that they may fit perfectly. Under my very eyes the rough bundle of staves grows into a possible barrel, while other hands feed the successive machines which form the head—cut, smoothed, shaved down, and polished up, all by machinery. Right and left fly the chips, and the shavings cumber the floor. Not, however, for long. Swept—this is done by hand—towards an opening in the great steam cooperage, chips and shavings vanish into a pneumatic tube, which sucks them in and delivers them into sacks arranged in a waggon waiting to carry them away. Licked into shape, the staves are next placed in a kind of cage, steamed into the proper curve, and are then ready to be hooped into a cask. As each stave is numbered, the workman has no difficulty in arranging them in proper order, and the cask is hooped and headed in an incredibly short space of time. It has now to be tested as to its capacity; and if any slight inaccuracy has crept in it is remedied, and the cask, approved perfect, is transferred to the great branding-house to receive the well-known trade-mark.

As I walk through a wilderness of barrels, I hear that those made by steam are, on the average, to be preferred to those made by hand. "You see," remarks my informant, "that a first-class skilled workman—a complete cooper—is apt to make one very good, almost perfect cask, another not quite so good, and a third wrong in capacity, or defective in some point or other. Say what you will, there is an uncertainty about hand-work and rule of thumb. What we want is certainty; and we get it by the means you see; by using machinery for everything but hooping and heading the barrels. As we turn out an average of a thousand barrels a week, accuracy is of considerable importance. Everything is gauged and cut by machinery, even to the heads and the bungs, and as you can see for yourself, the work is as near perfect as possible. Yet the work is so subdivided, that we have not the slightest fear of a strike. If our men were foolish enough not to know when they are well off and well cared for, we could replace them with others, who in a week or two could do their work, that is, mind a machine, as well as they can."

Every barrel made by Messrs. Bass

resembles in one respect a bank-note. When finished, it is duly numbered and entered in a cask-book, with its date of production. This volume is a record of the lives and vicissitudes of casks. When a cask returns from its first journey, it must go through a regular process before being sent into the world again. Its head is knocked out, it is thoroughly cleansed, and if quite sound and free from mustiness, is refilled, or stowed away till required in one of those vast stacks. Before, however, it is again entrusted with its measure of ale, it is rinsed and carefully "smelt" by two important officers called "smellers," who are responsible for its sweetness. Should they find it acid, it is subjected to a rigorous washing, steaming, and subsequent lime-washing, and if, as is sometimes the case, it resists these vigorous measures, it is condemned as incurable and sold out of stock. Some casks, like some ships, live to a good old age, retaining their sweetness and soundness, only requiring that their joints should once in a few years be tightened with rushes.

Before quitting Messrs. Bass's works there is a ceremony to be performed, to omit which would be to cast an undeserved slur upon them. In a cool and airy store-house, I am proffered samples of beer, not only of the most perfect manufacture, but in the most superb condition. Just one sip of the nut-brown, rich in malt extract, and fragrant with hop; then a long, strong pull at the "bitter" specially brewed for India, bright, sparkling, and of that delicious natural coolness which no artificial icing can produce, and I step out into that dreary labyrinth of railways known as Burton-on-Trent, speculating on the sport enjoyed by Nottingham anglers wielding their delicate tackle farther down stream.

THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

It was early spring. There was a soft balmy feeling in the air. The bare branches of the almond-trees were dotted over with tiny rose-coloured buds, a few brave primroses were thrusting up their pale yellow blossoms out of the dark brown mould. Women were crying "Hyacinths!" in the street, and tempting passers-by with baskets heaped with their tall odorous clumps of white and pink and creamy bells. There were birds twittering in the square, and a stir of new life and freshness all through the world; but Mr. Robarts was not so well.

He had been confined to the house for several days; and I went over to sit with him one afternoon, so that Magdalen might get out for a little fresh air.

"You won't leave him till I do come back," she said, lingering even after her bonnet was on. "Promise me, doctor. He is so disobedient to orders that he is not to be trusted by himself; but if you——"

"Yes," I said, "I will stay, don't be afraid. I can promise you that or—anything else that you ask." The exceeding loveliness of her face had struck me even more that day than usual. I could not take my eyes off it till she was gone; and then, as I turned back to her father, I met his fixed on me. They were keen grey eyes; and in their hard scrutiny I read that which told me without any words that something in my face or tone had betrayed me, and that my secret was no longer my own. Well, I had naught to be ashamed of, and after the moment's shock I was man enough to meet his gaze fully and calmly. He was silent for a little; and then said:

"I have just found out something. Do you know what it is, Dr. Elliot?"

"I think so. Isn't it that there are more fools in the world than you were aware of a few moments back? You have discovered that I care for your daughter. I have known it myself for some time back; but what does it matter? I hoped no one would ever guess it; and, after all, it is not my fault."

To my unutterable surprise he put out his hand to me, smiling.

"What is not your fault? To tell you the truth, I have once or twice before suspected your feelings for Magdalen; and I am glad you have owned it. You call it a folly, though. In what way?"

"Only that it is a folly for any man to stake his whole heart on something he has no hopes of winning."

"Hem! You are modest; or—may I ask if Magdalen has already convinced you of the hopelessness of your affection?"

"I have never so much as hinted at its existence to her. I should have thought you knew me well enough for that, Mr. Roberts. Indeed, I fancied that you——"

"Wouldn't have heard of it? Well, to be frank with you, when the idea first flashed across my mind, it did startle me; but I have thought over it since then; and I don't mind telling you that, if I were to give my child to any man, I would rather it were you than another."

I was struck dumb with astonishment. He smiled again and went on:

"It is simply this—I know you. You are an honourable and kind-hearted man. I believe you are in a position to keep her in the style she has been accustomed to; and also that, if she were your wife, you would be good and faithful to her. Am I right, or not?"

I rose and answered—— Well, well, what do the words matter now? But I must have made my meaning plain at any rate; for he pressed my hand kindly.

"There! you are a good fellow, doctor, and I believe you. There is one stipulation, however, which I must make. Will you agree to it?"

"You have been so wonderfully generous to me, Mr. Roberts, it would be hard if I did not agree to anything you asked."

"Don't take my child from me then. I have a fancy I am not here for very long; but I could not live without her. You will promise me."

I knew she would not have left him; but I promised notwithstanding.

"Thank you; and—don't say anything to her yet awhile. I do not believe that she cares for you at present, or guesses at your caring for her, or I would not ask it; but overhastiness might only upset her peace and damage your own cause. Leave her alone for awhile."

I assented; and meanwhile I will tell you what I did: I set to work to beautify and refurnish my ugly old house from garret to cellar; and I got together pictures, and old china, and quaint brasses, and I cunningly persuaded Magdalen—old Roberts laughing in his sleeve at us all the while—that I had little taste and less time of my own for such things; and so won her to lend me hers in the choice of nearly all I purchased; being wishful that they should be all according to her own taste, so that the home, to which one day I hoped to bring my darling, should not repel her by its unlikeness to that she left. I remember her saying to me one day that she should quite look on it as her house when it was finished; and I hardly know whether the words gave me most pain or pleasure. Would she have said it if there had been any feeling in her heart akin to that in mine for her? And yet she took such a frank and eager interest in it all; and was so warmly cordial and trustful with me! I knew at least that she liked me, and how often is not liking only love's prelude?

I had much secret doubt and fear and anxiety about that time; but I look back on it now, and know that I was very happy in it all the same.

The end came sooner than any of us expected. Mr. Robarts was taken suddenly worse one evening in early May. A succession of fainting fits followed; and though he rallied from them, it was only to pain too keen for his exhausted frame to bear. Before midday on the morrow he was dead; and Magdalen knelt weeping by the bed where a few moments back he had tried to clasp our two hands in his dying fingers, and had whispered in hoarse, gasping tones:

"Take care of her, Elliot. I trust her to you. Magdalen, remember, I—leave—
you—to his care."

Ah me! it was more than "care" that I longed to give her then, my poor darling, in the first hour of her desolation; but no one save an utterly self-engrossed coward would have spoken to her of love and marriage at such a time; and it was enough that she did not repel the affectionate authority which, for her own good, I felt bound to use to her; and submitted to be ruled and tended by me with a meek, childlike passivity which made her more than ever dear and precious to me.

"I will wait a week," I said to myself. "One week more, and then, after the funeral, I will speak to her. I do not think she will send me away," and I did not. There was something in the look of her eyes when she thanked me, in the clinging touch of her fingers when they rested in mine, which, through all sense of my unworthiness, made me hope at last.

Mr. Robarts had few relations, and no near or trusted ones. He had left a written request that I would take charge of his papers, burn all that were not of importance, and arrange the funeral and legal matters. It would spare Magdalen somewhat; and she was to write to an elderly cousin in Scotland, who had long ago agreed to come to her in the event of such a contingency; but her letter found the elderly cousin ill and unfit to travel for several days, and Magdalen would not go to her or leave the house till after the funeral; neither had I the heart to urge it.

"You are here, and you do all that I want, or that anyone could do for me. I am much happier alone," she had said with a pitiful quiver about her beautiful

mouth; and I took her hands in mine and answered:

"My dear, you shall do just as you like. If being alone is a comfort to you, no one shall disturb you," and certainly I did not. I had to be there every day on business; but very often I did not see her at all. I was busy with the papers I have mentioned; and she rarely left her own room. The little garden on the leads was gay with spring flowers, and the ivy was putting forth all its fresh green shoots; but she never went into it now, and it had lost all its beauty for me.

I was over at the house one evening turning out the old oak cabinet, where her father had once told me he kept most of his private letters. It was a wearisome task enough, for they had all to be looked through before being destroyed; but I was glad to do it, for I knew that many would have pained Magdalen sadly; and in course of time came to one, set aside in an old pocket-book by itself, and without an envelope. I had glanced through it and had seen the signature before I realised that it was not written to Mr. Robarts at all, but to his daughter, from one Guy Latham—the letter written by Magdalen's lover, which had never been suffered to reach her. I don't know much about love-letters, and I suppose this was not different to the generality; yet I felt that I would rather die than that she should see this, the passionate appeal of a young man desperately in love, and furious at the ornelty which had separated him from its object. "I know you love me," he wrote. "Be true to me; and neither time nor absence shall shake my fidelity. Your father has behaved like a brute and a tyrant to us; but only wait for me, my angel, till I can make a home for you, and we shall be happy in spite of him," and I, reading it, wondered whether, if she had seen it, she would have granted the prayer, and gone on waiting for him till then. It was a question which was very terrible to me, and I shut the cabinet, and sat down to ponder over the letter. The doubt was what I should do about it even now.

Her father had kept it from her, and had never intended it to reach her eyes. It had been written six years ago, when she was only a young girl. The young man had never been seen or heard of since. The probability was that he had long since forgotten her, and she—well, she had wept for him, and had dried her tears and grown happy again as she had been before he

crossed her path. What earthly end could showing her this letter serve now, save to upset her peace of mind, add a cruel tinge of bitterness to her grief for her father, and perhaps stir up some morbid scruple as to her right to accept the new love which was waiting to be offered to her? I thought of it all night and all the next day, and in all ways and lights, but this was the result to which I invariably came; and in the end I resolved to abide by it. I did not destroy the letter, however; something within me made me averse to doing so; and I locked it up again with other papers which were to remain in my keeping.

The funeral was on the following day. Magdalen would go, though I tried to persuade her to the contrary, for it was a cold, raw day, and I was afraid for her health; but, though pale as death, she was very calm, and even at the graveside made no moan or crying; but stood there with locked hands and head a little bent, a tall, slender figure, all black from head to foot, cut out against the faint red colour of an afternoon sky—a figure so solitary and pathetic in its voiceless bereavement, that it comes back to me even now with the longing I had then to take her in my arms, and so show her that love had not left her alone in the world after all.

"But to-morrow," I said to myself, as I put her and cousin Jane, who had arrived in time for the ceremony, into the carriage. "Only till to-morrow! We shall both know then." Was it some mocking fiend which whispered to me that if she cared for me she would never have kept her face so steadily averted from mine, and answered me as briefly and coldly as I fancied she had done all that day—the day which saw the completion of the last services I could do for her? But what did it matter? I would have served her all my life long, even if I had known I could never have so much reward as a smile from her. Young men, when they make love, do it as they run and leap, for the prize they hope to win. With men of my age it is different. When we love a woman, it is not what we can get from her, but what we can do for her, that we think about.

I went to see her on the following day. She was in the dining-room, the servant said, and alone; and there I found her. I had gone in unannounced, and I must have startled her, for a deep crimson spot came into her cheek as she rose to greet

me, and I felt her hand tremble in mine. It had never done so before.

"I did not expect you," she said, a little formally. "It is kind of you to come, when I have been taking up so much of your time of late. Cousin Jane has only just gone upstairs. I will ring for her," and she was reaching out her hand to the bell when I stopped her.

"Do not ring just yet," I said. "I have something I want to say to you first. Do you mind? It is not a good time, perhaps, but I will not keep you long, and I have waited——" My voice was husky, and I broke off. I did not tell her how long I had waited. Her sweet, soft eyes met mine with a questioning glance. Somehow she must have guessed that it was no trifle I had come about, for her face had grown very white again; yet even then the trouble and yearning which I could not keep out of mine touched her. She answered very gently:

"You may keep me as long as you like. Do you think I have forgotten what you were to papa, and that he left me to your care? What is it you want to say to me?"

She was still looking up at me. The late coldness which had so distressed me had quite gone from her manner. It was grave and full of trust. I had got my opportunity at last, and how did I use it? Why, I let go her hand, turned away from her sweet eyes, and, crossing the room, unlocked the oak cabinet in the corner, and took out Guy Latham's letter. I had decided that it ought never to be shown her. My mind was quite clear on the subject. My reason and my conscience were alike convinced, and—— Well, well, I daresay I am a blundering, inconsistent fellow; but I couldn't help it. I could not take advantage of an absent man when it came to the point, no, not even if I were to win Magdalen by so doing; and so I just put the letter in her hand and said:

"I have something to show you first. I found this among your father's papers. It was written over six years ago; but he thought it better not to give it you then. You will not blame him even if he was wrong; for he meant it for your good. Do you know the handwriting?"

For the moment—one glad moment—I hardly thought she did; for she looked up at me, and then at the paper with a puzzled, wondering glance. Then I, looking on with what a sore-wrung heart no

man can know, saw the blood suddenly rush up into her face, dyeing throat and cheeks and brow with one vivid crimson glow. Her lips parted with a quick shivering gasp, her great eyes dilated with a look half fierce, half tender and yearning; and then a cloud came over them, "there came a mist and a driving rain," and down came the tears in a blinding torrent, bowing the fair head, and shaking the slender figure, and blotting all the faded words with their passionate drops, as she hid her face above them, murmuring the name which I had read at the bottom of the letter; but which none had heard cross her lips for many a weary year.

"Guy! My Guy! Oh! why did I never see it!"

I said nothing. What could I say—aye, or do either, in such a case? When wife and home, and all that this world holds for a man has just been swept away by a mountain avalanche, it is not words that you expect from him. He may know that in that one moment his heart has broken; but what of that? Hearts break every day; and mine—even then the worst ache in it was to see her grief and be so impotent to heal it. Yes, that was the worst of it; that passion of sorrow told me that my hope was vain; I should never now have the right to comfort and protect her as I had prayed I might; and I turned my face away, and crushed my hands together with a stifled groan for the vanishing of my foolish dream.

It was she who recalled me. Far more quickly than I had thought for she checked her grief, brushing the tears from her eyes with the air of one long used to repression, and touched me half timidly on the arm, as though she feared I was displeased with her.

"I am so sorry," she said gently. "Dr. Elliot, I do not know what you are thinking of me; but it was the sudden shock; and it is so long since—" Her voice broke, and her eyes wandered to the letter which her other hand held pressed gently against her bosom. "I loved him," she said, looking up at me again with a sweet simplicity that was above all disguise, "and we were parted. I do not blame my dear father; and it is all over now. I ought not to have given way so, and before you. What was it that you wanted to say to me?"

Wanted! Ah, but the want was past now. I too could have said: "It is all over," but looking at the gentle courage

in her fair pale face, I could not but be brave myself.

"Nothing of any importance," I answered, taking her hands in mine. It was to be for the last time; though she did not know it. "I had meant to ask you something; but it does not matter, and you have answered it, not knowing, already. Let me speak of this letter instead. You will know I did not mean to grieve you when I showed it you. What I want is to see you happy, my child. Only be frank with me; and do not forget that you are in my care. I will not fail you. You love this—this young man. Do you know if he is true to you; or where we can find him?"

The red fire-light was on her face, but I saw it whiten through all the ruddy glow; and felt her hands tremble. Yet her pathetic eyes never wavered in their straightforward glance.

"Do you not know?" she said. "Dr. Elliott, you are very good. I never knew how good till to-day; but you cannot help me in the way you think. There is nothing now of Guy to find but his grave. He died five years ago, just before we came to this house."

"Died!" I must have said it; but it did not sound like my voice, and the room seemed reeling with me. "Yes," she said softly, the tears brimming up into her eyes again, "it was barely twelve months after—after papa sent him away. He went to Australia. The friends where we first met gave me news of him two or three times; but it was not good news—there was no good news to hear." Her lip quivered even now at the remembrance; but she went on. "I suppose papa was right; he was not steady, my poor Guy, and he grew less so after we parted. At first I hoped that my love might help him; for he knew I would be true and wait until he had got on, and won papa's consent. And papa was not unjust, doctor; he would have given it if— Please do not mind my crying; but I can't talk about that time. I don't think my poor Guy could work or keep to anything for long, and I daresay he had many temptations; but oh! even when I heard it, I knew God had never been so merciful as when He took him away. Poor Guy is safe now. It is better so, far."

There was a dead silence in the room. Only the ashes fell with a soft rustling sound into the hearth, and the flames leaped up and threw a warm glare over the dim green walls, the slender figure in its

black robes, and tender, wistful face. A little small rain was pattering against the window-pane; and in the corner of the room a great basket of hyacinths gave out a sweet, faint fragrance. Magdalen remembered herself with a start, and our eyes met.

"I have pained you," she said sorrowfully. "Dr. Elliot, I am so sorry. Forgive me. Indeed, I never meant to do so. I who owe you so much, and would give so much to be able to repay you, even in the least, for all you have done for me."

"My dear," I answered, lifting her pretty, clinging fingers to my lips, "love does not want repaying. I love you, Magdalen. Did not your father tell you? There is only one thing you can do for me; but I would not have it, though it has been the one hope of my life all these years I have known you, except you can give it me freely—of your own will—my love."

And then I stopped for an answer. What it was I will not tell you. Only, if you think it wrong that she, so fair and beautiful, should have given herself to a dull, middle-aged man like me, I cannot say anything. She will tell you if she has ever repented it—she, my wife, and the mother of my children, sitting with her hand in mine while I say this.

And the house across the street has had other tenants for more than ten years now.

WAR PRICES.

THAT war is a wasteful, as well as a bloody business, is beyond dispute. Bellona Victrix, or Victa, for that matter, runs up terrible bills. But something more than this homely truism is needed to account for the aureole of extravagance, loose-fingered expenditure, and subsequent self-denial, which encircles the rugged brow of war. Why should so many of our middle-class householders glance up so apprehensively at the storm-cloud darkling on the political horizon, when no immediate danger can be feared for kith and kin, for goods and gear? Of old time, as we know, a rat in a besieged town sold for its weight in silver, and a pigeon, or a scrap of mutton, for its equipoise in sterling gold, but the Channel protects us from mishaps like these.

When Europe's master, Napoleon Emperor, fulminated his Berlin decrees against us, shut out our commerce, robbed our

factories, and leagued in hostility to Britain more than half the Continent, English prices were fabulously high. A shilling a quart for ale, a shilling a loaf for bread, heavy custom-house dues, a crushing excise, weighed upon the country. In person, or in purse, all the world was taxed. There was a real ballot for the militia. A very genuine press-gang went about by night kidnapping unwary Britons to serve their country at sea. Champagne was a guinea a bottle; claret fifteen shillings; tea was a close monopoly; and sugar came in under convoy at eighteenpence a pound. Yet England bore all this gaily. Never were there so many carriages and livery servants, country theatres so crammed, or country ball-rooms so crowded, as during the old war.

That the mere rumour of a coming war sends up the quicksilver in the sensitive price-barometer, is a phenomenon that has been known and studied for the last half century. When the Crimean storm was brewing vaguely in the far-off east, a sudden tide-wave, which began in Central Europe, carried up the prices of most perishable commodities; and they have never since, with the exception of bread, sunk to their former level. Horses, forage, corn, and cattle, provisions, wheeled carriages, hides, and eather, all rose abruptly in value.

There is something piteous, at the present time, in the anxiety with which Paterfamilias, in a household of moderate means, scans his telegrams each morning at the breakfast-table, just as at haytime an amateur farmer eyes the heavens in fearful quest of the coming storm-cloud. Still more tremulous is the alarmed curiosity with which some spinsters and widows rustle over the leaves of the newspaper, eager at once to know the worst that can be known, and to cast a mental plumb-line, as it were, to the very depths of misfortune. Yet the three Misses Mimikin, of Laurel Villas, Camberwell, and Mrs. Major Green, H.E.I.C.S., once of Dustypore, and now of Upper Norwood, S.E., scarcely seem as though Mars, that truculent deity, could effect much to spoil the modest comfort in which they live. Camberwell is, at any rate, beyond the reach of the marauding Cossack, and Penge Hill impregnable to the most dashing commander that ever led a Russian raid.

In sober truth, the enemies, whom people of limited means chiefly dread, are domestic, not foreign foes. The invasion they appreh-

hend is a foray upon their slender balance at the bankers. The "butcher's bill," that grim adjunct of victory or defeat, which they fear the most, is one delivered by a mottle-faced, blue-vested lad in the employ of Messrs. Chopper and Block. They have no ripening corn for hostile horse to trample down, but Slack the baker is equal to the occasion, and can send up "cottages" and "households" to ascend, as deftly as any military blower-up of hamlets.

Were it not for war prices, perhaps, the position of the fundholder would be one of too serene security. Safe in his snug dealings with the auriferous Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, the possessor of a fixed income might survey the straggles of others with the lazy satisfaction of the Horatian landsman looking on at the storm-tossed mariners striving with wave and wind. Factories might close, and the whirr of spindles, and the clang of the steam-hammer give place to a dull silence, broken only by the wail of hungry children, but still the dividends would be as punctual as the setting and rising of the sun. Even the prospect of a heightened income-tax can be borne with philosophy, when every added penny is known to add some seventeen hundred thousand sterling pounds to the paying, and, therefore, fighting force of the nation. But inflammation of the weekly bills is a disorder not to be endured without grumbling.

No doubt, in war-time, some legitimate increase in the cost of living may fairly be looked for. Freights, to begin with, are higher, and maritime insurance raised, even when privateering is a defunct institution. Then, the labour market is disarranged, and trade is jostled out of some of its old grooves, and some of its principal channels are stopped. So much may be admitted; but we must admit, too, that there are always those who seek to earn an unholy profit by the public calamity, and to turn a dishonest penny by the war.

The first fear, the first flush, of one of those mighty wrestling-matches between rival nations which we call war, is held by timid and credulous people to excuse everything. They meekly submit to be mulcted by a tacit confederacy of middlemen, a "ring" of retailers who stand between them and the wholesale dealer. Poor Miss Matilda Minikin would believe nearly any statement by which the glib grocer chooses to account for the fact that tea, and butter, and French eggs, and Lambeth candles,

are all suddenly dearer. Mrs. Major Green will bow her meek neck to the yoke, and allow the butcher to add a penny a pound for the joint, and twopence for the choice tidbits, because Britannia's sword is bare. The very cabmen, but for deficient education, might extort an extra sixpence by the help of the same cuckoo cry.

The fact is, that war—far off, unseen war—is a blustering, blatant bully, and, like other bullies, loses half his terrors when looked fairly in the face. A little consideration would suffice to show us, how few of the commodities which we really need can be much enhanced in price by the effects of such a contest as that with which we are threatened. Mere alarm, blundering, and confusion, all inseparable from a great war, will aid in raising the value of what our French neighbours describe as articles of the first necessity, but self-interest and greed will do much more.

We in England are much better off, so far as supplies are concerned, than were our grandfathers during the long years during which they tried conclusions with the Corsican. There is not even a partial blockade to dread. Breadstuffs, in case of a bad harvest, will come to us as surely as water finds its level. There is corn in Egypt, ay, and in sun-kissed California and Upper India as well—this last an unexpected granary for the feeding of Western Europe. Nobody can meddle with our cargoes of ice-packed American meat, and nothing short of rinderpest and Orders in Council will keep Dutch cattle out of our ports. Sagar, whether from French beetroot or Cuban cane, will still be duly lodged in bonded warehouses, and no cordon will exclude from our harbours and our homes the produce of mine and vineyard, of plantation and prairie, in all quarters of the modern habitable world.

Very unlike our own was the position of our predecessors in the days of Corunna, Walcheren, and Torres Vedras. Corn Laws compelled the Briton of that time to measure his daily bread by the amount of grain grown in these islands, but, had there been no prohibitive duty, there was no one ready to deal with us for foreign wheat. We could not do business with the king's enemies. And even when America was at peace with us, she had not as yet learned to grow for our market. No foreign meat, alive or dead, reached us. The roast beef of Old England—and very dear it was—could not be eked out by alien joints. The six hundred million of Continental eggs,

the turkeys, fowls, and fruit, the Ostend butter, and Ostend rabbits, were then impossible exotics. And farmers rubbed their hands, and chuckled over inflated prices, while riotous mobs poured hungry-eyed into the street, to break windows and sack the shops of unpopular bakers.

A little prudence and firmness, a little sense and spirit, may enable John Bull to withstand what seems like an organised conspiracy against his pocket. But these excellent qualities are not widely enough distributed, for any very sanguine hopes to be entertained on such a subject. A great many of those with whom we rub shoulders every day—worthy folks enough, and endowed with most of the negative virtues—are mere moral molluscs, as destitute of intellectual backbone as if they had been born jellyfish. And such as these are the hereditary prey of any plausible tradesman who can but secure a hearing for his string of fluent common-places.

The very rumour of the coming strife, the ominous shake of the head as the whispered word "war prices" is passed from lip to lip, as though it were a Cabinet secret or the countersign of the Boscruicians, has a disturbing effect upon the nerves of the timid. The extended wings of that Black Eagle, to which the late Dr. Croly used to pen such admiring verses, seem to produce over a certain class of minds something of the effect which is caused among a covey of partridges when the hawk hovers in the blue sky. Nor is it surprising that a good many sharp-sighted persons should look forward to making the best of so inviting an opportunity. When the overcharge is a thing daily and helplessly anticipated, it would hardly be in human nature to refrain from imposing it. And yet, as reaction and resistance must come sooner or later, we might well parody the saying about war, by protesting that extravagance in war prices is a game at which, were customers wise, tradesmen would not play.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY E. E. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER X. "ARIA DIVENGO, E FUOCO."

JOHN MARCH had been absolutely earnest in his resolve not to be present at the first performance of Cleopatra.

It would have been too intensely painful; and, therefore, by a law as certain as that of gravitation, he found himself hidden away in an obscure corner near the ceiling of the theatre when the conductor's bâton fell for the first chord. Nobody was likely to look for him there, nor were the gods likely to recognise the composer in this queer intruder among them. His will not to be present had only proved strong enough to make him skulk in like a criminal, to witness the triumph of art and his own glory.

It was more than pain—it was a hideous sensation when dead silence followed the first fall of the bâton. He could follow with his eyes the blasts of the brass, and the sweep of the bows, and the gestures of the conductor; it was like a nightmare, well known to experienced sleepers, in which one dreams of and strains after inaudible sound. It was all acted before his eyes, it all lived in his brain, but there was no link between the silent action without and the silent music within. The whole air seemed heaving with a Cleopatra that would not come, or rather that died before it had time to be born. And yet the brass was blown and fingered, and the strings were swept as if by an orchestra of madmen, as content as the sane are to waste their energies in doing nothing. Or it may be that even such would be the hidden music, everywhere about us always, but pitched too high or too low for our senses, if our eyes could be opened while our ears remained closed. There, however, sat John March—alone unable to hear one note of the music that he himself had made.

Were it possible to hear with one's eyes, he would have heard, for he listened with them intensely, trying to see the sounds. He knew his own work too well to lose his place or his way one moment among all the complicated bars. Perhaps in truth he did hear better with his dead ears than the house at large; but it was only as a waking ghost may be called more alive than a sleeping man. The overture ended. He saw a faint fluttering of hands; but what did it mean? In his solitary visions that close had been drowned in a thunder of applause, proclaiming sudden victory; he had seen the evil spirits clapped out of the temple windows, never to return. It might be so, for all he knew.

He dared not ask a question of any chance neighbour, for he would have to

demand a written answer; and what should a deaf man be doing at an opera? Suppose, however, anybody should address him? For the gods are as sociable as their inferiors in the stalls are otherwise. He had no need to be afraid, however, for the god must have been sociably disposed indeed who would have tried to get up a conversational entr'acte with such a neighbour. But, for fear of such a chance, he would not let his eyes wander, and kept them, till the curtain rose, consciously upon the chandelier.

Was it triumph? Was it defeat? One or the other, and that supremely, it must be—no moderate success could be the destiny of the Cleopatra. Nothing unheroic could be its destiny. Lost in his corner he watched hungrily through two acts, and watching Celia in a growing agony. He knew, when he came, that he was courting unendurable pain—the concentration of his whole life into three terrible hours. He tried to translate every movement of her lips into sound, that he might compare it with the ideal perfection which the deaf man, among the whole house, was able to hear.

And so he listened with all his eyes till the critical third act was half through. Then, just before the grand crisis itself, he saw the tenor hand Celia her first bouquet. And then!

What happened then? He saw the false orchestral start—he saw Celia standing before the flaring footlights as if petrified into dumbness; he saw the house flutter; what could it all mean? His neighbouring gods were craning over the railing, and many of those below were rising in their stalls. Surely Celia had not broken down now—that would be too tragic a jest even for destiny. He, too, half rose from his seat and leaned forward. No; it was no common fiasco; no ordinary turning of swine to rend a giver of pearls. It was the utter, ignominious failure of the only possible Cleopatra in the old world of song. The great work was strangled while being born.

His whole soul turned faint and sick. His will felt paralysed; and, if it had remained to him, what could he do? He could not swoop down among them all, and by impossible magic call the dead work back to life again. That minute while Celia stood mute felt petrified into a century. He could have cried out in his despair. No mere baffled artist has seen what he saw—the defeat of Art for ever

because a girl had lost her voice or her memory.

How long did it last?

All at once, a woman swept forward across the stage. At least she looked like a woman; unless they wear black velvet and diamonds in the spirit world. Was it Cleopatra herself come straight from dead Egypt to vindicate the glory of her own tragedy? It might have been. For a real moment she stood silent and calm, though even from so far off he could see her bosom heave. Then she made the slightest sign with her arm—half to the house, to command a hush; half to the orchestra. There was no disobeying; the house became hushed, and the orchestra began once more.

He saw that she sang. And then, before the last notes of the great scena had died upon her lips, he saw a storm. We know what no mere instinct could tell the man who had not seen Noëmi Baruc since she was a child—it was she, not Celia, who alone in the whole world could sing Andrew Gordon's Cleopatra; something more was wanted than to sing the notes in tune and time. The grand voice which had hitherto wasted itself in singing for diamonds seemed inspired, and swept away the house in a whirlwind of song. Divine Art was spreading the wings of diviner Nature, and scattering flame as it flew.

Ears need not hear to catch the electric thrill of such a fire; he could see; and as yet he could not wait to question. Perhaps that voice, so used for once, would have turned the veriest trash into glory; perhaps, after all, the Cleopatra, for all its skill, deserved to fail. Or perhaps the great voice required the highest art of its highest flying—who can tell, or need care to tell? After all, Cleopatra was made to sing; not to plod through with poor Celia's tired throat and weary heart, but to soar over, as in free air, and to pelt the hearers in flying with its thorny phrases as lightly as if they were flowers. Even those who knew her best, Lady Quorne, Ilma Krasinski, Prosper, did not at once recognise the waning prima donna in this sudden meteor. Her voice failing—she growing old? If this was sunset, sunrise is but a feeble thing, and noontide nowhere.

Such a storm as followed this unlooked-for and inexplicable intrusion is not known in a century of song. The suddenness, the

contrast, the completeness of triumph truck all alike, until the whole house had but one heart, and that was Clari's. Not only did her voice work like magic, but her presence was a spell as she stood and sang, not acting, hardly stirring indeed, but letting music rush on without guidance to its full tide. Art must have been there, but it was as if she were herself creating the music as it came. Every note was a heart-beat; and every beat was answered in unison. Yes—surely John March had been not Andrew Gordon; he had been Pygmalion, Prometheus. He had made, not a score but a soul.

Portatemi il diadema—col mio sangue
Desij divini sorgono dal cuor;
Aria divengo, e fuoco—

It was Noëmi Baruc whom he heard!

It was for her voice, and no other, that he had given his Cleopatra song; her voice only that had sounded through his ears while he dreamed of all that song might mean; her voice, of which Celia's had been but the echo and the shade. It was even thus he had heard it sung—no, not thus even in his fullest dreams. He had dimly guessed, but never knew, all it would mean to hear this great work of his, his whole mind, turned into life by the voice which had inspired all its best—the voice of the one woman whom in all his days he had ever loved, and that so much as to make him hate her very name. For when love calls itself hate we may be sure that it has never died. And now she, who had betrayed him to the Philistines for gold, was turning the dreams of darkness into daylight truth and more.

It was no dream that he heard. He had felt a bewildering rush, as a torrent of water, through his ears and his brain, and then the voice of Noëmi followed; the same, only fuller and richer than of old, even as this woman who sang was statelier and more queenlike than Noëmi.

But that she, of all humankind, whether in the body or in the spirit, should have come to take the burden of the battle of Art from poor Celia's feeble fingers! Through what roads had they gone to such an end? The years might shrivel away till five-and-twenty years ago became closer than yesterday; but this was a greater miracle. Had she been defying his once more living ears with the melody of some stock opera—but that she should be filling them with Cleopatra, and in this wise! He clung to the rail in front of

him, bewildered with his new-found sense, which could hardly bear the strain. He was in the shadow of the Colosseum once more, only with his vision fulfilled.

Aria divengo, e fuoco—

Yes, it was indeed all flame and air, and he felt his whole soul flying, forgetful of all common life, he knew not where or whither. But this was Noëmi, and this was Cleopatra, both in one.

When he opened his eyes again, he was no longer among the gods in the gallery. But, wherever he had flown, it was not to any heaven yet higher. He was in an inferior refreshment-room, in the upper regions of the theatre, surrounded by strange faces—and by strange tongues too; his ears were still unclosed. He was stretched on a hard bench, with a bearded Frenchman at his head, and a long-haired German at his shoulder—for the musical gods are of many nations—and a British barmaid with a glass of brandy at his side. There were indeed too many Samaritans from a medical point of view, for a man in a fit is sure to draw. Something had happened to him, he knew; something bewildering, strange. But he had neither strength nor courage to seek for any link wherewith to bind his vision to reality. Had it ever been? He closed his eyes, and turned his face from them all. If it were false, let him at least hold to it one minute more. But—yes, that was true, if all the rest of the universe were a dream and a lie.

"Stand back there, if ye please," said a harsh voice, roughly. "Where is the man?" The man, still clinging to his wonderful dream, neither looked nor moved, though he felt his wrist held firmly but gently. He could not know the voice; but the touch did not feel quite strange. All his senses were coming back, quivering like over-strained strings. Then another hand paused for a moment over his heart, and he was let go. "Somebody must go for the manager," said the same voice again. Give him this," and he wrote a few words in pencil. "And you'd better all go back to your places. I'll stay here."

The Cleopatra was not over, then? But that mattered little—if the spell had not been broken, it was in safe hands. Even as he lay there, with closed eyes to keep the dream in, he could hear his own music through the door, and, now and again, a

voice sailing as a ship on its sea. And the applause seemed never to cease, but only to rise and fall, like a wind in the night time.

"What is all this?" said another voice. "A man is vanished? I am no medicine. What for do you send for me? Send for a cab, and I shall pay."

"I am a surgeon; my name is Comrie, and I sent for you. Are you the manager?"

"I am—Prosper."

"This is Miss March's father. She cannot come to him here."

"Ah! Yes; that is he. Then he shall die; yes, if he shall. What the diable makes the deaf old fool in this gallery? Yes; I shall tell you, and I shall tell all the world, that have ears, that he and Clari have conspire. Miss Celia! Bah! she is not worth her salt; I shall make a box for her ears. Ah!—"

He had not been drinking; but he was plainly in a towering rage. He clapped his hands to his own ears, to keep out the noise of the waves which were the sea of Heaven itself to him who had made them. What did such a victory mean to him? The triumph of Clari, to whom he must go down on his knees, and whom he must re-engage on her own terms.

"Yes," said Comrie, quietly. "But, meanwhile, he must be carried where his daughter may come to him."

"You shall dictate to me in my own house? No!"

"Yes," said Comrie, still more quietly. "And you will help me to carry him, if you please."

Something in the surgeon's tone made Prosper look at the surgeon's hands. They were larger and heavier than even an angry man would care to feel. Comrie passed one arm round the patient and raised him.

"No; I don't think I need trouble you to help," he said to Prosper. "Only go first, and lead the way; and let it be so that none of the play-people see us as we go."

"I wish he had broke his neck!" raved Prosper. "But never mind; he is a cheat—he is a fraud! I shall tell all the world. One shall know how they conspire, these English! Yes; one shall know. I tell you," he announced to the world, as at present represented by Comrie and the barmaid, "that they conspire. I shall prove my words; it is a gang. The public shall not be made a fool. He makes a part; he teaches his mistress behind my

back; he makes his girl break down; his mistress is there! Ah! it is well arranged!"

John March opened his eyes.

"There goes the last," he said, "in the shape of a lie!"

And even while he spoke, a new blast of applause swept along the passage and through the door, as if, indeed, the last of the unclean spirits of folly and falsehood, whom it was Cleopatra's mission to conquer, had flown to its own place.

Prosper was in no mood to notice miracles. He who could only see a vulgar fraud in a sublime self-assertion of nature in the face of all conventional things was himself deaf and blind. But Comrie forgot all else—the folly that had drawn him from his books after Celia's voice, even the immediate need of the moment; he could only say, in quick speech, that contrasted strangely with his common drawl:

"You must have lied hard to make him hear. Why, neither Morel nor an earthquake would have done that; but Nature's a terrible wonder! When did you hear?"

"How can I tell? Send for Celia."

"Yes," said Comrie, absently. "The human ear is a wonder," he began, as he easily carried the musician's small and wasted body down back staircases and along corridors. "Perhaps it is the most wonderful thing in the world. I'd give mine, and welcome, to understand them. I wish I'd thought, when I had ye under my fingers, of giving ye a good sound blow with the side of a book or the palm of my hand. Some shock ye must have had—and that a big one—to clear the meatus internus; for I'll swear the serous secretion, if that was the mischief, gathered no nearer than that to the membrana tympani. Maybe a pistol fired off at the auricle might have broken the thing; but that might have broken the drum as well. It's best as it is; but why Nature should be so fond of getting us into scrapes, unless for vanity, just to show how cleverly she can get us out again, is very hard to say. Sometimes I think she's a physician: and then, again, I think she's but a fool. And, maybe, it's not so hard to be both—not at all so hard."

Not without cause had the old anecdote come into his mind; for was not he himself a physician? And was he not also a fool? Wise men do not crowd up gallery stairs to listen to voices that they have taught themselves, by dint of philosophy, to despise.

But that was only a passing thought.

he possibilities of what may happen in the inaccessible labyrinth of the internal were more than enough to absorb his thoughts to the end of the last corridor—that sudden spasm of muscle or nerve, and under what conditions, might have freed from the burden of years the most delicate and the most mysterious of all created things. After all, what was even elia's voice to the ear of Celia's father? should be nothing, any way; for who could tell on what spring of discovery the surgeon might not be putting his finger—discovery that from his prosaic point of view would serve the world better than a thousand Cleopatras or other such bundles of idle song? None observed the queer recession as it moved to the region of the house behind the curtain—the enraged presario stalking in front, and the gaunt crotch doctor carrying the grotesque, warfish figure of the musician as if it were a child's. Prosper led them to his own room. Comrie laid his patient on a sofa; but John March sat up, and once more said, "Send for Celia." Comrie started from his own mental travels—there was such a strange note of satisfied triumph in his voice, such a strangely weary look in his eyes.

Meantime, while the composer thus hovered between earth and air, the Cleopatra swept on gloriously to its close. There was no doubt about it now—there had not been since the true Cleopatra had taken her rightful place upon the stage. Whether the work was to live or die, that might would live for ever. It seemed even to Noëmi that she had never sung in her life before; she knew she had never sung now. All the hidden and stifled genius in her swelled up and out. There are those who look back upon that night as their one night of song. She did not stop to think of what the magic could be that impelled her to sing the hateful and hated Cleopatra, to save it from ruin, and to crown her arch-enemy with glory. It was her arch caprice of them all. She only sang right out and right on till the curtain fell for the last chord, and left her to once the proudest and humblest woman in the world.

Was it simply for her lost child's sake that she had done this thing, after all?

Not one person on the stage spoke to

her when the curtain fell. There are times when a whole firmament lies between us and the common world. Prosper was not in the way; not even Ilma came to her behind the scenes. The fire was still upon her; she did not begin to think how she was to meet the baby whom she had lost in another world. Her heart felt too full even for the old hunger; too full even to feel alone. She had forgotten even to look for the face that had summoned her from above, as by a spell, to the stage.

She was gathering up her black velvet and passing alone through the wing when she was stopped abruptly; and she recognised her acquaintance of Saragossa Row.

"Madame," he said, "where can I find Miss March? Where is she?"

"Miss March?" she asked dreamily.

"Yes—she must be found; I don't know this place; she must see her father at once; there may be no time to lose."

Noëmi leaned against the woodwork, and felt for her fan.

"Her father? No time?" she was trying to comprehend common words.

He thought she did not understand English. "Where can I find Miss March?" he asked in French. "I must find her instantly. Her father is very ill."

"Her father—Andrew Gordon? He is ill?"

"Very ill, madame."

"Ah, Gran Dio! Yes; take me; I will come."

"I must find Miss March—his daughter, madame. For God's sake—if you know this place—tell me where she is to be found. There is no time to lose."

"Gran Dio! Do you not hear? I will come—now!"

"To find Miss March? Then let us lose no time."

"No—no! To find him! Now!"

"Pardon, madame. His daughter—"

Then the soul of Noëmi Barnac went back into the body of Giulia Clari, and—swore.

"Corpo d'un Cane! I am his Wife, monsieur."

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LIII. POOR POPENJOY !

ON the following morning the party at Rudham Park were assembled at breakfast between ten and eleven. It was understood that the marquis was gone—or going. The Mildmays were still there with the baroness, and the Houghtons, and the black influx from the cathedral town. A few other new-comers had arrived on the previous day. Mr. Groschut, who was sitting next to the canon, had declared his opinion that, after all, the Marquis of Brotherton was a very affable nobleman. "He's civil enough," said the canon, "when people do just what he wants."

"A man of his rank and position of course expects to have some deference paid to him."

"A man of his rank and position should be very careful of the rights of others, Mr. Groschut."

"I'm afraid his brother did make himself troublesome. You're one of the family, canon, and therefore, of course, know all about it."

"I know nothing at all about it, Mr. Groschut."

"But it must be acknowledged that the dean behaved very badly. Violence!—personal violence! And from a clergyman—to a man of his rank!"

"You probably don't know what took place in that room. I'm sure I don't. But I'd rather trust the dean than the marquis any day. The dean's a man!"

"But is he a clergyman?"

"Of course he is; and a father. If he

had been very much in the wrong we should have heard more about it through the police."

"I cannot absolve a clergyman for using personal violence," said Mr. Groschut, very grandly. "He should have borne anything sooner than degrade his sacred calling." Mr. Groschut had hoped to extract from the canon some expression adverse to the dean, and to be able to assure himself that he had enrolled a new ally.

"Poor dear little fellow!" aunt Ju was saying to Mrs. Holdenough. Of course she was talking of Popenjoy. "And you never saw him?"

"No; I never saw him."

"I am told he was a lovely child."

"Very dark, I fancy."

"And all those—those doubts? They're all over now?"

"I never knew much about it, Miss Mildmay. I never inquired into it. For myself, I always took it for granted that he was Popenjoy. I think one always does take things for granted till somebody proves that it is not so."

"The dean, I take it, has given it up altogether," said Mrs. Houghton to old Lady Brabazon, who had come down especially to meet her nephew, the marquis, but who had hardly dared to speak a word to him on the previous evening, and was now told that he was gone. Lady Brabazon for a week or two had been quite sure that Popenjoy was not Popenjoy, being at that time under the influence of a very strong letter from Lady Sarah. But, since that, a general idea had come to prevail that the dean was wrong-headed, and Lady Brabazon had given in her adhesion to Popenjoy. She had gone so

far as to call at Scumberg's, and to leave a box of bonbons.

"I hope so, Mrs. Houghton; I do hope so. Quarrels are such dreadful things in families. Brotherton isn't, perhaps, all that he might have been."

"Not a bad fellow though, after all."

"By no means, Mrs. Houghton; and quite what he ought to be in appearance. I always thought that George was very foolish."

"Lord George is foolish—sometimes."

"Very stubborn, you know, and pig-headed. And as for the dean—it was great interference on his part, very great interference. I won't say that I like foreigners myself. I should be very sorry if Brabazon were to marry a foreigner. But if he chooses to do so I don't see why he is to be told that his heir isn't his heir. They say she is a very worthy woman, and devoted to him." At this moment the butler came in and whispered a word to Mr. De Baron, who immediately got up from his chair. "So my nephew hasn't gone," said Lady Brabazon. "That was a message from him. I heard his name."

Her ears had been correct. The summons which Mr. De Baron obeyed had come from the marquis. He went upstairs at once, and found Lord Brotherton sitting in his dressing-gown, with a cup of chocolate before him, and a bit of paper in his hand. He did not say a word, but handed the paper, which was a telegram, to Mr. De Baron. As the message was in Italian, and as Mr. De Baron did not read the language, he was at a loss. "Ah! you don't understand it," said the marquis. "Give it me. It's all over with little Popenjoy."

"Dead!" said Mr. De Baron.

"Yes. He has got away from all his troubles—lucky dog! He'll never have to think what he'll do with himself. They'd almost told me that it must be so, before he went."

"I grieve for you greatly, Brotherton."

"There's no use in that, old fellow. I'm sorry to be a bother to you, but I thought it best to tell you. I don't understand much about what people call grief. I can't say that I was particularly fond of him, or that I shall personally miss him. They hardly ever brought him to me, and when they did, it bothered me. And yet, somehow it pinches me—it pinches me."

"Of course it does."

"It will be such a triumph to the dean, and George. That's about the worst of it.

But they haven't got it yet. Though I should be the most miserable dog on earth, I'll go on living as long as I can keep my body and soul together. I'll have another son yet, if one is to be had for love or money. They shall have trouble enough before they find themselves at Manor Cross."

"The dean'll be dead before that time; and so shall I," said Mr. De Baron.

"Poor little boy! You never saw him. They didn't bring him in when you were over at Manor Cross?"

"No; I didn't see him."

"They weren't very proud of showing him. He wasn't much to look at. Upon my soul, I don't know whether he was legitimate or not, according to English fashions." Mr. De Baron stared. "They had something to stand upon, but they went about it in such a dirty way! It don't matter now, you know, but you needn't repeat all this."

"Not a word," said Mr. De Baron, wondering why such a communication should have been made to him.

"And there was plenty of ground for a good fight. I hardly know whether she had been married or not. I never could quite find out." Again Mr. De Baron stared. "It's all over now."

"But if you were to have another son?"

"Oh! we're married now! There were two ceremonies. I believe the dean knows quite as much about it as I do—very likely more. What a rumpus there has been about a rickety brat who was bound to die!"

"Am I to tell them downstairs?"

"Yes; you might as well tell them. Wait till I'm gone. They'd say I'd concealed it if I didn't let them know, and I certainly shan't write. There's no Popenjoy now. If that young woman has a son, he can't be Popenjoy as long as I live. I'll take care of myself. By George I will! Fancy, if the dean had killed me, he'd have made his own daughter a marchioness."

"But he'd have been hung."

"Then I wish he'd done it. I wonder how it would have gone. There was nobody there to see, nor to hear. Well, I believe I'll think of going. There's a train at two. You'll let me have a carriage; won't you?"

"Certainly."

"Let me get out some back way, and don't say a word about this till I'm off. I wouldn't have them condoling with me,

and rejoicing in their sleeves, for a thousand pounds. Tell Holdenough, or my sister; that'll be enough. Good-bye. If you want ever to see me again, you must come to Como." Then Mr. De Baron took his leave, and the marquis prepared for his departure.

As he was stepping into the carriage at a side door, he was greeted by Mr. Groschut. "So your lordship is leaving us," said the chaplain. The marquis looked at him, muttered something, and snarled as he hurried up the step of the carriage. "I'm sorry that we are to lose your lordship so soon." Then there was another snarl. "I had one word I wanted to say."

"To me! What can you have to say to me?"

"If at any time I can do anything for your lordship at Brotherton——"

"You can't do anything. Go on." The last direction was given to the coachman, and the carriage was driven off, leaving Mr. Groschut on the path.

Before lunch everybody in the house knew that poor little Popenjoy was dead, and that the dean had, in fact, won the battle, though not in the way that he had sought to win it. Lord Brotherton had, after a fashion, been popular at Rudham; but, nevertheless, it was felt by them all that Lady George was a much greater woman to-day than she had been yesterday. It was felt also that the dean was in the ascendant. The marquis had been quite agreeable, making love to the ladies, and fairly civil to the gentlemen, excepting Mr. Groschut; but he certainly was not a man likely to live to eighty. He was married, and, as was generally understood, separated from his wife. They might all live to see Lady George Marchioness of Brotherton, and a son of hers Lord Popenjoy.

"Dead!" said Lady Brabazon, when Lady Alice, with sad face, whispered to her the fatal news.

"He got a telegram this morning from Italy. Poor little boy!"

"And what'll he do now? the marquis, I mean."

"I suppose he'll follow his wife," said Lady Alice.

"Was he much cut up?"

"I didn't see him. He merely sent me word by Mr. De Baron." Mr. De Baron afterwards assured Lady Brabazon that the poor father had been very much cut up. Great pity was expressed throughout

the party, but there was not one there who would not now have been civil to poor Mary.

The marquis had his flowers, and his fruit, and his French novels on his way up to town, and kept his sorrow, if he felt it, very much to himself. Soon after his arrival at Scumberg's; at which place they were obliged to take him in, as he was still paying for his rooms; he made it known that he should start for Italy in a day or two. On that night, and on the next, he did not go out in his brougham, nor did he give any offence to Mrs. Walker. London was as empty as London ever is, and nobody came to see him. For two days he did not leave his room, the same room in which the dean had nearly killed him, and received nobody but his tailor and his hairdresser. I think that, in his way, he did grieve for the child who was gone, and who, had he lived, would have been the heir of his title and property. They must now all go from him to his enemies! And the things themselves were to himself of so very little value! Living alone at Scumberg's was not a pleasant life. Even going out in his brougham at nights was not very pleasant to him. He could do as he liked at Como, and people wouldn't grumble; but what was there even at Como that he really liked to do? He had a half worn out taste for scenery, which he had no longer energy to gratify by variation. It had been the resolution of his life to live without control, and now, at four-and-forty, he found that the life he had chosen was utterly without attraction. He had been quite in earnest in those regrets as to shooting, hunting, and the duties of an English country life. Though he was free from remorse, not believing in anything good, still he was open to a conviction that had he done what other people call good, he would have done better for himself. Something of envy stirred him as he read the records of a nobleman whose political life had left him no moment of leisure for his private affairs; something of envy when he heard of another whose cattle were the fattest in the land. He was connected with Lord Grassangrains, and had always despised that well-known breeder of bullocks; but he could understand now that Lord Grassangrains should wish to live, whereas life to him was almost unbearable. Lord Grassangrains probably had a good appetite.

On the last morning of his sojourn at

Scumberg's he received two or three letters, which he would willingly have avoided by running away had it been possible. The first he opened was from his old mother, who had not herself troubled him much with letters for some years past. It was as follows :

"DEAREST BROTHERTON,—I have heard about poor Popenjoy, and I am so unhappy. Darling little fellow! We are all very wretched here, and I have nearly tried my eyes out. I hope you won't go away without seeing me. If you'll let me, I'll go up to London, though I haven't seen there for I don't know how long. But perhaps you will come here to your own house. I do so wish you would. Your most affectionate mother,

"H. BROTHERTON."

"P.S.—Pray don't turn George out at the end of the month."

This he accepted without anger as being natural, but threw aside as being useless. Of course he would not answer it. They all knew that he never answered their letters. As to the final petition he had nothing to say to it.

The next was from Lord George, and that shall also be given :

"MY DEAR BROTHERTON,—I cannot let he tidings which I have just heard pass by without expressing my sympathy. I am very sorry indeed that you should have lost your son. I trust you will credit me or saying so much with absolute truth. Yours always,

GEORGE GERMAIN."

"I don't believe a word of it," he said almost out loud. To his thinking it was early impossible that what his brother said should be true. Why should he be sorry, he that had done his utmost to prove that Popenjoy was not Popenjoy? He crunched the letter up and cast it on one side. Of course he would not answer it.

The third was from a new correspondent; and that also the reader shall see :

"MY DEAR LORD MARQUIS,—Pray believe me, had I known under what great affliction you were labouring when you left Rudham Park, I should have been the best man in the world to intrude myself upon you. Pray believe me also when I say that I have heard of your great alleviation with sincere sympathy, and that I condole with you from the bottom of my heart. Pray remember, my dear lord, that if you will turn aright for consolation you certainly will not turn in vain.

"Let me add, though this is hardly the proper moment for such allusion, that both his lordship the bishop and myself were most indignant when we heard of the outrage committed upon you at your hotel. I make no secret of my opinion that the present Dean of Brotherton ought to be called upon by the great Council of the Nation to vacate his promotion. I wish that the bench of bishops had the power to take from him his flock.

"I have the honour to be, my lord marquis, with sentiments of most unfeigned respect, your lordship's most humble servant,

JOSEPH GROSCHUT."

The marquis smiled as he also threw this letter into the waste-paper basket, telling himself that birds of that feather very often did fall out with one another.

CHAPTER LIV. JACK DE BARON'S VIRTUE.

WE must now go back to Jack De Baron, who left Rudham Park the same day as the marquis, having started before the news of Lord Popenjoy's death had been brought downstairs by Mr. De Baron. Being only Jack De Baron, he had sent to Brotherton for a fly, and in that conveyance had had himself taken to The Lion, arriving there three or four hours before the time at which he purposed to leave the town. Indeed, his arrangements had intentionally been left so open that he might if he liked remain the night, or, if he pleased, remain a week at The Lion. He thought it not improbable that the dean might ask him to dinner, and, if so, he certainly would dine with the dean.

He was very serious—considering who he was, we may almost say solemn—as he sat in the fly. It was the rule of his life to cast all cares from him, and his grand principle to live from hand to mouth. He was almost a philosopher in his epicureanism, striving always that nothing should trouble him. But now he had two great troubles, which he could not throw off from him. In the first place, after having striven against it for the last four or five years with singular success, he had in a moment of weakness allowed himself to become engaged to Guss Mildmay. She had gone about it so subtly that he had found himself manacled almost before he knew that the manacles were there. He had fallen into a trap of hypothesis, and now felt that the preliminary conditions on which he had seemed to depend could never avail him. He did not mean to

marry Guss Mildmay. He did not suppose that she thought he meant to marry her. He did not love her, and he did not believe very much in her love for him. But Guss Mildmay, having fought her battle in the world for many years with but indifferent success, now felt that her best chance lay in having a bond upon her old lover. He ought not to have gone to Rudham, when he knew that she was to be there. He had told himself that before, but he had not liked to give up the only chance which had come in his way of being near Lady George since she had left London. And now he was an engaged man, a position which had always been to him full of horrors. He had run his bark on to the rock, which it had been the whole study of his navigation to avoid. He had committed the one folly which he had always declared to himself that he never could commit. This made him unhappy.

And he was uneasy also—almost unhappy—respecting Lady George. People whom he knew to be bad had told him things respecting her which he certainly did not believe, but which he did not find it compatible with his usual condition of life altogether to disbelieve. If he had ever loved any woman he loved her. He certainly respected her, as he had never respected any other young woman. He had found the pleasure to be derived from her society to be very different from that which had come from his friendship with others. With her he could be perfectly innocent, and at the same time completely happy. To dance with her, to ride with her, to walk with her, to sit with the privilege of looking at her, was joy of itself, and required nothing beyond. It was a delight to him to have any little thing to do for her. When his daily life was in any way joined with hers, there was a brightness in it which he had thoroughly enjoyed though he did not quite understand it. When that affair of the dance came, in which Lord George had declared his jealousy, he had been in truth very unhappy because she was unhappy, and he had been thoroughly angry with the man, not because the man had interfered with his own pleasures, but because of the injury and the injustice done to the wife. He found himself wounded, really hurt, because she had been made subject to humny. When he tried to analyse the thing he could not understand it. It was so different from anything that had

gone before! He was sure that she liked him, and yet there was a moment in which he thought that he would purposely keep out of her way for the future, lest he might be a trouble to her. He loved her so well that his love for awhile almost made him unselfish.

And yet—yet he might be mistaken about her. It had been the theory of his life that young married women become tired of their husbands, and one of his chief doctrines that no man should ever love in such a way as to believe in the woman he loves. After so many years, was he to give up his philosophy? Was he to allow the ground to be cut from under his feet by a young creature of twenty-one, who had been brought up in a country town? Was he to run away because a husband had taken it into his head to be jealous? All the world had given him credit for his behaviour at the Kappa-kappa. He had gathered laurels, very much because he was supposed to be the lady's lover. He had never boasted to others of the lady's favour; but he knew that she liked him, and he had told himself that he would be poor-spirited if he abandoned her.

He drove up to The Lion and ordered a room. He did not know whether he should want it, but he would at any rate bespeak it. And he ordered his dinner. Come what come might, he thought that he would dine and sleep at Brotherton that day. Finding himself so near to Lady George, he would not leave her quite at once. He asked at the inn whether the dean was in Brotherton. Yes; the dean was certainly at the Deanery. He had been seen about in the city that morning. The inhabitants, when they talked about Brotherton, always called it the city. And were Lord George and Lady George at the Deanery? In answer to this question, the landlady with something of a lengthened face declared that Lady George was with her papa, but that Lord George was at Manor Cross. Then Jack De Baron strolled out towards the Close.

It was a little after one when he found himself at the cathedral door, and thinking that the dean and his daughter might be at lunch, he went into the building, so that he might get rid of half an hour. He had not often been in cathedrals of late years, and now looked about him with something of awe. He could remember that when he was a child he had been brought

here to church, and as he stood in the choir with the obsequent verger at his elbow, he recollected how he had got through the minutes of a long sermon—a sermon that had seemed to be very long—in planning the way in which, if left to himself, he would climb to the pinnacle which culminated over the bishop's seat, and thence make his way along the capitals and vantages of stonework, till he would ascend into the triforium and thus become lord and master of the old building. How much smaller his ambitions had become since then, and how much less manly! "Yes, sir; his lordship is here every Sunday when he is at the palace," said the verger. "But his lordship is ailing now."

"And the dean?"

"The dean always comes once a day to service when he is here; but the dean has been much away of late. Since Miss Mary's marriage the dean isn't in Brotherton as much as formerly."

"I know the dean. I'm going to his house just now. They like him in Brotherton, I suppose?"

"That's according to their way of thinking, sir. We like him. I suppose you heard, sir, there was something of a row between him and Miss Mary's brother-in-law!" Jack said that he had heard of it. "There's them as say he was wrong."

"I say he was quite right."

"That's what we think, sir. It's got about that his lordship said some bad word of Miss Mary. A father wasn't to stand that because he's a clergyman, was he, sir?"

"The dean did just what you or I would do."

"That's just it, sir. That's what we all say. Thank you, sir. You won't see Prince Edward's monument, sir? Gentlemen always do go down to the crypt." Jack wouldn't see the monument to-day, and having paid his half-crown, was left to wander about alone through the aisles.

How would it have been with him if his life had been different; if he had become, perhaps, a clergyman, and had married Mary Lovelace?—or if he had become anything but what he was, with her for his wife? He knew that his life had been a failure, that the best of it was gone, and that even the best of it had been unsatisfactory. Many people liked him, but was there anyone who loved him? In all the world there was but one person that he loved, and she was the wife of another man. Of one thing at this

moment he was quite sure, that he would never wound her ears by speaking of his love. Would it not be better that he should go away, and see her no more? The very tone in which the verger had spoken of Miss Mary had thrown to the winds those doubts which had come from the teaching of Adelaide Houghton and Guss Mildmay. If she had been as they said, would even her father have felt for her as he did feel, and been carried away by his indignation at the sound of an evil word?

But he had asked after the dean at the hotel, and had told the verger of his acquaintance, and had been seen by many in the town. He could not now leave the place without calling. So resolving, he knocked at last at the Deanery door, and was told that the dean was at home. He asked for the dean, and not for Lady George, and was shown into the library. In a minute the dean was with him. "Come in and have some lunch," said the dean. "We have this moment set down. Mary will be delighted to see you—and so am I." Of course he went in to lunch, and in a moment was shaking hands with Mary, who in truth was delighted to see him.

"You've come from Rudham?" asked the dean.

"This moment."

"Have they heard the news there?"

"What news?"

"Lord Brotherton is there, is he not?"

"I think he left to-day. He was to do so. I heard no news." He looked across to Mary, and saw that her face was sad and solemn.

"The child that they called Lord Popenjoy is dead," said the dean. He was neither sad nor solemn. He could not control the triumph of his voice as he told the news.

"Poor little boy!" said Mary.

"Dead!" exclaimed Jack.

"I've just had a telegram from my lawyer in London. Yes; he's out of the way. Poor little fellow! As sure as I sit here he was not Lord Popenjoy."

"I never understood anything about it," said Jack.

"But I did. Of course the matter is at rest now. I'm not the man to grudge anyone what belongs to him; but I do not choose that anyone belonging to me should be swindled. If she were to have a son now, he would be the heir."

"Oh papa, do not talk in that way."

"Rights are rights, and the truth is the truth. Can anyone wish that such a property and such a title should go to the child of an Italian woman whom no one has seen or knows?"

"Let it take its chance now, papa."

"Of course it must take its chance; but your chances must be protected."

"Papa, he was at any rate my nephew."

"I don't know that. In law, I believe, he was no such thing. But he is gone, and we need think of him no further." He was very triumphant. There was an air about him as though he had already won the great stake for which he had been playing. But in the midst of it all he was very civil to Jack De Baron. "You will stay and dine with us to-day, Captain De Baron?"

"Oh, do," said Mary.

"We can give you a bed if you will sleep here."

"Thanks. My things are at the hotel, and I will not move them. I will come and dine if you'll have me."

"We shall be delighted. We can't make company of you, because no one is coming. I shouldn't wonder if Lord George rode over. He will if he hears of this. Of course he'll know to-morrow; but perhaps they will not have telegraphed to him. I should go out to Manor Cross, only I don't quite like to put my feet in that man's house." Jack could not but feel that the dean treated him almost as though he were one of the family. "I rather think I shall ride out and risk it. You won't mind my leaving you?" Of course Jack declared that he would not for worlds be in the way. "Mary will play Badminton with you, if you like it. Perhaps you can get hold of Miss Pountner and Grey, and make up a game." Mr. Grey was one of the minor canons, and Miss Pountner was the canon's daughter.

"We shall do very well, papa. I'm not mad after Badminton, and I daresay we shall manage without Miss Pountner."

The dean went off, and, in spite of the feud, did ride over to Manor Cross. His mind was so full of the child's death and the all but certainty of coming glory which now awaited his daughter, that he could not keep himself quiet. It seemed to him that a just Providence had interfered to take that child away. And as the marquis hated him, so did he hate the marquis. He had been willing at first to fight the battle fairly without personal animosity. On the marquis's first arrival

he had offered him the right hand of fellowship. He remembered it all accurately, how the marquis had on that occasion ill-used and insulted him. No man knew better than the dean when he was well-treated and when ill-treated. And then this lord had sent for him for the very purpose of injuring and wounding him through his daughter's name. His wrath on that occasion had not at all expended itself in the blow. After that word had been spoken he was the man's enemy for ever. There could be no forgiveness. He could not find room in his heart for even a spark of pity because the man had lost an only child. Had not the man tried to do worse than kill his only child—his daughter? Now the pseudo-Popenjoy was dead, and the dean was in a turmoil of triumph. It was essential to him that he should see his son-in-law. His son-in-law must be made to understand what it would be to be the father of the future Marquis of Brotherton.

"I think I'll just step across to the inn," said Jack, when the dean had left them.

"And we'll have a game of croquet when you come back. I do like croquet, though papa laughs at me. I think I like all games. It is so nice to be doing something."

Jack sauntered back to the inn, chiefly that he might have a further opportunity of considering what he would say to her. And he did make up his mind. He would play croquet with all his might, and behave to her as though she were his dearest sister.

THE SEASIDE IN SPRING.

I HAVE been staying down at the seaside during the winter; "hibernating" is, I believe, the correct expression to employ. We are not a very lively people at the best of times. Ours is a fancy line of railway. We have no staple industry, little goods traffic, and the line carries passengers only. The misfortune is, that the passengers don't come. We are only a branch, and have the melancholy satisfaction of having nearly ruined the main line. Our travelling, though sure and comfortable, is very slow. The company is certainly not going to incur wear and tear of rails, and engines, and carriages, by running express trains, when it frequently happens that the so-called express, a steady-going affair of twenty miles an hour, may only have one

or two passengers. So we abide by the "melancholy main," melancholy ourselves. About Christmas we have the picture, let us hope the reality, of cheerfulness. After that, things become very flat. But the advent of spring really wakes us up from this bodily and spiritual lethargy. We become unconscious sharers of the new life of the earth and waters. Seen under this cheerful guise, the many drawbacks of our little town have their advantages. We have no pier, or promenade, concerts, band, or dances: But our woods and meadows are inviolate; in no other region have I seen the lanes and the hillside so rich in wild-flowers; our gabled country-inn stands as it did in the days of the Stuarts; we have "the haven under the hill" and the grey old church a mile and a half away, to which the rustic population wend their way, all weathers, on a Sunday afternoon.

We were so glad when the spring really came. It was a perfectly lovely day, and I had been walking up and down the beach with a friend. He knows the seaboard of the Mediterranean, and he tells me that the sky and the weather seem exactly to reproduce the Riviera for him. I know the seaside at all seasons, and I love it at all seasons, but it especially delights me in the spring-time. There is the primal flush and grace of the dawn of the year. The great flashes of light upon the waters seem then to have a splendour not to be surpassed at any other season. You will never have such delicious delicate greens as the trees put forth in the morning of the year. There is a keen bracing healthiness in the winds of heaven, peculiar, I think, to this cheerful, blessed season. But it is a curious fact that, while the seaside is best and brightest in the spring, it is the time in which it is least visited of all. Now surely there is a fact here, well worthy of the attention of all who would like a change to the seaside, but are dismayed by the heavy season prices. There is a whole row of very good lodging-houses directly facing the sea, which stand nearly empty for three-quarters of the year, their owners for the most part burrowing in the back apartments. Many a lodging-house keeper thinks it a sort of profanation to take up his abode in his own state apartments—drawing-room, dining-room, and first-floor front bedroom. But they would be quite ready to let them on the most reasonable terms—anything to help with the rent and taxes, and to keep the place aired. The rooms which would

cost five or seven guineas a week in the season, would be let for thirty shillings out of the season. Now, why is it that people insist on all taking their holiday at the same time? August and September are delicious months by the seaside, and now that at nearly all schools the modern terms are superseding the old-fashioned half-years and quarters, the children come down in a mass to the coast in these months, and it is the children's hour all the day long. The difference of prices between June and August is something immense. But the holiday season might be distributed more evenly during the fine season of the year. Professional people might come down at an immense saving to themselves. They would have large rooms instead of small rooms, and surely it is a greater and more healthful change from town to the solitary coast, than from a big crowded town to a little crowded town. Then again, I often wonder why arrangements are not made to enable the working-classes to get a good holiday at the seaside. In the season, they would have to pay a great deal of money, even in small lodging-houses in the smaller streets in the rear of the principal streets. But out of the season, they could get their lodgings quite as cheap as, or cheaper than, a residence in London. In the case of many artisans, their work could be carried on at the seaside for a limited time as at home. Of course, there would be the railway fare, but railway companies would probably give special tickets in such cases. I am well aware that various other difficulties might arise, but all that I am contending is, that the poorer classes, with some method and management, might obtain a much larger amount of rest and holiday at the seaside than is at present the case. Some system of mutual help and co-operation might be devised to promote this desirable combination.

As I go about, I now and then find some person from London who has had the sagacity to appreciate the wonderful good which the seaside may do at this season. My friend Jones, the artist, has been here for weeks, studying the beautiful effects of this fresh bright season. Those rocks, dashed over by bold seas; this shadowy combe, through which the rill streams to the beach, bordered by a luxuriant growth of trees on either hand, will be reproduced on the walls of the Royal Academy. A great London physician came down and sojourned from the Saturday to the Monday at the little hotel. My friends, the lodging-

house keepers, little know how rich he could make them, if he only chose to prescribe the place to his patients. And Wilkins has come down here to enjoy the silence and solitude, to perfect that epic poem which is to astonish the world. Poor Wilkins!

Nothing is pleasanter, in the case of our seaside town, than to see our invalids crawl forth in the pleasant advent of spring. The great London physician must surely have taken cognisance of this interesting fact. We have had several invalids with chest complaints staying among us during the winter. Our place is not strictly a fashionable place; but still it has as much ozone and iodine as any of its neighbours. Indeed, we have a kind of floating idea that it has very great health capabilities, which may one day bring it very much into fashion. Our local surgeon had, in point of fact, a very strong idea of writing a book about it, which should bring people to the town and himself into practice. Anyhow, the town, as a town, is greatly flattered by these sporadic invalids coming down, and feels greatly interested in their health and their general proceedings. Some of these have, from time to time, crept out during the winter to warm themselves in sunny spots. Others have been hermetically sealed up till the spring, and only leave their houses as Noah and his family left the ark—as soon as the sight of a green bough encourages them. We have come to understand all about these visitors; their history, their complaints, their business, and their connections. We were truly sorry when one of them died—died, though one of the greatest doctors in London came down to see him. We say to one another, that he was very far gone when he came among us, and that nothing could have saved him. Our wary invalids, who have chronic complaints, know very well that the spring is the time when it behoves them to take especial care of themselves. It is hot in the sun, and cold in the shade. The temperature varies very greatly in the day and night. The keen, searching east wind will detect any flaw in our physical harness. One is so tempted to throw off the overcoat in a hot day, and then a terrific file of perils—pneumonia, pleurisy—bronchitis, are ready to seize upon us. So, while we give due emphasis to the beauty of the seaside in spring, we ought also to remember that the season has its special perils. We have one steep bit of cliff, which interposes some kind of

barrier to those cutting winds; and on a warm day, the beach and whole front of the cliff collect the sunshine and make a regular Madeira climate. We call this Little Madeira. But the protection it affords is limited; and, indeed, it is difficult anywhere in our island to find an effective screen against these winds. Our invalids seem to understand and appreciate this state of things; for they get homewards before the evening wind grows sharp, and the fog settles over sea and land. I ought to say that, remote and quiet as we are, we have two little institutions, which are a great help and guide to us in things hygienic and sanitary. They are institutions which have multiplied throughout the country of recent years, and which it is to be hoped that the country will increasingly develop and support. We have an institution for gentlewomen who are in bad health or bad circumstances—generally a combination of both—who for a very moderate payment get a pleasant home and the best of food and medicines. I do not suppose that the institution is altogether self-supporting; in fact, it is supplemented by some subscriptions, given among our own little community and others. Similarly, we rejoice in a Cottage Hospital. Ours is a genuine Cottage Hospital, and one of the first that ever existed. It is a genuine cottage, only with a bigger garden than cottages generally possess. It was the gift of two good ladies—sisters. When one of them died, the other made herself matron and head-nurse. The curate-in-charge has, of course, constituted himself chaplain. Everything here is homely, but it is also wholesome and good. Of course, we have not the costly surgical appliances and the great scientific lights of a London hospital; but, on the other hand, our little hospital is close at hand for local cases. When we see the good old ladies taking their walks abroad, or the cottage patients sitting on chairs in the garden, we hail them as veritable signs of spring. We have a highly-scientific gentleman, who constructs a weather-chart, and communicates a monthly article thereon to our local print; but, practically, we regard our patients as the real barometer and thermometer. But although we are so very quiet usually, this is not invariably the case. On the Bank Holidays which occur in the spring of the year we are subjected to a raid and an irruption. On Easter Sunday we have quite a civic congregation in the

little church. Our curate preaches one of his best sermons, and afterwards gives a gracious greeting to all who stay to look at a certain marble monument in the church, or linger in the green arcade of the churchyard. On the actual day of the Bank Holiday, the line does as much business as in the month before and in the month afterwards put together. Our residential gentry regard the invading horde with feelings of the deepest dejection and melancholy. They shut their gates, draw down the blinds, and go into a sort of mourning. That, however, is by no means the feeling of the industrial order of our community. We sympathise with the tourists, and all except the publicans hope that it may be the finest of our fine spring days. New and unexpected industries suddenly develop themselves. We turn out any number of photographers' businesses. The acrobats are among us. Aunt Sally smiles benignantly at all comic proceedings. We have a circus, and the curate has administered a galvanic shock to the local mind by sending his servants and children thither. There is also kiss-in-the-ring; and rings are formed everywhere, and on the slightest provocation. The town roughs, and a certain number of the town gentles as well, escort our visitors back to their excursion train. We shake hands miscellaneously, and cheers elicit answering cheers. To-morrow morning the town, as a town, feels slightly rakish—debilitated, dissipated, and exhausted. The metropolitan invasion is over, and we begin to look ahead for our local dissipations—the archery meeting, the flower show, the regatta, the club dinner, and the excursion from our own town to the Crystal Palace.

I take a walk with my friend the curate-in-charge. He is a good man, and does good, but he preaches in his surplice, which is a severe blow to the Protestantism of the district. Indeed, the parish churchwarden is of the private opinion that he is little better than a Papist in disguise, and would be glad to have a blaze in the market-place like the old fires of Smithfield. I will venture to say that I have a better opinion of him than that. He tells me that the fishermen have greatly improved as a class. He remembers the time when they made large gains in the summer, and endured great poverty in the winter; would drink port wine out of mugs at one time, and come to him for alms at another. He says that

they are now much more sensible and economical, and lay by for a rainy day. They are also better able to take sound commercial views of the produce of their vast wandering farm, the sea. Those light spring winds are good for the fishing-boats. When the weather is settled calm they lie idle close to shore, and do no business. My reverend friend explains to me all the ins and outs of the social life of the little town, recounts the history, reckons up the associations. He justly tells me that I might live in this little place for a year, without knowing it as he enables me to know it. Like Andrew Fairservice, he is able to tell me the history of the big houses in the neighbourhood, and of those who inhabit them. As a rule they keep away rather ostentatiously from the inhabitants of the little town. Anyone in the town who is visited by the county people has a sort of aristocratic brand attached to him. Any chance visitor to the place is indeed honoured by a call from some of the county magnates, some of whom are popularly supposed to have been settled in the county ever since the Heptarchy; but of the others, one is known to have made a fortune in dry goods, and another has bought up an old estate from the proceeds of soap-boiling. Anyhow, their carriages and prancing horses wake up the echoes in our silent streets, and if they interchange greetings with a chance visitor, henceforth the latter has the hat touched to him by the trading community, and the churchwarden calls on him, and asks him, as a mark of respect, to subscribe to the local charities. One day, many years ago, a dignified old gentleman arrived at our little town, and proceeded to make his way to an old martello tower, which he examined and probed at with great diligence. The said martello tower has been since pulled down, and proved a much tighter job for the engineers than had ever been expected. The old gentleman took a plain bed and a plainer breakfast; but before he went away the overpowered landlord became aware that he had entertained no less a personage than Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington, Commander-in-Chief, who was then busily occupying himself with our national defences. He changed the name of his inn to The Duke of Wellington, and to this day exhibits the bed to the general public, by whom it is stared at intently, with a great addition to their intellectual resources.

Now, too, is the time when the weather encourages us to look out for some fishing. Winter fishing is very good in its way, but, as a rule, we are not such ardent anglers as to venture to begin before the spring weather really sets in. We have one fine stream, which has a good deal of fish in it, trout and salmon, and certain brethren of the angle come down as soon as the season is open, and pay ever so much money on the chance of taking some. We will adventure out for some deep sea-fishing, for which, at least, no licence is required. Some audacious friends have fraternised with the boatmen, and have gone to the rocks a dozen miles out, where they will fish all night. They must have had rather an uncomfortable time of it, I should think, rising and falling with the swell of the sea. No amount of fish would exactly compensate a man for what he has to go through. It is a great achievement if you really get enough fish to pay your boating expenses. You may fish unsuccessfully for hours. Four of us hired a boat, men, and tackle, and fished for five hours, before one of the party secured a melancholy-looking dab, which was surreptitiously thrown away on the first occasion that offered.

For those who do not care to adventure on the perils of the deep, there is another kind of excitement very pleasing and very safe. We mean the studies of the beach and of the rocks; and everyone who knows anything of an aquarium, ought to study the natural aquaria of the rock-pools. Of course, there is capital opportunity for study all through the winter, but it requires some little courage to work in the front of the rough or steely-cold winter sea. There is indeed one highly scientific lady, who, with a green veil and geological hammer, has been knocking away at the rocks, but we have contemplated her example with what Gibbon calls "an admiring despair." In these spring days, all our young people who have the slightest aspiration beyond the circulating library—not that I wish to speak of that great institution with the slightest disrespect—after reading Mr. Lewes, Mr. Gosse, and Charles Kingsley, straightway provide themselves with scientific apparatus, and set to work to collect specimens, and make observations. They are especially great on anemones, and the young ladies cling to the rocks themselves, the loveliest of zoophytes. The boy population, in addition to cockles and shrimps, collect laver, to which they aver

that the royal family are extremely partial. I do not think that they partake thereof themselves; but they really send some to London, and are ready to sell any amount to visitors. The said visitors, however, not inclining to such vulgar pursuits, spread themselves over rocks and sands, not making, perhaps, as much scientific progress as they imagine, but by rock, wave, and wind, gaining in their own proper persons that "conservation of energy," of which our scientists talk so much nowadays.

Then, again, in the spring we desert the "barren, barren shore," to explore the inland regions. For the most part, we have kept to the high-roads during the winter; but now we explore the lanes, fields, and commons. The gorse comes early into flower; it spreads itself in sheets of brilliant colour, and the air is faint with the perfume. It is one of the pleasantest employments, to spend the afternoon in the country hunting for wild flowers, especially as the pursuit argues gentle companionship; the society of thoughtful maiden, or studious youth, who can talk the scientific talk, and also bring out the poetry and beauty. There is the violet, hiding in the shade of the long grasses and herbage of the hedgeside; but now there is no want of violet-farms and rose-farms in the country. The primrose, beloved of poets, is found in our neighbourhood with prodigal profuseness; we get a variety with pink blossoms, and, what is very remarkable, we have a butterfly with the very same combination of colours as the primrose. Especially do I delight in the lovely flower which is called a germander, speedwell, and, sometimes, a "forget-me-not." Tennyson, from the lovely blue, speaks of the "clear germander eye." The oxlip and cowslip, the daisy and the ox-eyed daisy are in masses of bright colour. There is the little celandine, which Wordsworth celebrates in his poems, and whose blossom is carved in marble on his tomb. The periwinkle sends out its blossoms even so early as January, and its regular flowering season commences in April; and, a month later, the ponds and streams begin to grow white with the goldilocks and water ranunculus. In the pasturage close to the stream, we have the perennial meadow cranesbill; this we carefully take up, to plant the root in our gardens, for the sake of the pure white and lilac-purple. Close by are the blossoms of the marsh marigold in

profusion. Here we rejoice over hyacinths and snowdrops as treasure trove. We wander forth, and return with laden arms. I am set up with an herbarium, and hereafter I find dried leaves and flowers stored away in my choicest books. Some wild flowers we pathetically mourn over. The early summer must come, and our seaside visit will be over before they come to this district with their scents and blossoms. And then we settle that, before we go away, we must see one or two of the famous places of the locality. There is, of course, a ruined abbey and a ruined castle, where, though early in the season, we will have a picnic to commemorate our stay in the country before we go up to town. The friends who walked with us on the beach, or who wandered with us in the dells, will be with us. We do not picnic on the grass, for our old monks have left us their famous refectory, which the lord of the manor has wisely roofed over, and there we appropriately partake of spring chicken, spring lamb, and spring salad. It is almost unnecessary to say that we do not shun "the foaming grape of eastern France." "And so to town," as old Pepys would say, satisfied that if we can spend some of the spring at the seaside, and part of the summer amid the mountains, we have consulted well for our sanitary condition.

A POET'S LOVES.

A POET loves full oft, the legends tell :

To such an one, I wot of, four loves came—

One stirred his boyish heart with bashful shame,

But died out soon, when on him there befell

A great, strong love, that kindled with its spell

Heart, mind, and soul, and touched his lips with flame,

Till they sang constantly one worshipped name :

Then Death said, bitterly : "He loves too well !"

So with sweet ghosts awhile the poet stayed,

Until a woman came, alive and fair,

Who woke his heart to passion and despair,

Made his sick soul of its own self afraid.

So Fancy, Love, and Passion, being spent,

What proffers he for his last love's content ?

MY RUSSIAN BISHOP.

"KEEP her steady, Mac, and tell Brown, in the engine-room, to stick to her present rate of speed. Seven knots, all things considered, is decent going, even downstream, on one of these Russian rivers; and then we are in duty bound, you know, to economise the company's firewood, cheap as it is."

"Ay, ay, Captain Burton," cheerfully responded my tall, raw-boned first officer,

entering with national alacrity into a question of thrift.

"A careful man shouldna waste the sticks, when the vara current, since the rains, would a'most serve our purpose."

Macgregor, chief mate, and Brown, chief engineer, were, with myself, John Burton by name, the only three Englishmen on board the Fair Helen, a fine steamer, of light draught, but considerable engine-power, belonging to the Anglo-Russian Steam Navigation Company, and built expressly for service on the Dnieper. We were pretty far to the north just then, in the government of Mohilew, where the great river first becomes navigable for anything bigger than a skiff or a flat-boat, and were coming down now with a string of rafts in tow.

Macgregor left me on his round of inspection, but I, who had just then no call of duty, remained idly leaning against the taffrail, and gazing, now at the summer sky of greenish-blue, now at the swampy and reed-grown shores, where herds of black buffaloes and flocks of sickly sheep browsed on the rank grass, and once again at the brown waters of the sluggish Borysthenes, now swollen by recent rain. Astern of the steamer was the long array of rafts which we were towing, composed of timber, cut down in the forests farther north, which forms a valuable article of export to the more pastoral and treeless south of Russia. Most of these rafts had sheds or straw-thatched hovels built upon them, to screen the labourers from sun and rain; and at the edge of each some half-dozen men, with long poles in their hands, kept watch, in case the clumsy craft should ground among the shallows and mud-banks.

I had now spent over two years in Russia, and had acquired some little knowledge of the country, and, what was harder, a tolerable smattering of its very difficult language, while there were those who regarded me as singularly lucky in having been appointed, young as I was, to the command of the Fair Helen. The duties, however, incumbent on me as skipper of a river steambot in Russia, were not much to my inclination, and I believe I should long since have resigned my post and gone back to blue water and a sailor's life, had it not been that I fell in love, and that my love was returned.

Pretty Annie Clements, only child of the English manager of Prince Demidoff's paper-mills at Mohilew, was the enchan-

tress whose bright eyes detained me in Russia, and only two months had elapsed since our troth-plight had received the sanction of Annie's father. Mr. Clements, who had from his youth up filled lucrative positions in the Czar's dominions, and had saved money, was a good type of a class of Englishmen who may be described as Anglo-Russians. His industry and business habits had given him a marked superiority over the people among whom he dwelt; but at the same time he was imbued with an almost superstitious respect for the despotic government under which he had long lived, and for every abuse, and every freak of administrative tyranny on the part of the higher powers.

"This must be Bykhow!" said I, starting from my reverie, as I caught sight of the copper-coated cupola of the church of St. Michael, overtopping the wooden roofs of the tiny town; "but what have we here?" I added, as a boat put off from the wharf, and was soon alongside of the steamer, which had slackened speed in obedience to a signal from the shore. "Why, it is a bishop!"

And, indeed, the most prominent personage of the group which presently boarded us was, to judge by his garb and mien, a prelate of the Orthodox Church. He wore gracefully-flowing robes, of almost oriental aspect, and the quaint mitre, with its narrow edging of purple and gold, which distinguishes a Muscovite bishop. Behind him came three attendants—his chaplain, his crosier-bearer, and another, who tinkled a little silver bell; at the sound of which our Russian sailors and deckmen dropped upon their knees, and struggled with one another who should be the first to kiss the bishop's ungloved hand, on which glistened a great amethyst ring.

I found the bishop, who was a young man, not more than two years older than myself, very urbane and affable. He spoke French, and German too, fluently, and was in tone and bearing quite a citizen of the world.

"These poor, good people!" he said, apologetically for the slavish reverence with which the Russians of our crew besought his blessing. "They have well learned the only two lessons that for centuries past we have taught them, to obey and to believe. They are children, and we must humour their prejudices."

The bishop's business with me was soon stated. He wanted a passage to the city

of Kiew for himself, and his cross-bearer, chaplain, and acolyte; and also for a party of ecclesiastical students from the great monastery of Glinka, who were bound for the same place, to be solemnly inducted within the pale of the Russo-Greek priesthood by the Archbishop of Kiew. There were, moreover, some three or four nuns, who desired to avail themselves of the same opportunity for returning to their abbey.

At first, I was somewhat puzzled. Truth to tell, the vessels of the Anglo-Russian Navigation Company did very little business in the passenger carrying line. By towing, by the transport of light goods, and so forth, we earned a decent dividend; but although we had an elaborate printed tariff of charges, the "neat private cabins," and "saloon" for first-class passengers, had come to be sadly conspicuous by their absence. However, the bishop, with his easy bonhomie, made things pleasant. Russians, he said with truth, needed, in fine weather, but scanty accommodation. Students, nuns, and himself, could rough it, only thankful for a speedy journey. And the payment he would leave to me to appertain.

"A compliment," added the prelate, with a laugh and a shrug, "which I assure you, captain, I would not offer to my own countrymen. But you English have a conscience."

I did not forfeit the national reputation for fair dealing, by charging His Worthiness—for such I believe to be the correct designation of a Muscovite bishop—too much for the meagre comfort which I was able on board the Fair Helen to supply to this clerical company. We set to work with hammer and saw, and as all sailors, even Russian fresh-water mariners, are handy fellows, we soon knocked up some rough cabins for the nuns, while I gave up my own quarters to the bishop. As for the students, the weather was fine, and a set of hardy young fellows might surely make shift to keep the deck.

There were, as it turned out, four nuns; two of them being tall, burly Tsvorniks, of that she-grenadier aspect so common among the Russian peasant women who take the vows, and the other two, slight, delicate in manners and appearance, and unmistakably ladies. The prettier of these, who was decorated with a large gold cross, and wore snowy linen, and black French cashmere instead of coarse serge, was styled the prioress. There were twenty-

students, well-grown lads enough, apparently shy and ill at ease, and huddled together in a mob when light on board, and shunned conversation. Nor were the nuns very comical; but the bishop, who was a witty and agreeable talker, made amends for the taciturnity of the rest.

"I wish," said the mate to me, as we sped down stream, "that we hadn't a freight of blackvised cattle like you irreligious worshippers aboard. It's borne upon my mind that ill will come o't." At, knowing the strength of Mac's Polish prejudices, I did but laugh at his fiction.

At Stostizta, where we stopped to collect firewood, and where the overseer of the rafts went ashore to hire fresh laborers in the room of a dozen feverish wretches, on whom the miasma of the muddy river had done its work, who had been left behind at Bykhow, a procession went by the wharf along which the steamer lay. This consisted of some thirty political prisoners, some, as we were told, implicated in the abortive revolt near Minsk, and now on their way to Siberia. They were of various ranks and ages; some with delicate features, and faces that told of culture and refinement; others who showed the marks of honest toil; but all bore themselves with a certain air of quiet dignity which seemed to impress even the half-savage natives who guarded them. There was something in the proud endurance of the faces which touched me. They were shaven, their clothes were worn and faded. Their faces were wan with the fatigues of a Russian prison, and all feet sore and weary. Yet it was impossible not to admire the patient courage of their demeanour.

"Bah! They are not of our century, you Poles," said the bishop, taking a pinch of snuff and offering me the gilt pipe with suave courtesy. "They sacrifice themselves for a dream."

We were a long time at Stostizta, for the overseer's new hands were hard to away from the vodka shops, though when they did arrive they certainly turned out to be fifteen as strapping fellows as I ever seen; men, too, who walked the steady step of old soldiers. Of course, however, since conscription passes the peasantry through the ranks, I might expect little, but gave orders to cast off anchorings, get up a fuller head of steam,

to make up for lost time, and push on to Rogaczew, our next halting-place. Four versts down the river, I caught the gleam, among the tall reeds of the bank, of a Cossack lance-point, and soon, rounding a headland, descried the kafilas of prisoners. These latter marched but slowly, and their mounted guards, under the orders of an officer in green uniform—a major, as I guessed, by his medals and the glitter of his epaulettes—were driving them on with blows and threats. Just as we came abreast of the captives, I heard the overseer of the rafts shouting hoarsely orders which seemed worse than useless, for by some mismanagement of the poles, the raftsmen had grounded one of the cumbersome structures on a sandbank. The tough tow-rope jerked and creaked.

"Stop her, there below—reverse engines!" I called out; but scarcely had I done so, before, to my utter amazement, the travelling bishop drew from beneath his purple-hemmed cassock a silver whistle, and blew a long, shrill note. The effect of this signal call was magical in its rapidity. Wading waist deep in the water, the raft-workers whom we had taken in at Stostizta hurried to shore, scrambled up the slippery bank, and rushed like so many tigers upon the escort that guarded the prisoners.

"Ha! traitors! Cut the villains down!" thundered the Russian major, whisking out his sabre and aiming a heavy stroke at the first assailant who reached him; but a cudgel parried the blow, and in less time than it takes to tell it the officer was disarmed and dragged from his saddle. Of the nine Cossacks, eight were dismounted and bound without any serious resistance; but the ninth eluded the hands that clutched at his bridle, fired, wounding the man nearest to him, and, wheeling his shaggy steed, rode off at a gallop, pursued by a storm of pistol-balls and curses.

"Help! captain! cap—" gurgled in choking accents a well-known voice; and I looked round, to see Macgregor vainly struggling in the grasp of three ecclesiastical students, one of whom held him by the throat. Another of these interesting neophytes was pressing the muzzle of a revolver to the forehead of the scared helmsman; while five or six had found their way to the engine-room, to judge by the sounds of scuffling that proceeded from the hatchway.

"Secure him!" cried the false bishop, pointing to me; and three young fellows,

all well armed, and all with their black robes disordered and revealing the very secular garb which they wore beneath, rushed upon me. Bewildered as I was, the English instinct of giving as good as I got prompted me. One antagonist, stunned by a well-directed blow, dropped like an ox beneath the pole-axe; a second was tripped up, and the pistol wrested from his grasp; but then a flash of blinding fire glared before my eye, and next all grew black and hushed and quiet, and the very world seemed to swim away from me as I fainted.

When I regained my senses it was night. The stars were twinkling above us, and the wash and ripple of the river were the first sounds which reached my dulled ear. How my head ached! The throbbing pains it occasioned me made me try to lift my hands to my brow; but I could not stir. I was bound and helpless, and I groaned aloud.

"Is it you, Captain Burton?" said a lugubrious voice near me. "Deed, then, but I'm glad to hear ye speak, though 'tis that a way, for I thocht ye were dead."

"What has happened, Mac?" I asked feebly. "Can you not help me to get up? Who boarded us—pirates, or——"

"Nae pirates, captain," interrupted the mate. "The job's a poleetical one, nae doubt; and Sharpe himself was a saint to yon fause-tongued loon o' a bishop, as he ca'ed himself, the ringleader o' the gang. And as for helping ye, laddie, how can I do it, seeing I lie here, tied neck and heels, like a calf for the shambles? Brown, and the fireman, and the rest of the crew, are all in irons below, with the hatches battened down upon them. The overseer and the raft-labourers have run off, frightened, puir chieks, out o' their bits o' wits, and the major and his Cossack reivers are about as comfortable, Captain Burton, as ourselves. Our best hope is in the coming o' the police."

But alas! when the police and military, in the grey dawn, came lagging up in obedience to the summons of the solitary Cossack who had ridden off unharmed, we found that from the Polish frying-pan we had been promoted to the Russian fire. The major, who had passed some hours in impatient durance, tied to a willow-tree, with a gag between his teeth, and a cord around his wrists, actually foamed with rage when we were hustled into his presence.

"But for your help, English hounds,"

he reiterated, "yonder rebel scum could not have interfered with the emperor's justice. Prisoners have been rescued. Loyal soldiers have been bruised, disarmed, and deprived of their horses. I myself—— Here, corporal, take the scoundrels away. They shall suffer for the success of their rascally accomplices."

Macgregor and Brown, being able to walk, were sent off to Kiew, each with his right wrist chained to the stirrup-leather of a mounted policeman, while I, on account of the weakness caused by a severe blow on the head inflicted with the but-end of a pistol, was conveyed in a jolting country cart to Tchernigov, where I was duly lodged in prison.

Very bitter were my reflections as I lay on my hard pallet-bed, watching the scanty sunbeams that played upon the barred window of my cell, and listening to the shrill squeaks and pattering feet of rats, distressingly tame, that haunted the jail. What was I to do? My employers would probably supersede me as commander of the Fair Helen. Of Siberia I had no serious fear, but a long imprisonment might end only in expulsion from Russia. Annie was lost to me. I knew the rooted prejudices of her father too well to believe that he would ever accept a son-in-law who had conspired against the imperial authorities. And who was to persuade Mr. Clements that I was blameless in the matter? I could fancy him in his arm-chair, stolidly declaring, in reply to Annie's pleadings on my behalf, that there was no smoke without fire, and that as I had made my bed, so I must lie. And so weeks went by.

"Mr. Burton, or Captain Burton, you are free!" It was an officer of rank who spoke, pleasantly enough, tapping his boots with his gold-mounted riding-whip as he stood on the damp stone floor of my cell, with the door open behind him, admitting welcome air and daylight. "Your innocence, and that of the other British subjects confined at Kiew, has been at last fully proved by the confession of the principal rebel, Count Demetrius Sobieski, wounded and taken at Wilna. Ah, I see you do not know of whom I talk. Well, he was your episcopal passenger."

"The bishop?" I asked, half stupefied.

"Yes, the bishop," replied the general, with a laugh. "The students and the last batch of raft-labourers being, all of them, disbanded Polish soldiers, who were willing to risk their lives for the rescue of

the Minsk prisoners; an exploit in which they succeeded only too completely. As for the nuns, two of them were men in female apparel, and the others were simply Polish ladies of noble birth, whose husbands were among the exiles, and who were resolved to aid in their deliverance, or to follow them to Irkutsk. Your vessel, the Fair Helen, you will find at Kiew, with your mate and engineer on board of her. And now, Mr. Burton, it only remains for me, on the part of Government, to express our regrets, &c."

Annie and I are married, years since, and I command a ship of which I am also part owner; but we do not live within the range of green-and-white frontier posts, that mark the Czar's dominions.

TO PARIS AND BACK IN 1802.

On the 4th of August, 1802, a party of English travellers; consisting of two gentlemen and three ladies, a man-servant and a lady's-maid, with a courier in attendance; travelling in a barouche and a coach—"the former very light, containing ourselves only, the latter, with the baggage and servants"—arrived at the Ship Inn, Dover, in time for an early breakfast, and in hopes of sailing the same day for France. The wind would not serve, however, and they were compelled to wait until nine o'clock on the following morning. Resisting the importunities of a packet-master, who urged them to hire his vessel for their exclusive use at a charge of twenty-five guineas, they set sail in the ordinary Dover packet, paying for the voyage one guinea apiece, and two guineas for each carriage. Before embarking, they arranged with a banker at Dover for a credit at Calais, so as to be furnished with the money "best suited to travelling in France." They pronounced the Dover packets "noble vessels, well-found, and fitted with every possible accommodation." There were altogether some fifty passengers on board: "very decent people, by whom, as the weather was very fine, we were not the least annoyed." The voyage occupied four hours.

The war was over for a while—for but a little while, as was presently demonstrated. The Continent, so long closed against the British excursionists of the period, was now opened to them again by the Peace of Amiens. They rushed in shoals across the Channel. For years,

grand tours—so prized by the noble and gentle of England—and trips to Paris had alike been impossible. A generation was growing up, wholly ignorant of France and Frenchmen, save as forbidden ground and the natural enemies of Britons. But now all was to be changed. Early in June, 1802, there were said to be upwards of six thousand English subjects in Paris alone, the numbers greatly increasing as the year advanced. The political tourists were numerous; among them Fox and his nephew, Lord Holland, Erskine, General Fitzpatrick, and Lord St. John—eager to attend the levees of the First Consul, to pay homage to his genius as a ruler of men, and to express hopes for the endurance of peace, and the cordial alliance of England and France. But the majority of the travellers were no doubt moved simply by curiosity; they came to see and to be surprised. Everything was so new and fresh—so different to what had been expected.

Our party found themselves, on landing, surrounded by hundreds of "the strangest figures imaginable"—women with fly-caps, and no shoes and stockings; men, half-naked, and in rags, with gold-earrings, &c.; and then we are informed that "an Englishman, prepared as he is by all he has heard for the change, is still most wonderfully surprised that so short a distance should make such a difference in the manners, the dress, the everything which surrounds him." For it should be stated that the leader of the expedition under mention, some years after his safe return to England, published an account of the adventures of himself and his friends in the French capital. The book, which did not appear until 1814, when another interval of peace was permitting re-entry into France, bears the lengthy title of *Journal of a Party of Pleasure to Paris in the month of August, 1802*; by which any person intending to take such a journey, may form an accurate idea of the expense that would attend it, and the amusement he would probably receive. The volume is adorned by aquatint illustrations of French scenery and costume, after drawings by the author, of commendable spirit and adroitness.

After some detention for the examination of their passports, the travellers proceeded to Dessein's Hotel, which Sterne's Sentimental Journey had rendered famous. They dined elegantly, if lightly, at half-past six, drinking champagne, Côte Rotie, and Vin de Chablis. "They gave us an

elegant dessert, and served the cheese with it, which was quite new to us." Before dinner they visited the theatre, which was within the walls of the hotel, and not in a very clean condition, having been used as a warehouse during the war. They were much struck by the politeness of two French gentlemen, who gave up their seats to the English ladies. "This they did with such an easy, yet soliciting politeness, that we could not refuse; and which, contrasted with the rude behaviour of some of our box-lobby loungers, left a very predominant impression in favour of French politesse." The performance consisted of a little comic opera; they pronounced the music "really pretty," and the actors "tolerably good;" one in particular, an old man, reminding them of their favourite Parsons—the original Crabtree of the School for Scandal.

From Calais they journeyed to Boulogne in their own carriages, which had been much scratched and injured in the course of their voyage across the Channel. They remarked that, as yet, they had not seen a clean shirt in France; that the labouring men wore, immense cocked hats while driving their carts, and that few of the postillions possessed either shirt or stocking; that they were nevertheless gay, and self-conceited to a degree, all taking snuff, and being, in their own opinion, men of great consequence. They noted, moreover, among their first impressions of the French, that they were a century behind the English in many of the details of civilisation, but that their great quickness and versatility of talent were visible in everything. "The common people also seem to be much better informed than ours; and since the Revolution, have an air of independence about them which they did not possess before."

Quitting Boulogne, they proceeded towards Abbeville, stopping at Montreuil to dine. They observed, that the many châteaux they passed on the road were half-ruined and forsaken, or only partially inhabited, and that the crops were, in general, extremely thin. Abbeville, they found, had suffered much from the Revolution. The place wore a general air of poverty and desolation, and the street beggars were so numerous, that it was difficult to avoid driving over them. The weather was now intensely hot. The travellers resolved to rest during the day, and to continue their route at night. The ladies expressed some alarm at the thought of

travelling at night in a strange country, but they were consoled by the information, that the post laws in France were very severe, and that it was impossible for the postillions to be concerned in any robbery without immediate detection. "My friend and I rode by turns on the box of the barouche, to watch that all things went on right, and we carried a brace of loaded pistols each; however, we had no occasion to make use of them." The travellers arrived at the gates of Paris by seven o'clock in the morning of the 9th August. Detained for the examination of their passports, they were presently lodged magnificently at the Hôtel Richelieu. They agreed to pay ten louis per week for their apartments, comprising an ante-chamber, a dining and drawing room, opening into bed-rooms and dressing-rooms, all very elegantly furnished; and twenty louis for their board. They engaged a lacquy de place at four livres per day, "providing himself, and for our carriage and horses at the rate of twenty-five guineas a month." After a warm bath at the Chinese baths on the boulevard—"commodious, but dear"—the travellers set out on their first ramble through the streets of Paris, noting, as they went, the height and whiteness of the houses; the public buildings, "so much handsomer than ours;" and the absence of a paved footway, "the carriages driving quite close to the houses, to the great inconvenience and danger of the walkers."

It was necessary, of course, to walk to the gardens of the Tuileries through the Place de la Révolution, formerly the Place Louis Quinze, and to give a "tributary sigh" to the memory of Louis the Sixteenth on the spot where his life was sacrificed; and to contemplate with the liveliest interest the various scenes "of the most dreadful and bloody tragedies that ever disgraced a civilised people;" and to inspect the Place du Carrousel with its bronze horses brought from Venice—"a kind of horse very different from those we admire, of rounder proportions, and with much fuller necks; but the workmanship most exquisite, and the heads having a character of fiery spirit most wondrously well represented."—It is noted, that at the corner of one of the streets leading out of the square, an attempt had been made on the life of Bonaparte, by the explosion of a powder-waggon as he was passing on his way to the opera; the corner-houses still exhibiting marks of the injuries they had received on the occasion. The travellers

then visit the Palais Royal, and observe curiously its long square and colonnades, its open garden and brilliant shops, with magnificent rooms above devoted to gaming purposes. The company they found to be very bad indeed. Examining the accounts of their expenditure, they discover that the journey from Calais to Paris, "including ten horses with two English carriages, and all expenses of living well, but not extravagantly, on the road," had cost about fifty pounds.

They waited upon Mr. Merry, the English minister, who received them politely; and then they visited the Louvre, to be duly impressed by its statues and pictures. After dinner, the heat being too great to permit of their going to any of the theatres, they went at about ten o'clock to Frescati, "an entertainment somewhat like our Vauxhall, but on a smaller and far more elegant scale." The company was a *mélange*; the slovenliness of the men contrasting with the elegant dress of the women, and greatly injuring the general effect. It was observed that the ladies had wisely abandoned the use of rouge, and that the fashion of twisting the hair into great greasy ringlets was very unbecoming; but in all other respects their system of dress was held to be "very advantageous to personal beauty." Upon another occasion, they visited Tivoli, an entertainment of the Frescati class, but less elegant, on a larger scale and entirely in the open air. Various diversions were in progress—fireworks, music, tumbling, ombres chinoises, and dancing upon a large platform. And here our English travellers first made acquaintance with a famous dance, and our journalist entered in his sketch-book an ingenious drawing of its peculiarities. "It is called a *valse*," he writes, "and it was danced by about two hundred couple, to a tune extremely slow, each couple turning each other round and round, till they have completed the circle of the whole platform. The attitudes of the women are tasteful and sportive, to say no more of them; but of the men I can say nothing, they were so dirty and vulgar that they only excited disgust. This dance, though very amusing to the lookers-on, and doubtless, to the performers, will, I think, never become the fashion in England." Our traveller had not the gift of prophecy.

This sight-seeing was interrupted by adventures in quest of French lace—which, being purchased, proved to be of English manufacture—French works of art, old

china, and old ornamental furniture, the pillage of various palaces and châteaux in the fiercest day of the Revolution. The brokers' shops are described as abounding in choice specimens of such property. The chief buildings of Paris are in turn visited, Notre Dame, the Hôtel des Invalides, the churches of Ste. Généviève and St. Sulpice, &c. Then the Gobelin tapestries are inspected, the Jardin des Plantes, and an entertainment called Robertson's Phantasmagoria, "which is in itself very similar to what was exhibited last spring in London."

Starting at four o'clock in the morning, in a French cabriolet, with post-horses, the tourists spent a day at Versailles; resting awhile at Sèvres, to change horses and to visit its famous porcelain manufactory. The carriage is described as resembling the worst kind of old-fashioned English "buggy," with the head up and fixed, and a fixed apron, with a wretched cart-horse in the shafts, and by its side another cart-horse mounted by a postillion in immense jack-boots, the courier galloping in front on a pony. The harness was made chiefly of ropes in a very infirm condition, needing much knotting and splicing before a start could be effected. Conducted by a ragged rascal in a cocked hat, who undertook to be their cicerone, they viewed the splendours of Versailles, with an eye, however, to the havoc and devastation wrought by the revolutionary mob. In the beautiful theatre, they discovered, piled up at the back of the stage, certain scenes inscribed, "painted for the tragedy of King Lear, in 1783;" relics of the performance before Louis the Fifteenth and his court, of M. Ducis's adaptation of Shakespeare. They dined at the Little Trianon, then occupied by a *traiteur*, in a small room that had been the boudoir of Marie Antoinette, but was now stripped of its former luxurious fittings. From the aqueduct of Marly they surveyed Malmaison, the residence of Bonaparte, having very much the appearance of an English house, and a country villa that had once been occupied by the famous Madame Du Barry. At dinner they displayed their superiority to prejudice by tasting a fricassée of frogs. "They were very good, and in flavour relished much like a young chicken. If Englishmen would give up the prejudice they have conceived against them, I see no reason why they might not be generally eaten."

On Sunday, the 15th of August, the birthday of Bonaparte, and the day of his

proclamation as consul for life, Paris was illuminated, fireworks were displayed upon the Seine, the theatres were opened gratis to the public, coloured lamps gleamed from the towers of Notre Dame, Te Deums were sung in the churches, and an uncle of Bonaparte's was installed as a bishop. The private houses, however, did not exhibit lights in the windows, to the surprise of our English friends, who thought, too, that the gaiety of the spectacle was lessened by the shabbiness of the equipages, and the fact that only the servants of Bonaparte and the ambassadors wore liveries.

At the Théâtre de la République our friends were but poorly entertained. "The opera was very dull, and the singing in a bad taste." The scenery and dresses, however, were pronounced magnificent and picturesque, and the dancing extremely good. "Though the great Vestris did not perform that night, we were much pleased with the agile graces of De Hayes as well as those of several female dancers." The house was thought to be inferior in size and splendour to our own opera-house, and the company very indifferent. The women were elegant and lovely; but the men, "ill-dressed, ill-mannered, and ill-bred, which quite spoiled the effect of an opera-house." The system of lighting the theatre by means of "a double circle, of immense diameter, of patent lamps," suspended from the ceiling, so as not to intercept the view of the spectators, was judged to be "striking and beautiful, and infinitely preferable to our mode of placing chandeliers between the boxes."

The Théâtre Louvois furnished more amusement. Here were presented three well-acted comic pieces, which lasted, however, "an uncommon length of time." The natural manner of the actors is particularly admired. "The spectator would almost think he was looking into a private room, where the people were conversing familiarly of their own affairs." And the English visitors note, as another pleasing circumstance, the attention and quietness of the audience. "The least noise is strongly reprobated, no boisterous carelessness of the shutting of doors, or women of fashion talking louder than the actors. This must be ranked amongst the perfections of the French people; at the same time that our want of decorum in these particulars calls loudly for reformation."

The classical drama of France presented few attractions to our travellers. They attend a performance of one of Voltaire's

tragedies at the Théâtre Français, scorning themselves as being "fortunate in being present only during the last t acts, as more would have fatigued us death." Yet the leading character sustained by an actor of much celebrity who, as they were informed, "had been noticed by Kemble." And they judge that he had formed himself somewhat the Kemble model; but had given to Kemble's faults a French colouring, till by no means lessened them. They found his quick transitions from the strong emotions of love or rage, or such violent passions, into perfect calmness, by means consistent with the excellence of his histrionic art. The actor's name is mentioned, but it seems probable that our friends are speaking of Talma.

As yet they had not seen the Fi Consul. But one night at the opera they perceived Cambaçeres in a box, attended by a considerable retinue, and they learned from one of the guards that Bonaparte was at the Français. They hurried thither. They found him occupying a balcony near the stage, accompanied by other generals, and by Madame Bonaparte and certain other ladies. "He is, as everyone has heard, a little man, but with an intelligent, spirited countenance, and an eye that speaks an uncommon mind; he wears his dark hair out of powder, very short and was dressed in a blue coat most richly embroidered. He is somewhat like the gallant antagonist Sir Sydney Smith—least, more so than any other person I can recollect. The prints we have of him in England are not very like." The play ended, Bonaparte came forward to the front of the box and gracefully took leave, making three respectful bows to the audience, and apparently much pleased with the applause he had obtained. Our English friends were much gratified that they had seen so extraordinary a man. They had not desired to attend his levee and otherwise he was rarely visible, except on the review days at the beginning of each month.

They returned to the opera to see the grand ballet of The Judgment of Paris splendid, but startling, in regard to the unclad condition of the dancers. Vest appeared. "He is grown somewhat old but still maintains his distinguished pre-eminence; he danced little, but that little was in a style of excellence worthy of great fame." They had remarked by that time, that *superbe* is a term applied indiscriminately to everything in France, a

observed as much to a French gentleman, who retorted "that there is a term which English make fully as frequent use of, the adjective *shocking*, which they say is perpetually in our mouths. Whether our term *shocking* is not often more applicable than theirs of *superbe*, it was not for me to decide."

They were now on the eve of returning home; the day of reckoning was at hand. They suffered much from the rapacity of their host, and express bitterly their sense of the folly of relying much on the honour of a French tradesman. Their last hours in Paris were indeed full of troubles, "for, accustomed as you may be to being cheated, there are always some new and unexpected impositions which tax your patience severely to submit to patiently, as no Englishman ought to do, or at least as Frenchmen think he ought to do." They had studied to behave on all occasions with particular civility, but their tempers gave way at some crowning act of fraud on the part of their landlord; and as they drove away from the Hôtel Richelieu, they fairly flung at his head the last nine livres he had demanded of them, on account of breakfasts they had already paid for. While admitting the gratification their trip had afforded them, they quitted Paris without the least regret, sensible that they had been as nobly cheated as five persons well could be, and "as John Bull is apt to do, looking forward with increased pleasure to the liberty, cleanliness, and roast beef of Old England."

The journey to the coast had its troubles. They were overtaken by severe storms, the axle of their carriage gave way, and the impositions of the roadside innkeepers were most intolerable. Nor did their troubles cease with their arrival at Calais, although they renew their admiration of its hotel, pronouncing it incomparable for comfort. "So pleasant do I think it, that I recommend any English party wishing to have a good idea of France—which really Calais gives—and at the same time to live well, to go over and spend a few days there, even if they can go no farther."

As they desired to be landed at Ramsgate, it was necessary to hire a French vessel for that purpose, and to pay a charge of twenty-four guineas. No English vessel was then permitted, upon any pretence, to carry back passengers—a French regulation, remarkable for its lack of reason and justice. The *Parfaite Union*, a very excellent vessel, well found and manned, and fitted with every elegant accommodation,

was therefore secured. There was every reason to hope that the travellers would reach Ramsgate in about four hours. But the wind chopped round, the rain fell heavily, and it became bitterly cold. The *Parfaite Union* beat about the Channel for thirteen hours, until all hope of reaching Ramsgate had to be abandoned, and it was necessary to run for Dover. "Never were people more rejoiced to be relieved from wet, cold, sickness, and hunger, than ourselves." And our journalist concludes his labours with an explanation that he has simply endeavoured to serve those of his countrymen who had a similar expedition in contemplation, or to enable others to say, in the words of Sancho Panza, "that they can see all these things dryshod at home." He especially addresses himself to such English families as, however well appointed with servants and fearless of expense, might, for lack of proper information, and owing to the very different methods of conducting everything in France, encounter so many obstacles that their gratification would be much diminished, and their money consumed, but in increasing their own troubles.

It may be noted that hostilities between England and France were resumed in May, 1803, when Bonaparte detained as prisoners of war all the English of whatsoever condition found on French territory. Some ten thousand British subjects, of nearly every class and condition, thus fell into Bonaparte's clutches. There were consequently no more trips to Paris and back, until the restoration of Louis the Eighteenth and the departure of Bonaparte for Elba in May, 1814.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. B. FRANCOILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND GEMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER THE LAST. AFTER ALL.

COMBIE might have spared himself the pains and the wasted time of searching for Celia behind the scenes. The news of her father's sudden illness flew fast enough; rumour and gossip knew their way about those back stairs and twisted ways better than a Scotch doctor. It came to her in her dressing-room, where Beasy Gaveston had hurried to her at the instant of her collapse upon the stage; and it was brought her by Walter Gordon, in whom a little of his old omnipresence seemed, for once, to

revive. He spoke to Bessy at the door; Bessy told Celia by throwing her arms round her neck and crying, without words.

"I have killed him!" cried Celia.

"He has nearly killed you, you mean!" cried Bessy, as fiercely as a young hen. "No; John March isn't the sort of man to get killed; I wish he—I mean I wish others were as unlikely. You must come, though, if it's only because of what they'll say in Deepweald. Duty's always disagreeable you know, or else where's the merit?"

"Oh, it isn't that—but how should you know? But I must come—if it is only to let him curse me before he dies."

"Come too!" whispered Bessy to Walter, as they passed him on their way into the passage. The chaperon felt as if she had been chosen by Fate to lead a victim to an ogre, and clutched instinctively at the first semblance of a man she could find by the way. Walter signed to her that he would not leave them, and then drew back into the dark to let them pass before him towards the manager's room. He knew but one thing on earth—that it was no time to speak to Celia then. The time for his arm to give her strength was gone; gone all the more surely that no man ever longed with a fuller heart that he had not let it go.

So it happened that Celia entered Prosper's room hardly half a minute after Comrie had left it in search of her. Till she came in with Bessy, followed by Walter, nobody was there, during that half minute, but Prosper himself and John March, or Andrew Gordon; we may call him now as we will. He half raised himself at the sight of her, while Prosper, who had the air of a gaoler rather than of a nurse, stood scowling with thunder too intense for explosion. But it was not the enraged manager whom Celia feared. She knew nothing of what Cleopatra's fate had been; and if failure alone had killed her father, what untold death would the cause be, if he ever came to know—if that poison in the bouquet were not a lie! She burned to throw herself at his feet; and she could only stand trembling at the door.

"Celia!" he said eagerly, "did you hear the end?"

Was it cruel sarcasm, or was his mind wandering?

"No?" he answered for her. "Then you have never heard the Cleopatra—you never will. Heaven forgive me, for thinking I could make a soul. This is their doing; the stars were wiser than I. I under-

stand nothing; I only know that Art has triumphed to-night for ever and ever. From this night, we have no more to do with it, nor it with us, any more. Let those who gained the triumph keep the glory. I have done my part; you have tried to do yours; now we will go and live in peace, for even the arch-enemy has become the arch-propheteess of the light, and given it the victory. It is a wonder and a mystery; but so are all things—none less, none more. You know to what I vowed you from your cradle; and to-night I set you free."

Could he be dreaming of triumph in the midst of despair? Had she brought upon him even worse than death, and left it to Nature to solace him with madness as the only comfort left for life to give him? Could she do nothing, not one least thing, for him, in all her days, but turn away, and leave him to the consolation of a madman's dream? She even longed for his reproaches—they would have been her due. Just twice in her whole life, and twice only, the veil had, for one passing moment, been lifted from between the hearts of the father and daughter, so unlike on the surface, so alike in the depths that are out of eye-reach; but now the same force seemed at once to tear in pieces her heart and the veil together. She could hold herself no longer; she threw herself on her knees before him.

"Father!" she cried out; "oh, if you could only hear—oh, if you could only know!"

It was the whole of the life, crushed by his hand, that cried out from her. He had never heard with his heart. He had never known. If he had, surely their two lives would have found room for love as well as duty; and the love would not die between them because all else had died. That he could not hear her cry was but a symbol of deeper things. For the voice is the soul; and if his ears had not been closed, Celia's soul must have reached into his heart and told him all that might have been.

"Celia," he said, very calmly, "I do hear—I do know. Yes; I hear. God was good enough to let me hear the end. Do you wonder? It does not seem strange to me. I have been blind, not deaf, Celia. Do you understand? No; you cannot. At least, not all. There is no need. But—if you knew how I have crushed my own heart in trying to give you a soul—you would forgive me, if you knew."

"Father! I forgive you!"

"Yes; you would forgive me, and you do. And it is not too late. One can no more crush a heart, thank God, than one can make a soul—by one's own will—unless, maybe, one's own."

"Indeed, I did my best. But, do you know? Is it true?"

To Prosper on his hearth-rug, to Walter Gordon and Bessy Gaveston in the doorway, perhaps to others who were listening with their eyes, the two were talking in an unknown tongue. But it was not so.

"Then, you did not forget? Your voice did not fail?"

"Is it true that she is——?" She handed him the poisoned paper, which had never left her fingers.

"It is the one secret I would have died with—but—yes, it is true. Listen to me, Celia. No, there is no need for us to be alone. There may not be too much time, and we have been alone only too long. Your mother—you have thought I loved nothing on earth but the score, no—I loved your mother, Celia, with all that there was of me to love any creature in the world. I had found her in Rome, a mere voice without aim, or form, or sound. I destined her for such glory as had never been the lot of woman. I believed that I had transformed her into a soul. But," he said, facing round upon Prosper, "she was bought like the rest; and when I found her transformed, not into a soul, but into a Clari, I knew what alone had to be done. For Art's sake I must turn love into hate, and tear from my own breast the soul that I had planted there. I was right, Celia. Never for one moment have I doubted that—not one," he said, with hurried defiance, as if all things depended on his denial. "But never for one moment have I doubted that she, and she alone, was made for the work I had to do. You do not know what it means to have crushed the love of your life for Art's and Truth's sake."

Had she not? She sighed, but he did not hear the sigh.

"That is what I have done. I have saved Art from her, and you from her; and now, by some strange path, she has been given back to Art, and you are her child—hers and mine. You may see her now. Perhaps I wronged her a little; I suppose it hurts a woman more than we know to lose her child. She will do you no harm now; you are free, and she has atoned. As for me—Noëmi!"

Celia started round—there stood Clari,

in her black and diamonds, grand and calm. But neither so grand nor so calm as the musician, as he raised himself still higher on his couch and bowed, like an ambassador to a queen.

"I thank you in the name of Art, madame!"

But what were the bewildering mazes through which the artist's still darkened, perhaps darkening brain was still groping, what Celia's wayward battle of old and new emotions to the real woman who had at last found herself, after all these years? He thanked her in the name of Art, and bowed. She cried out, "Andrea mio!" and threw herself at his feet, clasping both his hands. "Ah, you have hated me, because you love me? I know what that means—I know. And we have hated each other, you and I, as only we could hate, and have never loved but each other in all the world; and now we know, *corpo del centesimo cane*, we know now——"

Italian flame and oriental fire recked nothing of time, or place, or standers-by; the woman who had had all things—but love, had heard that she had been loved with the whole of love all her days; and she believed because she knew. She alone had a soul large enough to comprehend what all had heard. What had she not lost—what might not have been; even now, the dregs and lees of life might be worth the draining, though the full sweetness might be gone. He had been her tyrant, but he had loved her; he had sacrificed her to an idol, but he had loved her only; he had robbed her of even a child's love, but he had loved her always. Comrie would have dared most things for medicine's sake, but even he kept aloof as this woman, with all her tragedy turned to nature and set on fire, guarded her master with her arms.

As for him—triumph had come to him, but Noëmi has come back to him. And he said:

"Nunc dimittis, Domine . . . for mine Ears have Heard thy salvation . . . Bring me my score."

II.

Here, I take it, this voyage in somewhat strange and unfamiliar waters of life comes to a natural end. There are points and lines beyond which ships can sail, but no pen can follow them; I mean the waters of death, though they are familiar, and not strange. Whether the force of habit called for the vocal and instrumental parts of the thing called Cleopatra, or whether the

opening inward eyes of the musician caught infinite possibilities of new scores in new worlds, where the stars sing aloud for joy in their courses, not even the omniscient Prosper could tell. It seems enough, not that John March died in the glory he had lived for—that was nothing—but that he died in the arms of Noëmi; understanding and understood by the only hearts that cared for him, or for whom he cared. If it was but for a moment—even such a moment is more than comes to most men between cradle and grave. "Call no man happy till he dies?" Rather call no man unhappy till he has lived; and John March least of all.

Lady Quorne and Ilma Krasinski, the Parnassus and Prosper, Cleopatra and Clari, Lindenheim and London, fade back into dreamland. But the old grey tower of Deepweald, whence this voyage of souls began, still turns to rose in the sunset; and round its highest mouldings, and among the elms, the rocks still curl and caw, making finer harmonies than Cleopatra, sweeter songs than Clari's. I cannot tell if the great work, made under its shadow, had revolutionised the world. I think not; for the world is not so easy to turn upside down, even in the matter of a song. Vulgarity, buffoonery, æsthetic affectation, cliquism, Prosperism, fashion, and cant, are fairly able to hold their own, and have as yet shown but few signs of dying; and it is good they should live, for it is good they fight them. Enough that one stout soldier died in the faith that the fight was won. But, however it might be, and may be, with the world, Deepweald, after three whole months, was still—Deepweald. Mrs. Swann and Miss Hayward had not called a Dorcas meeting to petition Parliament against the misuse of semi-grand pianos, and to indict Mr. Lucas, their highly respectable and efficient organist, as a charlatan.

Nor, as yet, had the curate of St. Anselm's received a mitre in recognition of his wife's complaisance in looking after the health and morals of a prima donna. He was curate of St. Anselm's still; and, indeed, was in all things the same, except in having two new guests under his roof: Hope, and Celia.

It was not out of complaisance to the caprice of a countess that Bessy Gaveston had taken Celia home with her to Deepweald. It was just out of her own sweet nature and good heart, because Celia had no friends, and nowhere to go, and not enough pride or independence to stand

alone, when the whole rock whereon her life had been built was shattered at a blow. The only thing that was not strange in life seemed to her terribly strange. For the first time she was both in Deepweald and at home.

Is it very terrible to say that she mourned, at heart, for her father less than if he had not been a tyrant, whose whole love for her had been shown by trying to turn her into a machine? Slaves may honestly mourn for their masters; and Celia mourned with her heart even more than with her eyes; but it was as a slave after all, and as a slave set free. Such grief is honest; too honest to affect impossible depths of feeling. But she did better than mourn for his loss, which was no loss; she understood him. And if the great soul, set free from its narrow body, was still conscious anywhere in the world, it might have been amply content with such mourning. Mrs. Swann said: "How easily she takes it, to be sure!" Mr. Swann said: "No wonder!" Bessy said: "It's because she feels too deep for tears." They were all wrong. It was because she knew.

On Sunday morning, Lucas, the organist, was hurrying over a late breakfast in the parlour sacred to the memory of Cleopatra. The ghost of the grim old organist would have lost itself in the orderliness that reigned in that Angean stable. And yet Lucas was no Hercules—he was only a married man, with a tidy wife who believed in dusters. It was too near church-time to expect callers. But one came; an old visitor from Lindenheim.

"Why—Herr Walter! What brings you here?"

"Why not? I knew Deepweald before you."

"Mrs. Lucas—Mr. Gordon. And breakfast—Mr. Gordon, if you will."

"Thank you; I became intimate with breakfast hours ago."

"Then I'll have the pleasure of introducing you to dinner in a few hours. Meanwhile, you shall come to church, and hear me play; though I can't promise you Fritz Meyer to blow. You remember Waaren?"

"Thank you; but I've heard you play."

"But not here."

"Yes; here. The first time you ever played in Deepweald."

"What! when I played to Clari, and thought it was my Lady Quorne? That was a fearful joke—worse than Waaren. By-the-way, you know Clari? What's

come of her? I never see her name in anything."

Walter both frowned and smiled.

"Nobody knows Clari."

"What! you don't mean to say she's—"

"Bah! I mean I thought I knew her face; but I didn't, that's all. She made tremendous hit last season, and has engaged herself to Prosper for the remainder time. That's all. She's singing in Moscow, or Sumatra, or Paris, or somewhere, for a fortune a night, and is allowed to eat oysters by the bushel."

"Oysters?"

"Yes; I believe she is Cleopatra, and lives on pearls."

After all, it had been the dead baby, the child for vengeance, whom Noëmi Barnard loved; not the grown-up girl. It was she; and what had Giulia Clari to do with Celia March, after all? Romance itself has not the magic to make a prima donna, for more than one night, live backward twenty-five years, and to be as if seas and diamonds had never been. She

settled down, and rest on the love of a girl, who had been the empress of an emperor? Who was still, and more than ever, empress of that greater world—the age? Not she. Diamonds are immortal, and the love for them never dies. But she, who understood the master-soul of them all; and, doubtless, he understood her, too. And henceforth, under all her moods, she had a soul, faithful to her light, which was—song.

Thinking of these things, and of some others, more suitable to the place than they appear, Walter Gordon took his seat in the chancel; and there, in the middle of the middle benches, he looked for and found Celia. For what else was he there? It had not struck him that she would naturally have been at St. Anselm's. Where else should John March's daughter worship, but where her father had made her raise up in such music as the great cathedral would never hear again? She lingered a little after the rest. He joined her at the south porch under the elms.

"You have had my letter?" were his first words.

"Yes."

"And——?"

He half held out his hand, but she said nothing, and did not move even a finger.

"Celia, do you remember what I asked you that afternoon by the Thames? You did not say 'Yes' then. I let it slip, like a fool; you would have said it, Celia, but I always let everything slip, like a fool. But never again. Say 'Yes,' Celia!"

Still no word.

"I am not taking you by surprise. I wrote. You knew what I would come to say. I told you I know now what I never knew, your glorious self-devotion, your— Everything that makes me feel the meanest sham alive. I want you to make a man of me. I have never been a man; I have been a fool. Let me learn strength from you. Celia, when you came to Linden-heim I saw my one woman of all women, and I did not know it; I went on following false lights and their shadows. I let others help you. I let even poor Comrie starve himself for days to find you gloves, while I—Heaven forgive me!—I went wandering off abroad, thinking. I shall never forgive myself for what I thought of him who is dead, and you. Is a man never to be pardoned because he has not seen the light till the eleventh hour? I am not a strong man, Celia; I am not wise; but I love you with all my heart and soul, and shall, and must, for all my days."

Why had he not said so months ago? Celia's blushing days were past; but the white rose has its own way of blushing, and of bending to the wind.

"Do you remember Linden-heim?" said she.

"Do I remember the heaven that I saw, and passed by on the other side?"

"You know who I am? A wretched stage failure—a——"

"Hush! I know that I love you, that I want to marry you, and that there is none but you, your own self, to say 'Yes' or 'No.' Say—which is it to be?"

She did not think: "What will they say in Deepweald—he rich, and I poor?" She put out her hand—under the elms.

"Is that 'Yes'?" Celia—I believe—I swear that I have loved you, down in my real heart, ever since we walked through the Rosenthal! And you have loved me—is it yet one minute? Is it——?"

She put her hand into her bosom, and drew thence what might have been a bunch of violets—once upon a time.

"How long have I kept these?" said she.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LV. HOW COULD HE HELP IT ?

WHEN he returned she was out in the garden, with her hat on and a mallet in her hand ; but she was seated on one of a cluster of garden-chairs under a great cedar-tree. "I think it's almost too hot to play," she said. It was an August afternoon, and the sun was very bright in the heavens. Jack was of course quite willing to sit under the cedar-tree, instead of playing croquet. He was prepared to do whatever she wished. If he could only know what subjects she would prefer, he would talk about them and nothing else. "How do you think papa is looking ?" she asked.

"He always looks well."

"Ah ; he was made dreadfully unhappy by that affair up in London. He never would talk about it to me ; but he was quite ill while he thought the marquis was in danger."

"I don't believe the marquis was much the worse for it."

"They said he was, and papa for some time could not get over it. Now he is elated. I wish he would not be so glad because that poor little boy has died."

"It makes a great difference to him, Lady George—and to you."

"Of course it makes a difference, and of course I feel it. I am as anxious for my husband as any other woman. If it should come fairly, I am not going to turn up my nose at it."

"Is not this fairly ?"

"Oh yes. Papa did not make the little

boy die, of course. But I don't think that people should long for things like this. If they can't keep from wishing them, they should keep their wishes to themselves. It is so like coveting other people's goods. Don't you think we ought to keep the commandments, Captain De Baron ?"

"Certainly—if we can."

"Then we oughtn't to long for other people's titles."

"If I understand it, the dean wanted to prevent somebody else from getting a title which wasn't his own. That wouldn't be breaking the commandment."

"Of course I am not finding fault with papa. He would not for worlds try to take anything that wasn't his—or mine. But it's so sad about the little boy."

"I don't think the marquis cared for him."

"Oh, he must have cared ! His only child ! And the poor mother ; think how she must feel."

"In spite of it all, I do think it's a very good thing that he's dead," said Jack, laughing.

"Then you ought to keep it to yourself, sir. It's a very horrid thing to say so. Wouldn't you like to smoke a cigar ? You may, you know. Papa always smokes out here, because he says Mr. Groschut can't see him."

"Mr. Groschut is at Rudham," said Jack, as he took a cigar out of his case and lit it.

"At Rudham ? What promotion !"

"He didn't seem to me to be a first-class sort of a fellow."

"Quite a last-class sort of fellow, if there is a last class. I'll tell you a secret, Captain De Baron. Mr. Groschut is my pet abomination. If I hate anybody, I

hate him. I think I do really hate Mr. Groschut. I almost wish that they would make him bishop of some unhealthy place."

"So that he might go away and die?"

"If the mosquitoes would eat him day and night, that would be enough. Who else was there at Rudham?"

"Mrs. Montacute Jones."

"Dear Mrs. Jones. I do like Mrs. Jones."

"And Adelaide Houghton with her husband." Mary turned up her nose and made a grimace, as the Houghtons were named. "You used to be very fond of Adelaide."

"Very fond is a long word. We were by way of being friends; but we are friends no longer."

"Tell me what she did to offend you, Lady George. I know there was something."

"You are her cousin. Of course I am not going to abuse her to you."

"She's not half so much my cousin as you are my friend—if I may say so. What did she do or what did she say?"

"She painted her face."

"If you're going to quarrel, Lady George, with every woman in London who does that, you'll have a great many enemies."

"And the hair at the back of her head got bigger and bigger every month. Papa always quotes something about Dr. Fell, when he's asked why he does not like anybody. She's Dr. Fell to me."

"I don't think she quite knows why you've cut her."

"I'm quite sure she does, Captain De Baron. She knows all about it. And now, if you please, we won't talk of her any more. Who else was there at Rudham?"

"All the old set. Aunt Ju and Guss."

"Then you were happy."

"Quite so. I believe that no one knows all about that better than you do."

"You ought to have been happy."

"Lady George, I thought you always told the truth."

"I try to; and I think you ought to have been happy. You don't mean to tell me that Miss Mildmay is nothing to you?"

"She is a very old friend."

"Ought she not to be more? Though of course I have no right to ask."

"You have a right if anyone has. I haven't a friend in the world I would trust as I would you. No; she ought not to be more."

"Have you never given her a right to think that she would be more?"

He paused a moment or two before he answered. Much as he wished to trust her, anxious as he was that she should be his real friend, he could hardly bring himself to tell her all that had taken place at Rudham Park during the last day or two. Up to that time he never had given Miss Mildmay any right. So, at least, he still assured himself. But now—it certainly was different now. He desired of all things to be perfectly honest with Lady George—to be even innocent in all that he said to her; but—just for this once—he was obliged to deviate into a lie. "Never!" he said.

"Of course it is not for me to enquire further."

"It is very hard to describe the way in which such an intimacy has come about. Guss Mildmay and I have been very much thrown together; but, even had she wished it, we never could have married. We have no means."

"And yet you live like rich people."

"We have no means because we have lived like rich people."

"You have never asked her to marry you?"

"Never."

"Nor made her think that you would ask her? That comes to the same thing, Captain De Baron."

"How am I to answer that? How am I to tell it all without seeming to boast? When it first came to pass that we knew ourselves well enough to admit of such a thing being said between us, I told her that marriage was impossible. Is not that enough?"

"I suppose so," said Lady George, who remembered well every word that Guss Mildmay had said to herself. "I don't know why I should enquire about it, only I thought—"

"I know what you thought."

"What did I think?"

"That I was a heartless scoundrel!"

"No, never. If I had, I should not have—have cared about it. Perhaps it has been unfortunate."

"Most unfortunate!" Then again there was a pause, during which he went on smoking while she played with her mallet. "I wish I could tell you everything about it; only I can't. Did she ever speak to you?"

"Yes, once."

"And what did she say?"

"I cannot tell you that either."

"I have endeavoured to be honest;

but sometimes it is so difficult. One wants sometimes to tell the whole truth, but it won't come out. I am engaged to her now."

"You are engaged to her!"

"And two days since I was as free as ever."

"Then I may congratulate you."

"No, no. It makes me miserable. I do not love her. There is one other person whom I care for, and I never can care for anyone else. There is one woman whom I love, and I never really loved anyone else."

"That is very sad, Captain De Baron."

"Is it not? I can never marry Miss Mildmay."

"And yet you have promised?"

"I have promised under certain circumstances which can never, never come about."

"Why did you promise if you do not love her?"

"Cannot you understand without my telling you? I cannot tell you that. I am sure you understand."

"I suppose I do. Poor Miss Mildmay."

"And poor Jack De Baron!"

"Yes; poor Jack De Baron also! No man should talk to a girl of marrying her unless he loves her. It is different with a girl. She may come to love a man. She may love a man better than all the world, though she hardly knew him when she married him. If he is good to her, she will certainly do so. But if a man marries a woman without loving her, he will soon hate her."

"I shall never marry Miss Mildmay."

"And yet you have said you would!"

"I told you that I wanted to tell you everything. It is so pleasant to have someone to trust, even though I should be blamed as you are blaming me. It simply means that I can marry no one else."

"But you love someone?" She felt, when she was asking the question, that it was indiscreet. When the assertion was made she had not told herself that she was the woman. She had not thought it. For an instant she had tried to imagine who that other one could be. But yet, when the words were out of her mouth, she knew that they were indiscreet. Was she not indiscreet in holding any such conversation with a man who was not her brother or even her cousin? She wished that he were her cousin, so that she might become the legitimate depository of his secrets. Though she was scolding him for his misdoings,

yet she hardly liked him the less for them. She thought that she did understand how it was, and she thought that the girl was more in fault than the man. It was not till the words had passed her mouth, and the question had been asked, that she felt the indiscretion. "But you love someone else?"

"Certainly I do; but I had not meant to speak about that."

"I will enquire into no secrets."

"Is that a secret? Can it be a secret? Do you not know that ever since I knew you I have had no pleasure but in being with you, and talking to you, and looking at you?"

"Captain De Baron!" As she spoke she rose from her seat, as though she would at once leave him and go back into the house.

"You must hear me now. You must not go without hearing me. I will not say a word to offend you."

"You have offended me."

"How could I help it? What was I to do? What ought I to have said? Pray do not go, Lady George."

"I did not think you would have insulted me. I did trust you."

"You may trust me. On my honour as a gentleman, I will never say another word that you can take amiss. I wish I could tell you all my feelings. One cannot help one's love."

"A man may govern his words."

"As I trust in Heaven, I had determined that I would never say a syllable to you that I might not have spoken to my sister. Have I asked you to love me? I have not thought it possible that you should do so. I know you to be too good. It has never come within my dreams."

"It is wicked to think of it."

"I have not thought of it. I will never think of it. You are like an angel to me. If I could write poetry, I should write about you. If ever I build castles in the air, and think what I might have been if things had gone well with me, I try to fancy then that I might have had you for a wife. That is not wicked. That is not a crime. Can you be angry with me because, having got to know you as I do, I think you better, nicer, more beautiful than anyone else? Have you never really loved a friend?"

"I love my husband with all my heart—oh, better than all the world."

Jack did not quite understand this. His angel was an angel. He was sure of that.

And he wished her to be still an angel. But he could not understand how any angel could passionately love Lord George Germain—especially this angel who had been so cruelly treated by him. Had she loved him better than all the world when he walked her out of Mrs. Jones's drawing-room, reprimanding her before all the guests for her conduct in dancing the Kappa-kappa? But this was a matter not open to argument. "I may still be your friend?" he said.

"I think you had better not come again."

"Do not say that, Lady George. If I have done wrong, forgive me. I think you must admit that I could hardly help myself."

"Not help yourself!"

"Did I not tell you that I wanted you to know the whole truth? How could I make you understand about Miss Mildmay without telling it all? Say that you will forgive me."

"Say that it is not so, and then I will forgive you."

"No. It is so, and it must be so. It will remain so always, but yet you will surely forgive me, if I never speak of it again. You will forgive me and understand me, and when hereafter you see me as a middle-aged man about town, you will partly know why it is so. Oh dear; I forgot to tell you. We had another old friend of yours at Rudham—a very particular friend." Of course she had forgiven him, and now she was thankful to him for his sudden breach of the subject; but she was not herself strong enough immediately to turn to another matter.

"Who do you think was there?"

"How can I tell?"

"The baroness."

"No?"

"As large as life."

Baroness Banmann at Mr. De Baron's."

"Yes;—Baroness Banmann. Aunt Julia had contrived to get permission to bring her, and the joke was that she did us all out of our money. She got a five-pound note from me."

"What a goose you were."

"And ten from Lord Brotherton! I think that was the greatest triumph. She was down on him without the slightest compunction. I never saw a man so shot in my life. He sent me to look for the money, and she never left me till I had got it for her."

"I thought Annt Ju had had enough of her."

"I should think she has now. And we had Lord Giblet. Lord Giblet is to marry Miss Patmore Green after all."

"Poor Lord Giblet!"

"And poor Miss Patmore Green. I don't know which will have the worst of it. They can practice the Kappa-kappa together for consolation. It is all Mrs. Jones's doing, and she is determined that he shan't escape. I'm to go down to Killanoodlem and help."

"Why should you have anything to do with it?"

"Very good shooting, and plenty to eat and drink—and Giblet is a friend of mine; so I'm bound to lend a hand. And now, Lady George, I think I'll go to the hotel and be back to dinner. We are friends."

"Yes; if you promise not to offend me."

"I will never offend you. I will never say a word that all the world might not hear—except this once—to thank you." Then he seized her hand and kissed it. "You shall always be a sister to me," he said. "When I am in trouble I will come to you. Say that you will love me as a brother."

"I will always regard you as a friend."

"Regard" is a cold word, but I will make the most of it. Here is your father."

At this moment they were coming from a side path on to the lawn, and as they did so, the dean appeared upon the terrace through the Deanery room window. With the dean was Lord George, and Mary, as soon as she saw him, rushed up to him and threw her arms round his neck. "Oh George, dear, dearest George, papa said that perhaps you would come. You are going to stay?"

"He will dine here," said the dean.

"Only dine!"

"I cannot stay longer to-day," said Lord George, with his eye upon Captain De Baron. The dean had told him that De Baron was there; but still, when he saw that the man had been walking with his wife, a renewed uneasiness came upon him. It could not be right that the man, from whose arms he had rescued her on the night of the ball, should be left alone with her a whole afternoon in the Deanery garden! She was thoughtless as a child, but it seemed to him that the dean was as thoughtless as his daughter. The dean must know what people had said. The dean had himself seen that horrid dance,

with its results. The awful accusation made by the marquis had been uttered in the dean's ears. Because that had been wicked and devilishly false, the dean's folly was not the less. Lord George embraced his wife, but she knew from the touch of his arm round her waist, that there was something wrong with him.

The two men shook hands, of course, and then De Baron went out, muttering something to the dean as to his being back to dinner. "I can't say I like that young man," said Lord George.

"I like him very much," replied the dean. "He is always good-humoured, and I think he's honest. I own to a predilection for happy people."

Mary was of course soon upstairs with her husband. "I thought you would come," she said, hanging on him.

"I did not like not to see you after the news. It is important. You must feel that."

"Poor little boy! Don't you grieve for them?"

"Yes, I do. Brotherton has treated me very badly, but I do feel for him. I shall write to him and say so. But that will not alter the fact. Popenjoy is dead."

"No; it will not alter the fact." He was so solemn with her that she hardly knew how to talk to him.

"Popenjoy is dead—if he was Popenjoy. I suppose he was; but that does not signify now."

"Not in the least, I suppose."

"And if you have a son——"

"Oh George!"

"He won't be Popenjoy yet."

"Or perhaps ever."

"Or perhaps ever—but a time will probably come when he will be Popenjoy. We can't help thinking about it, you know."

"Of course not."

"I'm sure I don't want my brother to die."

"I am sure I don't."

"But the family has to be kept up. I do care about the family. They all think at Manor Cross that you should go over at once."

"Are you going to stay there, George? Of course I will go if you are going to stay there."

"They think you should come, though it were only for a few days."

"And then? Of course I will go, George, if you say so. I have had my visit with papa—as much as I had a right

to expect. And, oh George, I do so long to be with you again." Then she hung upon him and kissed him. It must have been impossible that he should be really jealous, though Captain De Baron had been there the whole day. Nor was he jealous, except with that Casarian jealousy lest she should be unfortunate enough to cause a whisper derogatory to his marital dignity.

The matter had been fully discussed at Manor Cross; and the Manor Cross conclave, meaning of course Lady Sarah, had thought that Mary should be brought to the house, if only for a day or two, if only that people in Brothershire might know that there had been no quarrel between her and her husband. That she should have visited her father might be considered as natural. It need not be accounted as quite unnatural that she should have done so without her husband. But now—now it was imperative that Brothershire should know that the mother of the future Lord Popenjoy was on good terms with the family. "Of course her position is very much altered," Lady Susanna had said in private to Lady Amelia. The old marchioness felt a real longing to see "dear Mary," and to ask becoming questions as to her condition. And it was quite understood that she was not to be required to make any cloaks or petticoats. The garments respecting which she must be solicitous for the next six months would, as the marchioness felt, be of a very august nature. Oh, that the future baby might be born at Manor Cross! The marchioness did not see why Lord George should leave the house at all. Brotherton couldn't know anything about it in Italy, and if George must go, Mary might surely be left there for the event. The marchioness declared that she could die happy if she might see another Popenjoy born in the purple of Manor Cross.

"When am I to go?" asked Mary. She was sitting now close to him, and the question was asked with full delight.

"I do not know whether you can be ready to-morrow."

"Of course I can be ready to-morrow. Oh George, to be back with you! Even for ten days it seems to be a great happiness. But if you go, then of course you will take me with you." There was a reality about this which conquered him, even in spite of Captain De Baron, so that he came down to dinner in good-humour with the world.

CHAPTER LVI. SIR HENRY SAID IT WAS THE ONLY THING.

THE dinner at the Deanery went off without much excitement. Captain De Baron would of course have preferred that Lord George should have remained at Manor Cross, but under no circumstances could he have had much more to say to the lady. They understood each other now. He was quite certain that any evil thing spoken of her had been sheer slander, and yet he had managed to tell her everything of himself without subjecting himself to her undying anger. When she left the dining-room, the conversation turned again upon the great Popenjoy question, and from certain words which fell from the dean, Jack was enabled to surmise that Lord George had reason to hope that an heir might be born to him. "He does not look as though he would live long himself," said the dean, speaking of the marquis.

"I trust he may with all my heart," said Lord George.

"That's another question," replied the dean. "I only say that he doesn't look like it." Lord George went away early, and Jack De Baron thought it prudent to retire at the same time. "So you're going to-morrow, dear?" said the dean.

"Yes, papa. Is it not best?"

"Oh yes. Nothing could be worse than a prolonged separation. He means to be honest and good."

"He is honest and good, papa."

"You have had your triumph."

"I did not want to triumph—not at least over him."

"After what had occurred it was necessary that you should have your own way in coming here. Otherwise he would have triumphed. He would have taken you away, and you and I would have been separated. Of course you are bound to obey him; but there must be limits. He would have taken you away as though in disgrace, and that I could not stand. There will be an end of that now. God knows when I shall see you again, Mary."

"Why not, papa?"

"Because he hasn't got over his feeling against me. I don't think he ever gets over any feeling. Having no home of his own, why does he not bring you here?"

"I don't think he likes the idea of being a burden to you."

"Exactly. He has not cordiality enough to feel that when two men are in a boat together, as he and I are because of you,

all that feeling should go to the wind. He ought not to be more ashamed to sit at my table and drink of my cup than you are. If it were all well between us, and he had the property, should I scruple to go and stay at Manor Cross?"

"You would still have your own house to go back to."

"So will he, after awhile. But it can't be altered, dear; and God forbid that I should set you against him. He is not a rake nor a spendthrift, nor will he run after other women." Mary thought of Mrs. Houghton, but she held her tongue. "He is not a bad man, and I think he loves you."

"I am sure he does."

"But I can't help feeling sad at parting with you. I suppose I shall at any rate be able to see you up in town next season." The dean, as he said this, was almost weeping.

Mary, when she was alone in her room, of course thought much of Captain De Baron and his story. It was a pity—a thousand pities—that it should be so. It was to be regretted—much regretted—that he had been induced to tell his story. She was angry with herself, because she had been indiscreet, and she was still angry—a little angry with him—because he had yielded to the temptation. But there had been something sweet in it. She was sorry, grieved in her heart of hearts, that he should love her. She had never striven to gain his love. She had never even thought of it. It ought not to have been so. She should have thought of it; she should not have shown herself to be so pleased with his society. But yet, yet it was sweet. Then there came upon her some memory of her old dreams, before she had been engaged to Lord George. She knew how vain had been those dreams, because she now loved Lord George with her whole heart; but yet she remembered them, and felt as though they had come true with a dreamy half truth. And she brought to mind all those flattering words with which he had spoken her praises; how he had told her that she was an angel, too good and pure to be supposed capable of evil; how he had said that in his castles in the air he would still think of her. Surely a man may build what castles in the air he pleases, if he will only hold his tongue. She was quite sure that she did not love him, but she was sure also that his was the proper way of making love. And then she thought of Guss Mildmay. Could she not in pure charity

do a good turn to that poor girl? Might she not tell Captain De Baron that it was his duty to marry her? And if he felt it to be his duty, would he not do so? It may be doubted whether, in these moments, she did not think much better of Captain De Baron than that gentleman deserved.

On the next day the Manor Cross carriage came over for her. The dean had offered to send her, but Lord George had explained that his mother was anxious that the carriage should come. There would be a cart for the luggage. As to Lady George herself, there was a general feeling at Manor Cross that in the present circumstances the family carriage should bring her home. But it came empty. "God bless you, dearest," said the dean, as he put her into the vehicle.

"Good-bye, papa. I suppose you can come over and see me."

"I don't know that I can. I saw none of the ladies when I was there yesterday."

"I don't care a bit for the ladies. Where I go, papa, you can come. Of course George will see you, and you could ask for me." The dean smiled, and kissed her again, and then she was gone.

She hardly knew what grand things were in store for her. She was still rebelling in her heart against skirts and petticoats, and resolving that she would not go to church twice on Sundays unless she liked it, when the carriage drove up to the door. They were all in the hall, all except the marchioness. "We wouldn't go in," said Lady Amelia, "because we didn't like to fill the carriage."

"And George wanted us to send it early," said Lady Sarah, "before we had done our work." They all kissed her affectionately, and then she was again in her husband's arms. Mrs. Toff curtsied to her most respectfully. Mary observed the curtsy, and reminded herself at the moment that Mrs. Toff had never curtsied to her before. Even the tall footman in knee-breeches stood back with a demeanour which had hitherto been vouchsafed only to the real ladies of the family. Who could tell how soon that wicked marquis would die; and then—then how great would not be the glory of the dean's daughter! "Perhaps you won't mind coming up to mamma as soon as you have got your hat off," said Lady Susanna. "Mamma is so anxious to see you." Mary's hat was immediately off, and she declared herself ready to go to the marchioness. "Mamma has had a great

deal to trouble her since you were here," said Lady Susanna, as she led the way upstairs. "She has aged very much. You'll be kind to her, I know."

"Of course I'll be kind," said Mary; "I hope I never was unkind."

"She thinks so much of things now, and then she cries so often. We do all we can to prevent her from crying, because it does make her so weak. Beat-tea is best, we think; and then we try to get her to sleep a good deal. Mary has come, mamma. Here she is. The carriage has only just arrived." Mary followed Lady Susanna into the room, and the marchioness was immediately immersed in a flood of tears.

"My darling!" she exclaimed; "my dearest, if anything can ever make me happy again it is that you should have come back to me." Mary kissed her mother-in-law, and submitted to be kissed with a pretty grace, as though she and the old lady had always been the warmest, most affectionate friends. "Sit down, my love. I have had the easy-chair brought there on purpose for you. Susanna, get her that footstool." Susanna, without moving a muscle of her face, brought the footstool. "Now sit down and let me look at you. I don't think she's much changed." This was very distressing to poor Mary, who, with all her desire to oblige the marchioness, could not bring herself to sit down in the easy-chair. "So that poor little boy has gone, my dear?"

"I was so sorry to hear it."

"Yes, of course. That was quite proper. When anybody dies we ought to be sorry for them. I'm sure I did all I could to make things comfortable for him. Didn't I, Susanna?"

"You were quite anxious about him, mamma."

"So I was—quite anxious. I have no doubt his mother neglected him. I always thought that. But now there will be another, won't there?" This was a question which the mother expectant could not answer, and in order to get over the difficulty Susanna suggested that Mary should be allowed to go down to lunch.

"Certainly, my dear. In her condition she ought not to be kept waiting a minute. And mind, Susanna, she has bottled porter. I spoke about it before. She should have a pint at lunch and a pint at dinner."

"I can't drink porter," said Mary, in despair.

"My dear, you ought to; you ought,

indeed; you must. I remember as well as if it were yesterday Sir Henry telling me it was the only sure thing. That was before Popenjoy was born—I mean Brotherton. I do so hope it will be a Popenjoy, my dear." This was the last word said to her as Mary was escaping from the room.

She was not expected to make cloaks and shirts, but she was obliged to fight against a worse servitude even than that. She almost longed for the cloaks and skirts, when, day after day, she was entreated to take her place in the easy-chair by the couch of the marchioness. There was a cruelty in refusing, but in yielding there was a crushing misery. The marchioness evidently thought that the future stability of the family depended on Mary's quiescence and capability for drinking beer. Very many lies were necessarily told her by all the family. She was made to believe that Mary never got up before eleven; and the doctor who came to see herself, and to whose special care Mary was of course recommended, was induced to say that it was essential that Lady George should be in the open air three hours every day. "You know I'm not the least ill, mother," Mary said to her one day. Since these new hopes and the necessity for such hopes had come up, the marchioness had requested that she might be called mother by her daughter-in-law.

"No, my dear, not ill; but I remember as though it were yesterday what Sir Henry said to me when Popenjoy was going to be born. Of course he was Popenjoy when he was born. I don't think they've any physicians like Sir Henry now. I do hope it'll be a Popenjoy."

"But that can't be, mother. You are forgetting."

The old woman thought for awhile, and then remembered the difficulty. "No, not quite at once." Then her mind wandered again. "But if this isn't a Popenjoy, my dear—and it's all in the hands of God—then the next may be. My three first were all girls; and it was a great trouble; but Sir Henry said the next would be a Popenjoy; and so it was. I hope this will be a Popenjoy, because I might die before the next." When a week of all this had been endured, Mary in her heart was glad that the sentence of expulsion from Manor Cross still stood against her husband, feeling that six months of reiterated longings for a Popenjoy would kill her, and the possible Popenjoy also.

Then came the terrible question of an immediate residence. The month was nearly over, and Lord George had determined that he would go up to town for a few days when the time came. Mary begged to be taken with him, but to this he would not accede, alleging that his sojourn there would only be temporary, till something should be settled. "I am sure," said Mary, "your brother would dislike my being here worse than you." That might be true, but the edict, as it had been pronounced, had not been against her. The marquis had simply ordered that in the event of Lord George remaining in the house, the house and park should be advertised for letting. "George, I think he must be mad," said Mary.

"He is sane enough to have the control of his own property."

"If it is let, why shouldn't you take it?"

"Where on earth should I get the money?"

"Couldn't we all do it among us?"

"He wouldn't let it to us; he will allow my mother and sisters to live here for nothing; and I don't think he has said anything to Mr. Knox about you. But I am to be banished."

"He must be mad."

"Mad or not, I must go."

"Do—do let me go with you! Do go to the Deanery. Papa will make it all square by coming up to us in London."

"Your father has a right to be in the house in London," said Lord George with a scowl.

When the month was over he did go up to town, and saw Mr. Knox. Mr. Knox advised him to go back to Manor Cross, declaring that he himself would take no further steps without further orders. He had not had a line from the marquis. He did not even know where the marquis was, supposing, however, that he was in his house on the lake; but he did know that the marchioness was not with him, as separate application had been made to him by her ladyship for money. "I don't think I can do it," said Lord George. Mr. Knox shrugged his shoulders, and again said that he saw no objection. "I should be very slow in advertising, you know," said Mr. Knox.

"But I don't think that I have a right to be in a man's house without his leave. I don't think I am justified in staying there against his will because he is my brother." Mr. Knox could only shrug his shoulders.

He remained up in town doing nothing, doubtful as to where he should go and whither he should take his wife, while she was still at Manor Cross, absolutely in the purple, but still not satisfied with her position. She was somewhat cheered at this time by a high-spirited letter from her friend Mrs. Jones, written from Killancodlem.

"We are all here," said Mrs. Jones, "and we do so wish you were with us. I have heard of your condition at last, and of course it would not be fit that you should be amusing yourself with wicked, idle people like us, while all the future of all the Germaines is, so to say, in your keeping. How very opportune that that poor boy should have gone just as the other is coming! Mind that you are a good girl and take care of yourself. I dare say all the Germaine ladies are looking after you day and night, so that you can't misbehave very much. No more Kappakappas for many a long day for you!"

"We have got Lord Giblet here. It was such a task! I thought cart-ropes wouldn't have brought him! Now he is as happy as the day is long, and like a tame cat in my hands. I really think he is very much in love with her, and she behaves quite prettily. I took care that Green père should come down in the middle of it, and that clenched it. The lover didn't make the least fight when papa appeared, but submitted himself like a sheep to the shearers. I shouldn't have done it if I hadn't known that he wanted a wife, and if I hadn't been sure that she would make a good one. There are some men who never really get on their legs till they're married, and never would get married without a little help. I'm sure he'll bless me, or would do, only he'll think after a bit that he did it all by himself.

"Our friend Jack is with us, behaving very well, but not quite like himself. There are two or three very pretty girls here, but he goes about among them quite like a steady old man. I got him to tell me that he'd seen you at Brotherton, and then he talked a deal of nonsense about the good you'd do when you were marchioness. I don't see, my dear, why you should do more good than other people. I hope you'll be gracious to your old friends, and keep a good house, and give nice parties. Try and make other people happy. That's the goodness I believe in. I asked him why you were to be par-

ticularly good, and then he talked a deal more nonsense, which I need not repeat.

"I hear very queer accounts about the marquis. He behaved himself at Rudham almost like anybody else, and walked into dinner like a Christian. They say that he is all alone in Italy, and that he won't see her. I fancy he was more hurt in that little affair than some people will allow. Whatever it was, it served him right. Of course I should be glad to see Lord George come to the throne. I always tell the truth, my dear, about these things. What is the use of lying? I shall be very glad to see Lord George a marquis—and then your Popenjoy will be Popenjoy.

"You remember the baroness—your baroness. Oh, the baroness! She absolutely asked me to let her come to Killancodlem. 'But I hate disabilities and rights,' said I. She gave me to understand that that made no difference, then I was obliged to tell her that I hadn't a bed left. Any little room would do for her. 'We haven't any little rooms at Killancodlem,' said I; and then I left her.

"Good-bye. Mind you are good and take care of yourself; and, whatever you do, let Popenjoy have a royal godfather."

Then her father came over to see her. At this time Lord George was up in town, and when her father was announced she felt that there was no one to help her. If none of the ladies of the family would see her father she never would be gracious to them again. This was the turning-point. She could forgive them for the old quarrel. She could understand that they might have found themselves bound to take their elder brother's part at first. Then they had quarrelled with her too. Now they had received her back into their favour. But she would have none of their favours, unless they would take her father with her.

She was sitting at the time in that odious arm-chair in the old lady's room; and when Mrs. Toff brought in word that the dean was in the little drawing-room, Lady Susanna was also present. Mary jumped up immediately, and knew that she was blushing. "Oh! I must go down to papa," she said. And away she went.

The dean was in one of his best humours, and was full of Brotherton news. Mr. Groschut had been appointed to the vicarage of Pugsty, and would leave Brotherton within a month.

"I suppose it's a good living."

"About three hundred pounds a year, I

believe. He's been acting not quite on the square with a young lady, and the bishop made him take it. It was that or nothing." The dean was quite delighted; and when Mary told him something of her troubles—how impossible she found it to drink bottled porter—he laughed, and bade her be of good cheer, and told her that there were good days coming. They had been there for nearly an hour together, and Mary was becoming unhappy. If her father were allowed to go without some recognition from the family, she would never again be friends with those women. She was beginning to think that she never would be friends again with any of them, when the door opened, and Lady Sarah entered the room.

The greeting was very civil on both sides. Lady Sarah could, if she pleased, be gracious, though she was always a little grand; and the dean was quite willing to be pleased, if only any effort was made to please him. Lady Sarah hoped that he would stay and dine. He would perhaps excuse the marchioness, as she rarely now left her room. The dean could not dine at Manor Cross on that day, and then Lady Sarah asked him to come on the Thursday following.

QUEER MEASURES.

BRITANNIA, averse to making new laws, is just now hard at work furbishing up old ones, stringing them together in something like intelligible order, and thus approaching by degrees that codification of the statutes which has long danced like a will-o'-the-wisp before the eyes of legislators. Not the least difficult part of her work is that concerning weights and measures. From time immemorial there have been difficulties on this subject—the tendency of man to try to get the better of his neighbour having in all countries proved too strong for the law-giver. If the Dutchman once bought furs by the weight of his foot, and thus got the better of the poor Indian, the latter has shown curious aptitude for inserting stones in lumps of indiarubber and gutta-percha, and turning a dishonest penny at the expense of his customer; who doubtless cheats him all round in return. The falsification of weights and measures possesses the fascination of being like the art of cheating at cards, very easy and profitable until it is found out. A lump of

fat at the bottom of a scale and a dent in the side of a pewter measure, are devices as old as civilisation itself, the substitution of false for the genuine measures stamped and approved by the Government, dates from the earliest communities. The statute-books of nations, cities, and guilds, overflow with enactments against false quantities and qualities. What is more curious than this special development of human rascality is, that custom has almost sanctioned the most extraordinary departures from recognised standards. In some cases the seller has profited by these variations, in others apparently the purchaser.

In the matter of cotton, thread, and cloth, it is perfectly well known that very short measure is the rule, and it has been boldly asserted that so well is it "understood of the people," that a reel of sewing-cotton "warranted" of a certain length is twenty or thirty yards shorter, that substantially no fraud is committed, although to the accurate mind the sale of a hundred and twenty yards, under "warranty" of a hundred and forty, has at least a fraudulent look. Since measuring machines have come into fashion the buyer has, in the case of many goods, lost a small advantage which, in olden times, he acquired by the method of measurement. The ancient custom in selling dry goods was to measure them with the "cloth-yard wand," and the consequence was that the buyer gained a "thumb" on every yard of stuff. Astute mercers are said to have set a high value on a shopman gifted by nature with a small hand and narrow thumb—the broader organ, popularly ascribed to the miller, disqualifying its possessor for the polite art of measuring dry goods. In silk and cotton goods the practice of giving "thumbs," which practically extended the yard to thirty-seven inches, has entirely disappeared—both being measured by machinery by the manufacturer and by a measure imbedded in the counter of the retailer; while, singularly enough, woollen goods are still measured in the old way, with "thumbs" thrown in. More than this, there is, in selling whole pieces of woollens, an allowance over and above the thumbs of measurement—that is, a yard or two over in the piece; amounting, in the case of expensive goods, to a bonus of as much as two-and-a-half per cent. This goes into the pocket of the retail dealer, and may be considered as one of the

many extant devices for preventing the consumer from arriving at any accurate estimate of the profit made by the middleman, who computes his profit without reference to this "pull" in his favour. This allowance of thumbs and measurement is similar in kind to the deeply-rooted practice of selling by "heaped" measure. At no distant date this custom reduced the dry measure of capacity to a dead letter. In one county heaped measure obtained, in the next "strike" measure, the bushel or peck being assumed to be full when filled up to the brim. This variable system made the comparison of prices in one county with those in another a matter of difficult calculation. There is something seductive in heaped measure. The peck, gallon, or pottle, piled up till it can support no more, has a handsome and a generous look withal; and there are few things more attractive than a display of sham liberality. Human nature craves for something "thrown in," if it be only a pennyworth, and the seller skilled in raising a pyramid above the level of the measure is sure to find customers. Moreover, this method of doing business affords opportunity for the excitement of a "deal." As it is the object of the seller to show that not a single grain more can be added to the superstructure, so is the ingenuity of the buyer stimulated to show that the measure, if properly piled upon, will hold a great deal more. There is scope for fun and rough market "chaff" over the negotiation, and in retired places, where market-day provides the single excitement of the week, the humour of a prolonged haggle is too precious to be lost. Custom, in the case of heaped measure, has proved too strong for the law, as it has in one instance of selling by weight. By an Act passed in the reign of William the Fourth, the "stone" is expressly declared to be equal to fourteen pounds, yet dead meat is sold all over the country by the stone of eight pounds; the fourteen-pound stone being called "horseman's" or "live" weight.

In no instance is the tyranny of custom more clearly shown than in the method of selling coke. Of old, both coal and coke were sold by the chaldra, chalder, or chaldron—a measure originally containing thirty-six Winchester bushels—a definition which to moderns requires to be defined, especially as Winchester measure is strangely contradictory. The Winchester quart, still used by chemists, is about twice as large as an ordinary

quart; while the Winchester corn-bushel is a little less than the ordinary bushel; and the Queen Anne wine-gallon, still in use in Canada and the United States, holds one wine-bottle less than the present imperial standard gallon. The latter measure is easily arrived at and fixed in the memory by the following distich:

A pint of pure water
Weights a pound and a quarter.

A gallon, therefore, dry or liquid, is now by statute equal to ten pounds of water, and is of the capacity of 277.274 cubic inches; and eight of these gallons make a bushel. This measure is therefore of the capacity of 2218.192 cubic inches; while the Winchester corn-bushel is of the capacity of 2150.42 cubic inches, and the old wine-gallon of two hundred and thirty-one cubic inches. The legal coal-bushel was altered and made a little larger in 1713, and was defined as a measure made round, with a plain and even bottom, nineteen-and-a-half inches from outside to outside, and to contain one Winchester bushel and one quart of water. A standard coal-bushel was made and kept at the Exchequer, in pursuance of the provisions of this Act. The legal measure of coals was regulated by this standard coal-bushel until the imperial coal-bushel was legalised in 1824 as the only standard measure. In 1835, it was enacted that coals were to be sold by weight only.

The weight of a chaldron of coals appears to have been first defined in 1695, so far as regards the carriage by sea of Newcastle coals, when fifty-three hundredweight were allowed to every chaldron. This chaldron, however, was known as Newcastle measure, but in a later statute of the same year an equivalent duty of five shillings per chaldron was imposed upon coals sold by measure, reckoning thirty-six bushels to the chaldron, Winchester measure, and per ton upon coals sold by weight, showing the chaldron of coals to be considered as equal in quantity to the ton of coals.

Although the sale of coals by weight was made imperative throughout the United Kingdom, by the Weights and Measures Act of 1835, a Local Act, passed in 1831, had previously required all coals to be sold by weight and not by measure from and after 1st January, 1832, within the cities of London and Westminster, and within the distance of twenty-five miles from the General Post Office.

Section forty-four of this Act enacted, that all contracts and agreements for the sale and delivery of coal by measure within these limits, made previously and not then completed, should be and continue in full force and virtue, except that such coals should be delivered by weight and not by measure, and for that purpose twenty-five hundredweight and a half should be considered and taken to be equivalent to the chaldron.

It is to be observed that whilst coal can be legally sold by weight only, coke is still sold by measure, under the provisions of the Weights and Measures Act of 1825. In consequence of the large quantity of water that dry coke can absorb, thus enabling a given measure of coke to be varied at will in weight, it is evidently inexpedient to legalise the sale of coke by weight. This is a good reason for selling coke by measure rather than by weight, but not for the variable practice of selling it sometimes by "strike," or "stricken," and sometimes by heaped measure. Not long ago a manufacturer was desirous of constructing an iron measure of a sack, to contain three bushels of coke, and requested to know the dimensions of the official standard, that he might construct his measure in conformity with it, and puzzled the Warden of the Standards not a little, as there is no legalised standard of the sack further than its definition as containing three bushels, leaving the question of heaped and stricken measure open. Yet there is on this very point legislation, albeit of a contradictory kind. By the Act of 1824, the sack was to consist of three heaped bushels. But heaped measure was abolished in 1835, and the capacity of the sack was therefore stated by the Warden of the Standards to be equal to three unheaped bushels.

Under the same section of the Act of 1824, a chaldron should contain twelve sacks, and consequently if the legal capacity of the sack is 3·851 cubic feet, the chaldron should be of the capacity of 46·212 cubic feet. A question, however, has been raised whether, under a true construction of the existing law, the sack and the chaldron are to contain respectively three and thirty-six heaped bushels, or stricken bushels. In 1875, the manager of a cement company in the city of London called attention to the fact that, in the sale of their coke, some of the London gas companies gave better measure than others, and the general practice in this matter

was so varied that much fraud was perpetrated; and in one contract entered into by his company, it made a difference to them of three thousand pounds by the struck bushel being used instead of the heaped bushel.

Now in the Act of 1824, which gives the definition of the imperial gallon and bushel previously quoted, a standard for heaped measure is given. It is to be the aforesaid bushel made round, with a plain and even bottom, and nineteen-and-a-half inches outside diameter. In using such bushel, the goods were to be duly heaped up in the bushel in the form of a cone, such cone to be of the height of at least six inches, and the outside of the bushel to be the base of the cone; and three bushels were to be a sack, and twelve such sacks a chaldron.

But two important changes were made in 1834 and in 1835; heaped measure was abolished, and coals were thenceforward to be sold by weight and not by measure.

Section seven of the Act of 1835 recited that: "Whereas the heaped measure is liable to considerable variation," and enacted that thenceforward the provisions of law which related to heaped measure should be repealed, and heaped measure abolished, all bargains made by heaped measure being declared void, and persons selling by heaped measure being liable to a penalty for every such sale.

This Act has been quietly ignored by many gas companies who heap their measures—where competition is strong, very liberally, while in other cases, such as that quoted, stricken measure only is given. Why the penalty for selling by heaped measure is not enforced is difficult to ascertain, except on the general ground that that measure is popular, as is proved in the case of apples and other produce. In the last report of the Warden of the Standards, it would appear, however, that the difference between the two measures is absorbed by the retailer. "The gas companies who make coke, sell it generally by 'heaped measure.' Three heaped bushels make a sack whose capacity is 8446·4661 cubic inches. The retail dealers appear generally to sell coke by 'stricken measure.' Three stricken bushels equal only 6654·576 cubic inches. This difference of capacity is considerable."

As prudent people buy their fuel in hot weather, this fact is worthy of their attention, more especially as an Act is at present before Parliament, not adding much

to, but reciting and consolidating the Acts at present in force. It declares distinctly that, "a stone" shall consist of fourteen pounds, and that a hundredweight shall consist of eight such stones, and that "in using an imperial measure of capacity, the same shall not be heaped, but either shall be stricken with a round stick or roller, straight and of the same diameter from end to end, or if the article sold cannot from its size or shape be conveniently stricken, shall be filled in all parts as nearly to the level of the brim as the size and shape of the article will admit." And also that "all local or customary measures, and the use of the heaped measure, shall remain abolished. Any person who sells by any denomination of weight or measure other than one of the imperial weights or measures, or some multiple thereof or some aliquot part, such as the half, the quarter, the eighth, the sixteenth, or the thirty-second part thereof, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding forty shillings for every such sale."

The new Act leaves unaltered the great blot of the double weights of troy and avoirdupois. This element of confusion is almost as great as that between Winchester and imperial measure. The old catch query: "Which is the heavier, a pound of silver, or a pound of feathers?" is therefore still to remain legitimate, as one will be sold by troy, or "Troyes," weight, and the other by avoirdupois—an absurdity made still more apparent by the difference in the ounces of these several pounds. The common unit of measure is the grain, but in troy weight four hundred and eighty grains make the ounce, while the avoirdupois ounce consists of four hundred and thirty-seven and a half such grains; but as twelve troy and sixteen avoirdupois ounces go to make a pound—the troy pound is of five thousand seven hundred and sixty grains, and the avoirdupois pound of seven thousand grains. This is one of the blunders in which blind adherence to custom has landed us.

The eternal argument against any change is, that it would disturb the existing relations of business—an excellent reason against changing anything. Now when the late Sir Robert Peel, in an access of hilarity rare in that grave statesman, tossed up a sovereign and asked: "What is a pound?" he set a very serious problem to the assembled legislators. There have, in England, been pounds and pounds. The earliest legal standard was the old pound of

the Saxon moneyers in use before the Norman Conquest. It was of the same weight as the old apothecaries' or medicinal pound of Germany, and was equal to five thousand four hundred of our later or imperial troy grains; and this weight—opines Mr. Chisholm—was the earliest form of our pound sterling, supposed to have been derived from the Ptolemaic mina, the sixtieth part of the lesser Alexandrian talent of silver. In 1842, an ancient weight of brass was found in the Pyx Chamber, that weighed five millions four thousand and nine troy grains, evidently an old monetary pound, somewhat increased in weight by oxidation. The pound sterling of silver was divided into twenty shillings, each of twelve pence, or pennyweights, and this scale seems to have been the same as that of the old "livre esterlin" of Charlemagne. Then we, or rather our ancestors, had the Tower pound, and finally, in the reign of Edward the Third, the avoirdupois pound was almost exactly the same as that now in use.

The durability of the old weights and measures goes far to prove the strength of that adhesiveness to old methods which stands in the way of all improvement. We have seen that troy, avoirdupois, and apothecaries' weights are sanctioned by the law, and that enactments have hitherto proved powerless to abolish heaped measure. It would therefore savour of rashness to advocate any sudden and radical change in our national method of measurement; for even if this country were governed—as happily it is not—by doctrinaires, and a perfectly logical and coherent system were made compulsory by law, a long time would elapse before its use could be actually enforced; and the chances are, that the obnoxious statute would rouse sufficient feeling to cause its repeal. This is, or should be, so obvious to the majority of Englishmen, as to deter reformers from attempting to force the metric system upon England. Like the decimal system of coinage, the metric system of weights and measures is absolutely perfect in its way, and will, in time, prevail all over the world; driving, by slow degrees, the clumsy Roman duodecimal system before it. We say advisedly that the progress of reform will be slow. The idea of a "dozen" of anything is too thoroughly engrained in the human mind to be flung off at once. We have, too, not only our real dozen, but our dozens of fashion and of custom. What would

become of a popular comparison if the half-dozen passed out of existence? and what, oh what, would the sporting scribe do, if he could no longer embalm the simple statement that thirteen horses started for a race in the phrase that "a baker's dozen sported silk?" Why should a baker's dozen be thirteen? and why is a long dozen still extant in the book and newspaper trade? If the dozen were abolished, or made to consist of ten instead of twelve, people would feel much as they did when the calendar was rectified. Then they rose against a science-ridden Government, and cried aloud: "Give us back our eleven days!" in the firm belief that their lives had been shortened by their iniquitous rulers. In like manner would the sturdy Briton fight against the French system of measurement, albeit a kilogramme is heavier than two pounds, a litre greater than a pint, and a metre longer than a yard. It is true that the metrical system has the merit of harmony, that measures of length, weight, and capacity bear to each other a certain fixed proportion; but it has, on the other hand, the disadvantage of being a revolutionary measure. When the French Republicans determined that the world should be commenced over again from first principles, they displayed, at first, a curious method in their madness, and in selecting the quadrant of the meridian as the basis of the unit of length showed considerable sense. At least they selected a natural instead of an imaginary quantity, and decided that the ten-millionth of the meridian quadrant should be the unit of measure, or metre. It is now known that the meridian quadrant is not a fixed quantity, but this is a small defect in a method carried out in its minutest details with the greatest exactitude—the unit of weight or kilogramme being the weight in a vacuum of a cubic decimetre of distilled water at its maximum density, and the unit of capacity the litre, or the contents of a cubic decimetre. It follows that in practice the legal measure of the litre is determined from the kilogramme—that is to say, the litre actually is a measure containing a kilogramme weight of distilled water at its maximum density. It never enters into anybody's head to contest the superiority of this system to the ridiculous muddle of weights and measures extant in England; the only question is how to introduce it. The answer appears plain enough. The Act now in progress only needs the modification of one clause and

the addition of another, making the use of metric weight and measures permissible. At present the sale of goods by metrical denomination is punishable with a fine of forty shillings. This is downright folly, when all the rest of the world is craving for the metric system, and scientific men use no other; and retrogressive folly into the bargain. To effectually prevent the introduction of the metric system at all hazards, a table is appended to the new Act in which the imperial equivalents of metric quantities are set forth, and this table is prescribed for lawful use in computing and expressing, in imperial weights and measures, those of the metric system, which must not be used in "any contract, bargain, sale, or dealing made or had in the United Kingdom," under the penalty of forty shillings.

So Britannia is to go on cumbering her scales with her old clumsy weights, which have no common multiple but the grain. Britannia should be a great arithmetician, for she has plenty of practice with her pennyweights and drachmas, live and dead stones, and hundredweights which weigh a hundred and twelve pounds; her cloth-yard wand, which may represent thirty, or thirty-six, or thirty-seven inches; her bushels, at last stricken level; her "long" tons and her baker's dozens; while an intelligent system, invented by an intelligent people, is tabooed under penalty of forty shillings. Once permitted, the metric system might be left to make its own way, as other fashions have made their own way, in this matter of weights and measures. A quarter of a century ago, coals and potatoes were sold by weight, but who would have dreamt of buying spinach, turnip-tops, onions, and strawberries by the pound? This revolution has been brought about because no law existed against it. At the present moment kilogrammes and litres sound oddly in English ears, but would they sound so oddly in twenty-five years if they, being already exactly defined by authority, were acknowledged as legal media of sale and contract?

THE LADY'S ROCK.

Day by day in sun or shade,
Gliding down the wooded glade;
Crossing by the stepping-stones,
Where the bright beck chafes and moans;
Passing where the light wind stirs
To gleaming gold the clustered furze;
O'er the common, past the pond,
To the hollowed banks beyond,

Where the tall green rushes grow,
And the great tides ebb and flow;
O'er the reach of brown-ribbed sand,
By the wings of sea-mews fanned,
The black-robed lady sought the rocks,
Grey and grim from ocean's shocks.

Day by day in sun or shade,
There her nest the lady made,
Seeking in her heavy sorrow,
Nature's quiet aid to borrow.
Words of comfort stung or jarred;
Words of cheering sounded hard;
Words of hope but mocked her grief;
Words of love brought no relief;
Till, at last, they let her be,
Left her to the sky and sea,
Left the weary heart and head,
With the Past, and with the Dead,
Stood apart, while to her soul,
Peace and patience softly stole.

Hush! the wavelets whispered sweet,
Carving, creaming, to her feet;
Hush! the soft winds seemed to say,
Sweeping ever o'er the bay;
Hush! the sunshine smiled, at rest,
On the great sea's heaving breast;
Hush! the grey clouds breathed around,
Soothing all to lull profound;
So the days crept, one by one,
Till, her silent lesson done,
Turning to the world again,
She took up its joy and pain,
Strong for conflicts yet to be,
From commune with the sky and sea.

Oftentimes, all stann'd and crushed,
Heart and spirit lie in dust,
Cannot rouse again to strife,
Cannot face the fret of life,
Cold and dull to sympathy,
Dead to all but misery.

Let them be. Let Nature make
Her own cure of pang and ache.
Her soft charm will lap them round,
Calm the fever, stanch the wound,
Wash away the scalding tears,
Take the poison from the years,
Lead them back by faith and love,
To work on earth, and hope above.

SOMETHING ABOUT PRECIOUS STONES.

THERE can be no doubt that the many-
aged belief in the occult virtues of precious
stones has added greatly to the prestige of
these beautiful "flowers of the mineral
world."

Many writers have endeavoured to ex-
plain the reasons for the passionate eager-
ness to acquire objects which are easily
counterfeited, so as to deceive an inex-
perienced eye, and which—the diamond
excepted—are of no practical use what-
ever. The true cause certainly seems to
lie in the fact that tradition has lent its aid
to endure them with the charm of poetry
and romance, and has so perpetuated their
influence.

The sage Bacon, in his *Sylva Sylvarum*,
gives some reasons for the estimation in
which jewels are held. "There are," he

says, "many things that operate upon the
spirits of man by secret sympathy and an-
tipathy. That precious stones have virtues
in the wearing has been anciently and
generally received, and they are said to
produce several effects. So much is true,
that gems have fine spirits, as appears
by their splendour; and therefore may
operate, by consent, on the spirits of men,
to strengthen and exhilarate them. The
best stones for this purpose are the
diamond, the emerald, the hyacinth, and
the yellow topaz. As for their particular
properties, no credit can be given to them.
But it is manifest that light, above all
things, rejoices the spirits of men; and
probably varied light has the same effect
with greater novelty, which may be one
cause why precious stones exhilarate."

Renodens, quoted by Burton (*Anatomy
of Melancholy*), admires precious stones
"because they adorn kings' crowns, grace
the fingers, enrich our household stuff,
defend us from enchantments, preserve
health, cure diseases; they drive away
grief, cares, and exhilarate the mind."

No people were more credulous as to the
mysterious powers of precious stones than
the Jews, and the nations bordering on
them. Eastern writers pretend that
Solomon, among a variety of physiological
compositions, wrote one on gems, a chapter
of which treated on those which assist or
repel evil genii. It became a peculiar pro-
fession of one part of their sages to inves-
tigate and interpret the various shades and
coruscations of precious stones; and to ex-
plain the different colours, the dews, clouds,
and imageries, which gems, differently ex-
posed to the sun, moon, stars, fire, and air,
at particular seasons, and inspected by
persons peculiarly qualified, were seen
to exhibit.

Among the Arabians, serpents were
supposed to possess precious stones of in-
estimable virtue. This belief was current
through many ages. Matthew Paris relates
the story of a miserly Venetian, named
Vitalis, who was rescued from a terrible
death—having fallen into a pit in which
were a lion and a serpent—by a wood-
cutter, to whom he promised half his pro-
perty for this deliverance. The lion and
the serpent, who take advantage of the
ladder by which Vitalis is brought to the
surface, also testify their gratitude to
the woodcutter, by crouching at his feet.
While the poor man is having his humble
repast in his little hut, the lion enters with
a dead goat as a present. The serpent

also enters, bringing in his mouth a precious stone, which he lays in the countryman's plate. He next goes to Venice, and finds Vitalis in his palace, feasting with his neighbours in joy for his deliverance. On being reminded of his promise, the rich man denies having seen the woodcutter, and orders his servants to cast him into prison; but before this could be effected the rustic escapes, and tells his story to the judges of the city. At first they are incredulous; but, on showing the jewel, and proving further the truth, by conducting them to the dens of the lion and the serpent, where the animals again fawn on their benefactor, Vitalis is compelled to perform his promise. This story, adds Matthew Paris, was told by King Richard, to expose the conduct of ungrateful men.

In Timberlake's Discourse of the Travels of two English Pilgrims to Jerusalem, Gaza, &c., 1611, we find an account of a great jewel which was taken from a serpent's head, and used in conjuring. In Alphonso's Clericalis Disciplina, a serpent is mentioned with eyes of real jacinth. In the romantic history of Alexander, he is said to have found serpents in the Vale of Jordan "with collars of huge emeralds growing on their backs." Milton gives his serpent eyes of carbuncle. A marvellous stone was said to be found in the serpent's brain, but in order to secure its lustre and potent influences, it was to be extracted from the living animal.

The Draconius, described by Albertus Magnus as of a black colour and pyramidal form, was also taken out of the heads of dragons, while they lay panting. To the snake-stone a popular superstition is still attached in the East. In the narrative of a Voyage in her Majesty's ship Samarang, Captain Sir Edward Belcher says: "At my last interview with the Sultan of Guning Taboor, he conveyed into my hand—suddenly closing it with great mystery—what they term here the snake-stone. This is a polished globe of quartz, about the size of a musket-ball, which he described as of infinite value, an heirloom, and reported to have been extracted from the head of an enchanted snake." Allusions to serpent-stones are frequent in the early writers. We read in the Gesta Romanorum, that the Emperor Theodosius the Blind ordained that the cause of any injured person should be heard on his ringing a bell, which was placed in a public part of his palace. A serpent had a nest near the spot where

the bell-rope hung. In the absence of the serpent a toad took possession of her nest; the serpent, twisting itself round the rope, rang the bell for justice, and by the emperor's special command the toad was killed. A few days afterwards, as the emperor was reposing on his couch, the serpent entered the chamber, bearing a precious stone in its mouth, and, crawling up to the emperor's face, laid it on his eyes, and glided out of the apartment; the monarch was immediately restored to sight.

Apropos of the burglarious toad, the philosophers taught that though ugly and venomous "it wears yet a precious jewel in his head." Lupton, in his Book of Notable Things, instructs his reader how to procure it; "you shall know whether the toad-stone be the ryghte or perfect stone or not. Holde the stone before a tode, so that he may see it, and if it be a ryghte and true stone, the tode will leape toward it, and make as though he would snatch it. He envieth so much that none should have that stone." If swallowed it was a certain antidote against poison; and it was usual to take it as a precautionary pill—rather a hard one—before eating.

In the Philosophical Transactions, vol. vi. p. 21, we find that the toad-stone was supposed, in the Highlands, to prevent the burning of houses and the sinking of boats, and if the commander in the field had one about him, he would either be sure to win the day, or all his men would die on the spot!

The bezoar was a stone procured from the cervicabra, a wild animal of Arabia, and was supposed to have been formed of the poison of serpents which had bitten the creature, combined with the counter-acting matter with which Nature had furnished it. There was a belief in the Middle Ages that the bezoar was a potent charm against the plague and poison. In the inventory of the jewels of Charles the Fifth, made at Yuste, after his death, is the entry of "a box of black leather, lined with crimson velvet, containing four bezoar stones, variously set in gold," one of which the emperor directed "to be given to William Van Male, his gentleman of the chamber, being sick—as it was suspected—of the plague." In the same inventory is mentioned a blue stone, with two clasps of gold, "good for the gout."

Faith in the virtues of certain precious

stones for the cure of diseases was transmitted from early ages to a comparatively late period. In the church of Old Saint Paul's, London, was a famous sapphire, given by Richard de Preston, citizen and grocer of that city, for curing infirmities of the eyes. In reference to Queen Elizabeth's assumed power of healing scrofulous patients by the royal touch, it was said by Vaughan, Bishop of Chester, that "she did it by virtue of some precious stone in the crown of England, that possessed such a miraculous gift." Harrington, however, observes slyly: "Had Queen Elizabeth been told that the bishop ascribed more virtue to her jewels, though she loved them well, than to her person, she would never have made him Bishop of Chester."

The wonderful effects of stones found in various animals are too numerous to mention. The brain of a tortoise contained one that had the effect of a fire-annihilator in extinguishing flames; moreover, whoever did at a proper time—having first washed his mouth—carry it under his tongue, felt a divine inspiration to foretell future events. Birds were particularly distinguished for the possession of talismanic stones. The hyena was very properly hunted; not, however, for its ferocious propensities, but for a precious stone in one of its eyes, full of mystic virtues. One of the most curious superstitions, and one which has been a favourite theme with writers of all ages, is connected with the carbuncle, or ruby. Ælian has a singular story on this subject, how a certain widow, Heraclea, had tended a young stork which had broken its leg, and how the grateful bird, returning from its annual migration, dropped into her lap a precious stone, which, on her awaking at night, lighted up her chamber like a blazing torch.

The fabulous animal called the carbunculo, said to have been seen in some parts of Peru, is represented to be about the size of a fox, with long black hair, and is only visible at night, when it slinks slowly through the thickets. If followed, it is said to open a flap, or valve, in the forehead, from which an extraordinary and brilliant light issues. The natives believe that the light proceeds from a precious stone, and that any person who may venture to grasp at it rashly is blinded; then the flap is let down, and the animal disappears in the darkness.

In the *Gesta Romanorum* is the story of

"a subtle clerk" who, seeking hidden treasures, enters a hall filled with riches, and brightly illuminated by a carbuncle. The tale was originally invented of the necromancer Pope Gerbert, or Sylvester the Second, who died in 1003. Golding, in his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1565), describes "the princely pittance of the sun" as

Bezet with sparkling carbuncles that like to fire doth shine.

M. Googe's translation of Palingenius (1565) mentions a city of the moon, as with

Bulwarks built of carbuncle
That all is fyre yflamed.

Mandeville, in his *Travels*, says: "The emperor hath in his chamber a pillar of gold, in which is a ruby and carbuncle, a foot long, which lighteth all his chambers by night." So, in the adventures of *The Golden Fleece*, the hall of King Priam is described as illuminated at night by a prodigious carbuncle, placed among sapphires, rubies, and pearls, in the crown of a golden statue of Jupiter, fifteen cubits high.

In Pausanias we read of the carbuncle that "a Charake prophet had, near as big as an egg, which they said he found where a great rattlesnake lay dead, and that it sparkled with such surprising lustre as to illuminate his dark winter house like strong flashes of continued lightning, to the great terror of the weak, who durst not, upon any account, approach the dreadful fire-darting place, for fear of sudden death. When he died it was buried with him, according to custom." Luiz Bartholomew, in his *Segredos da Natureza*, states that he saw a carbuncle of the King of Peru so bright that in a dark place it made all the bystanders' bodies transparent, so penetrating was its splendour."

Chaucer describes Richesse as crowned with the costliest gems:

But all before full subtilly
A fine carbuncle set, sawe I.
The stone so cleare was, and bright,
That al so some as it was night
Men might in so to go for nede
A mile or two in length and brede,
Such light ysprange out of that stone.

Shakespeare alludes to the carbuncle in *Titus Andronicus*:

Upon his bloody finger he doth wear
A precious ring that lightens all the hole.

Innumerable were the effects produced by certain precious stones; among others, the heliotrope had especial virtues. It was

called by necromancers the "Babylonian gem," and if rubbed over with the juice of the herb of its own name, it rendered the wearer invisible. In the Middle Ages, the heliotropes which contained many red spots were highly valued, from a belief that the blood of Christ was diffused through the stone. The moonstone, was, as its name implies, venerated from its supposed lunar attraction. It is one of the prettiest, though most common of precious stones in Ceylon. Pliny describes it as containing an image of the moon, "which, if the story be true," he observes, "daily waxes or wanes, according to the state of that luminary." Chalcedony hung about the neck dispersed sadness, and if a person carried one perforated, with the hairs of an ass run through it, he would overcome all disasters. Crystal dispelled witchcraft. The chrysoprasus gladdened the heart; the chrysolite expelled phantoms, and, what was more serviceable, rid people of their follies. The onyx in the Middle Ages was believed to prevent ugly dreams by night, and law-suits by day. The jasper was a charmer of scorpions and spiders, and was worn as a talisman by the Roman athlete; Burton, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, tells us that, "if hung about the neck, or taken in drink, it much resisteth sorrow and recreates the heart." The same qualities were attributed to the hyacinth and topaz. The crystal has been the most popular of all oracular stones; a favourite stone was the beryl, "which," says Aubrey, in his *Miscellanies*, "is a kind of crystal that has a weak tincture of red; in this magicians see visions." The custom, was to consecrate, or "charge" them, as the modern term is, for which purpose set forms were used, which are described in Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*. The famous crystal of that prince of quackery, Dr. Dee, is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

The properties of the ruby were endless; bruised in water it was a panacea for all complaints; it had the peculiarity, wherever worn, of discovering its presence by its lustre, which would shine through the thickest clothes. Powdered agate was an infallible remedy for "all the ills that life is heir to." Pliny quotes the Magii, as teaching in Persia that storms could be averted by burning agates. The amethyst would prove a boon to modern tipplers, if, as the ancients asserted, it prevented intoxication. The sapphire and the emerald strengthened the sight, a property said to have been also possessed by the turquoise;

but it could confer a still more wonderful gift on its wearer: "Whoever," says Van Helmont, "wears a turquoise, so that it, or its gold setting, touches the skin, may fall from any height, and the stone attracts to itself the whole force of the blow, so that it cracks, and the person is safe." The Romans regarded the diamond with superstitious reverence, and Pliny tells us that it baffles poison, keeps off insanity, and dispels vain fears. Ben Mansur, alluding to the electric properties of the diamond, says: "It has an affinity for gold, small particles of which fly towards it. It is also wonderfully sought after by ants, who crowd over it, as though they would swallow it up." A marvellous curative power was supposed to exist in a diamond belonging to the Rajah of Matara, in the Island of Borneo, the Malays believing that a draught of water in which it had been placed would cure every disease.

In the journal of Sir Jerome Horsay, who was employed as a messenger between Ivan the Terrible of Russia and Queen Elizabeth, is a curious account of the superstitions prevalent at that period (1584). "The old emperor," writes Horsay, "was carried every day in his chair to the treasury. One day he beckoned me to follow. I stood among the rest venturously, and heard him call for some precious stones and jewels. He told the princes and nobles present before and about him the virtue of such and such, which I observed, and do pray I may a little digress to declare for my memory's sake: 'The loadstone, you all know, hath great and hidden virtue, without which the seas that encompass the world are not navigable, nor the bounds nor circle of the earth cannot be known. Mahomet, the Persian's prophet, his tomb of steel hangs on their Rapotee at Darbent most miraculously.' He caused the waiters to bring a chain of needles touched by this loadstone, and hanged all one by the other. 'This fair coral and this fair turcas, you see. Take it in your hand. Of his nature and orient colours put them on my hand and arm. I am poisoned with disease. You see they show their virtue by the change of their pure colour into pale—declares my death. Reach out my staff royal, an unicorn's horn, garnished with very fair diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and other precious stones that are rich in value—cost seventy thousand marks sterling of David Gower from the fowlers of Ansborge. Seek out for some spiders.' He

caused his physician, Johannes Lloff, to scrape a circle thereof on the table; put within it one spider and so one other that died, and some other alive, then run apace from it. 'It is too late, it will not preserve me. Behold these precious stones, the diamond is the Orient's richest and most precious of all others. I never affected it. It restrains fury and luxury; gives abstinence and chastity. The least parcel of it in powder will poison a horse, given in drink, much more a man.' Points at the ruby: 'Oh, this is most comfortable to the heart, brain, vigour, and memory of man, clarifies congealed and corrupt blood.' Then at the emerald: 'The nature of the rainbow, this precious stone is an enemy to uncleanness. The sapphire I greatly delight in; it preserves and increaseth courage, joys the heart; pleasing to all the vital senses, precious and very sovereign for the eyes; cheers the sight; takes away blood-shot, and strengthens the muscles and sinews thereof.' Then takes the onyx in hand: 'All these are God's wonderful gifts, secrets in nature, and yet reveals them to man's use and contemplation as friends to grace and virtue, and enemies to vice. I faint, carry me away till another time.'

GEORGIE'S WOER.

A STORY IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

SHEELING was a small country town on that part of the English coast facing the lovely "Emerald Isle," which seems to have borrowed some of the softness of her climate, and the richness of her soil, as though from ever looking across the water at her verdure and beauty.

Fertile meadows ran right down to the very edge of the sea; the pretty bladder-campion and "Our Lady's bed-straw," with its thousand tiny golden crosses, mingling with the pale rose stars of the sea-pink.

On a long slip of land which stretched far out behind the town, was a little fishing village, quite an independent colony, where the children were young fishermen from their earliest years, and took to the water as a matter of course, like young ducks.

Of an evening, sitting under the shade of the long row of cottages, might be seen sailors, young and old, enjoying an ample supply of tobacco; while at many of the cottage doors the fishermen's wives were busy making nets, and the children played and waded bare-legged in the shallow pools left by the tide; dragged about great

empty crab-shells by way of go-carts, or sported in the water like a flock of dolphins.

Sheeling—as any town of gentility naturally would—possessed a "High Street" by way of principal thoroughfare, and a market-place where, on certain days, the country people congregated to dispose of various farm products; but, besides both these desirable institutions, Sheeling actually possessed a member of parliament, which dignitary was always spoken of by the inhabitants as "the member," as though he had the House of Commons to himself, and from thence promulgated laws for the whole of the United Kingdom.

In the town itself gentry were few and far between, the local banker's wife, Mrs. Willoughby Robinson, considering herself the leading lady of the place: what other people considered her was therefore of small importance. The doctor and his wife, and the clergyman of the pretty ivy-covered church at the top of High Street, formed another "clique" of this small but divided community; for Mrs. Robinson had pronounced opinions on matters in general, which opinions she held in such a rampant manner as rendered it almost impossible to dwell peaceably with her; and therefore, though the minor politenesses of life were observed by everyone, nothing like intimacy existed. The banker himself was a quiet, let-everybody-alone sort of man, and rumour had it that he would have been only too thankful if the wife of his bosom would have pursued that line of conduct towards himself.

A son and a daughter completed the family circle, the son apparently leaguering with the mother against the father, while the daughter, an amiable, harmless sort of girl, tried to uphold the feeble authority of the nominal head of the house, and to explain away her mother's ill-natured sayings on every possible occasion. Indeed, the one was like the wasp that stung, and the other like the hand that applied honey to the wound.

The Sheeling doctor was a hard-working, ill-paid man, as most country doctors are, and he had a large family of very young children, and a washed-out-looking wife, whose chief characteristics were want of strength of mind, and a tendency to weep on the slightest possible provocation.

Thus it will be perceived that Sheeling possessed more of the beauties of nature than of social organisation.

Now, the banker's wife had yearnings

after county society, and many were her struggles, and ignominious her failures, in trying to gratify this ambition.

"If you'd take a house a mile or two out of town, and go backward and forward in the vehicle, it would be different, you'd see, Willerby," she would say to the long-suffering Robinson. But, weak on all other points he was strong on this; he would not leave the comfortable house adjoining the bank; and as to "the vehicle," as his spouse persisted in calling the one-horse carriage he kept for her use, he hated driving, and never entered it if he could help himself. The banker was a self-made man, and had married, as a clerk, on five-and-twenty shillings a week; but he was not a snob, for he was never ashamed of his origin, and never tried to make himself out better than he was.

How cruelly it lacerated Mrs. Robinson's feelings to see that, though ignoring the existence of herself, her son, and daughter, the county folks evidently liked and respected the banker! He had even on one memorable occasion been asked to lunch with Lord Salmontree, the big man of the neighbourhood! For some time after this important occasion Robinson was observed to be peculiarly subdued in demeanour; from which circumstance it was deduced that he had suffered much spiteful anubbing at the powerful hand of his lady, consequent upon his short sojourning in the halls of the great.

But behold! a star had now arisen on the horizon of the banker's wife; for Beach House was taken at last, after having been long tenantless, and it was understood that "a sea-captain and his family" were the expected inmates.

To the gaze of High Street, Beach House presented only a stiff row of narrow windows, and a long expanse of dead-wall, in the middle of which was a green door. This was certainly not an inviting prospect; but once inside that green door, you changed your mind, and voted Beach House the most charming place possible. The small, square, white-and-red-tiled hall led into a sitting-room, with great oak-beams crossing the ceiling, while running out at the farther end was a sort of alcove with quaint Gothic side-windows and glass doors. Beyond this was a long strip of garden, which ran downhill in the direction of the fishing hamlet. You could hear the murmur of the sea when the tide came rushing in, and the cry of the sea-gull as he swooped down upon some

little silvery fish and put an end to his swimming forever, or listen to the sad "Weep, weep," of the tiny sandpiper as he jerked himself about on the edge of the sandbanks.

It was a glorious August evening when Captain Hammond, his daughter Georgie, and the two younger members of the family—twins of six years old, named respectively Tricksy and Jack—arrived at Beach House, having posted from the large town some twenty miles distant; for as yet railways were not in Sheeling.

Our description of this family circle (in which I would fain hope the reader will take some kindly interest) is hardly, however, complete without mention of Dandy, a Skye terrier, all hair, and with no perceptible eyes; and Shag, a Shetland pony, fully deserving his name, for a more shaggy little beast it would be hard to see, and so broad was he in the back that Jack's little legs stood out almost at right angles when mounted on his trusty steed. It was a toss-up as to which was the noisiest member of Captain Hammond's family—Tricksy, Jack, or Dandy; but I am inclined to give the palm to the last-named individual, who never, on any possible occasion, failed to find some admirable reason for barking his loudest, and who, five minutes after his advent at Beach House, appeared at the farthest end of the long, narrow slip of garden, vehemently protesting against the existence of the sea-gulls, which were enjoying their evening fly. Jack and Tricksy, the latter with her long golden locks blown back by the breeze, watched this proceeding with much approval, while Georgie and her father stood together on the lawn, and gazed admiringly at the prospect seen from their new home.

We can have no better opportunity of taking the portraits of both.

Captain Hammond was a tall, spare man, long past the meridian of life; a slight stoop took from his height, and, combined with his almost white hair and care-worn face, gave the impression of a man who had borne with grave anxiety and sorrow. Nor was this impression a false one. The long gap between Georgie and the fair-haired twins was marked by more than one milestone of sorrow in the shape of a little grave by the way; and the delicate, grief-worn mother died when Tricksy and Jack were too young to know their loss, or feel the want of anything beyond "sister" by way of guardian. That Georgie had been

tender, loving, and motherlike beyond her years to these two little love-birds, so like each other, with their intelligent faces, golden locks, and fragile forms, it was easy to see, by their clinging, adoring love for "sister"—a name that to them held all the fond association which "mother" does to other children.

Let us sketch Georgie as she stood shading her eyes with one slender hand from the now level rays of the sun; her face lit up with sunset glory; her light dust-coloured dress blown back by the fresh sea-breeze; her slight, graceful figure, faultless in each curve and line; her hair—dark, yet holding a subtle tinge of red, enough to give that peculiar fairness of complexion always seen with ruddy locks—put back simply from her face, and breaking into a perfect sea of ripples, above each tiny shell-like ear; her soft, smiling mouth, and the clear-cut, determined little chin, that told of latent possibilities of firmness in a character still unformed. Her eyebrows were dark and well defined; and her eyes—when she has ceased to look seaward, and has turned, with loving gesture, to her father, you can see them without hindrance—those frank, honest, tender eyes, dark grey, with long black lashes, that tell of a drop of warm, true Irish blood in the veins, and warn you that you may meet with a want of caution in their possessor, but never with want of warmth and truth!

"Oh papa, what a lovely evening for our first coming to Beach House! And do look at those pretty boats!"

Georgie's voice was soft and low, yet full of that fervour of feeling peculiar to early youth. Certainly her enthusiasm was not uncalled for, as a flotilla of fishing-smacks swept over the bay, like a flight of great white-winged birds, swaying in the wind; now cutting through the water with a quick rush, now stopping and flapping their sails, till the breeze caught the canvas again, and away they went flying off on the other tack.

August is a month in which nature seems laden with ripeness and fulness of beauty. The flower-beds in Beach House garden were all ablaze with scarlet geraniums and flame-coloured nasturtiums; the jasmine stars, white as milk, shone out from among the ivy that covered the walls and framed the windows; and the large elder-tree bent downward with its mighty load of berries, turning black with ripeness, and almost ready for the gathering

hand. On sunny days the butterflies held high festival in this garden, the white ones, which are so common everywhere, hovering over the flowers, and chasing each other from spray to spray; while now and again a gorgeous "painted lady," with her glowing velvet wings, rested like a living flower upon some bush, and tempted little hands to imprison her, and crush the tiny feathers off her pretty dress.

But it was too late for the butterflies when Georgie stood on the lawn that first evening in the new house; a great golden moth flew hither and thither, and a stag-beetle rushed past with a loud drone, while flocks of swifts dipped down from the rosy sky, with sudden earthward flight, shrieking in concert as they rose again; and on a tree hard by a butcher-bird chirped his low, soft "kiss! kiss! kiss!" as if he would try to make himself out to be a genial, pleasant sort of a fellow, who never even heard of such a thing as spitting an unfortunate young sparrow on a cruel, sharp thorn.

It was almost like chasing two butterflies, to catch Jack and Trickay when Nurse Hughes came to take them to bed.

Here, there, and everywhere they flitted about among the flowers, followed by Dandy, noisy and delighted, discomfiting sadly a flock of purple-black starlings which had taken up their abode near Beach House garden, in order to profit by the load on the elder-trees, and, after having eaten the luscious berries all day, were going to roost, to dream of them all night, and get up next morning to eat again. At last, however, the children were captured and borne off in triumph; at which lamentable termination of the run Dandy lay down, a disconsolate hairy ball, at his master's feet; for Captain Hammond and Georgie had gone into the pretty drawing-room, where the reading-lamp threw a soft light over books and papers, already disinterred from sundry boxes and drawers by Georgie's busy fingers.

They could not make up their minds to shut out the moon that was rising over the sea, so they left the venetian of the glass doors open; and if there had been anyone outside to look in, he might have seen as pretty a picture of home-life as eyes could desire to gaze upon—the worn, weary-looking man, lying back in a lounging chair near the table where his books and papers lay, and close beside his knee on a low stool, loving, bright-eyed Georgie, her fair face turned, now toward the water

crossed by a bridge of burnished silver as the moon made a narrow pathway of light—now up to the dear face she loved so well.

Captain Hammond looked down fondly on his daughter, and laid his hand—what a thin hand it was, to be sure!—upon her sunny hair.

“I do hope, my darling, you will be happy here,” he said, tenderly.

And Georgie, with her soft cheek nestling against his arm, smiled as if there were little doubt she would be happy anywhere, so long as he and she were together.

When we are striving with the stormy waves, how fondly we look back to the quiet haven where once we rested so sweetly!

Georgie Hammond, in all her after life, never forgot that first evening at Beach House.

CHAPTER II.

“I DARE SAY plenty of nice people will call upon us,” said Georgie brightly, as she poured out the coffee at breakfast next morning. “But I hope they won’t come too soon, for I’ve heaps of things to see to. It will be days and days before I have a minute of spare time, papa!”

“Den we’ll have no lessons,” said Tricksey, with a delighted grin at Jack, and her mouth full of bread-and-butter.

“Don’t speak wis your mouth full!” retorted that young gentleman, who, by reason of half an hour’s seniority was always ready to admonish Tricksey, and equally so to resent anyone else finding fault with her. But Georgie’s hopes as to the visitors’ delaying to put in an appearance proved fallacious, for on the third morning after the arrival of the Hammonds in Sheeling, a ring came at the green door of Beach House—a ring so loud that it might have meant fire, or any other alarming catastrophe. Captain Hammond took swift refuge in his study, a small room already set aside as sacred to himself and his botanical specimens: he was a man of retiring and studious habits, and often a sufferer both from physical weakness and mental depression.

“What a figure you are, Miss Georgie, and here’s two ladies come, and in the drawin’-room, waiting!” said Nurse Hughes, with the privileged freedom of an old servant; and Georgie, busy among various pictures, household gods that had travelled with the Hammonds from one strange land

to another, and were being now finally anchored at Beach House, smiled at the dismay written in the countenance of her old nurse.

She passed her hands over her hair, for, to say the truth, it was none of the neatest just then, and followed by the twins, holding each other by the hand, as was their quaint loving fashion when about to face strangers or unknown perils of any kind, Georgie went to welcome the first visitors at her new home. A very stout, very gaily-attired woman rose as she entered, and held out a fat hand, surmounted by a large and aggressive-looking bracelet.

“Miss ‘Ammond, I presume,” she said. “My daughter, Miss Willerby Robinson. I am Mrs. W. R., and we’ve come to bid you welcome to Sheeling. Your pa’s well, I hope?”

The younger lady was by no means so overpowering as her mother, and Georgie pitied her for the nervous, timid look upon her face, and tried to draw her into the conversation that followed—with little success, however, for it was almost hopeless to get in a word edgewise, so continuous was the stream of Mrs. Robinson’s eloquence.

“Are those Captain ‘Ammond’s children, too?” she presently remarked, turning to Jack and Tricksey, who had exchanged their simple hand-clasp for a closer hold of each other, evidently looking upon the loud-voiced visitor as an enemy to be repelled by means of the union that is strength.

“I did not know there were younger ones. How do you do, my dears?”

“We’s quite well,” said Jack, Tricksey giving him a little shove forward, as much as to say that he should be spokesman. “And so is Dandy—and Sag’s coming to-day. We be’s velly glad Sag’s coming!”

“Dear me! are there more of you?” cried Mrs. Robinson, not overpleased at the prospect of a “pack of brats,” as she was wont to designate the young of the human species.

“Oh no!” said Georgie, her soft, sweet voice like music after the blatant tones of her visitor. “There are only we three: Jack and Tricksey are twins—his little love-birds, papa calls them—Dandy is the dog, and Shag is Jack’s pony.” And then, glad to be able to get an opportunity of speaking, she said, with a bright, happy look in her sweet face:

“I am sure we shall like Sheeling; we are delighted with it already; and the wild

flowers are so lovely, which is very nice, because papa is quite a botanist you know."

"Do you mean he goes about gathering weeds?" said Mrs. Robinson, puzzled at the idea of anyone admiring flowers that were not grown in gardens or greenhouses. What further enlightened remarks she might have made on Captain Hammond's favourite pursuit were cut short by her daughter plunging into the conversation in a sort of desperation, and expressing a gushing delight in Georgie's admiration of Sheeling.

"Oh yes," chimed in the mother, before poor Georgie could reply, "the place is well enough, but the people are dreadful; and, between you and me and the wall, as the sayin' is, Miss 'Ammond, I have to be very inclusive—very inclusive indeed."

Here Miss Robinson put in a word hurriedly: "Exclusive, mamma, exclusive."

"One word is just as good as another, my dear," said her mother complacently, and then turned again to Georgie, who was most devoutly wishing she might get through the visit without laughing outright.

"We live quite handy, you know, and shall be happy if you'll come in any time. We've got a fine croquet ground, and my son will be delighted to do the agreeable; he's a fine young man is my son, Miss 'Ammond, though I say it as shouldn't. He's gone to Collingwood to-day to see about our new silver entries—they're to be something out of the common, I can tell you. Don't you like things with cresses on? I always think they give a tong, you know."

Hopelessly bewildered between "entries" and "cresses," Georgie smiled feebly, and made no reply; but Tricksy, instantly taking advantage of what appeared to her small mind a congenial turn in the conversation, came close up to their guest's ample plum-coloured lap, shook back her long locks of gold, and looked sympathisingly up at Mrs. Robinson.

"I've dot sings wis cresses on, and mustards too—dear little bottles, 'oo know, and dey be growing lubly. I'se show dem to 'oo one of dese days."

"It is crests mamma means," interposed Miss Robinson, very red in the face.

"Of course," said her mother, majestically ignoring Tricksy altogether, "crests and coats-of-arms, and such like; they're to be on the new silver dishes, just like you

see the lion and unicorn, you know, and all the rest of it."

Once more Georgie held the clue to the conversation, but she was mentally declaring a visit from the banker's wife to be very exhausting.

"You'll have lots of callers, I daresay," went on the energetic bankress. "There's the Babbiecombs, they're sure to come; he's the doctor, a good sort of man enough, but she's such a touchy body you can't walk the same side of the road without offending her. She's six children under eight, and one's a cripple, and she's always whimpering about something or other. I hate people that have no spirit!"

"Oh mamma!" gasped Miss Robinson, "don't try to make Miss Hammond dislike Mrs. Babbiecomb. Indeed, she's very kind and good, but they've had a great deal of trouble."

"A great deal of fiddlesticks! don't tell me," broke in her mother, with all that incoherence such females are prone to.

"Indeed," said Georgie, earnestly, "trouble will break anyone's spirit. Why, dear papa used to be quite a different man before mamma died."

Her clear soft eyes grew "bright with unshed tears," and her voice faltered as she spoke. Miss Robinson gave a grateful glance, and even the mother's obtuse perceptions showed her that a change of topic was advisable, so she fell foul of the Rev. Anthony Featherdew, the pastor of Sheeling church.

"We're not favoured in the ministry, I can tell you," she said. "Mr. Featherdew's as stiff-necked a little man as you could come across from here to Jerusalem, though he does look as if he couldn't say 'bo' to a goose."

"But he's so good to the poor!" began her daughter, who entertained a sentimental and wholly unreciprocated admiration for Mr. Featherdew.

"Good to them, indeed! putting such extravagance into their heads—beef-tea and custard-pudding to one, and port-wine and jelly to another, instead of teaching them to mind their catechism and be content with their state of life, and make the best of it."

"But surely," said Georgie, in despair, "there must be people living in the country round who are not all disagreeable?"

"Oh yes," said the banker's wife, tossing her head, "there's county families, of course—Lord Salmontree and such like; but the airs they give themselves is such I can't

abide the sight of one of them;" then she added, with a sudden grasping at even the shadow of what she longed for, "Mr. Robinson is a mighty favourite with some of them; he's busy at the bank now with Douglas Ainsleigh—a captain in the army, and a son of Mrs. Ainsleigh of Fern Leigh, as fine a place as anyone could set eyes on; it's about three miles from here."

There are some people whom we come across in this mortal sphere, the enjoyment of whose society gives us the sensation of needing fresh air; so murky and oppressive is the moral and social atmosphere about them, that nothing short of a good breeze can blow it away. So, after Mrs. Willoughby Robinson had departed, it was a relief to Georgie to go and stand at the foot of the long garden, where the sea-air blew freshest, push back the locks from her forehead, and watch the grey-white gulls dipping their long wings in the crests of the wavelets.

"I hope no one else will come!" she said to herself in her vexation; "we are quite happy by ourselves, papa and I, with the sea and the flowers and the quiet restful days!"

"You have not been much pleased with your first visitors, my darling?" said Captain Hammond, as he and Georgie paced up and down the garden an hour after, his hand resting on her shoulder, in a fond fashion that was often theirs; for Georgie's face was never a sad tell-tale, and readable as an open book to those who loved her.

"No, papa, not very much," she said smiling, as she recalled her bright anticipations of the morning. "I was glad you did not come in, dear; they would have wearied you so!"

At this stage of the conversation, Tricksy dancing along at sister's side, became alive to the fact that their late visitor was under discussion.

"She's a vey nassy 'ooman," said Tricksy, getting rosy-red from the energy she bestowed on the adjectives; for the child was still sore over the insulting ignoring of her polite offer to display the dear little bottles, attired in their charming green coats of mustard and cress.

"She has a face—so—" continued Tricksy, puffing out her small cheeks to the utmost.

"Like so!" echoed Jack; and forthwith the children presented the appearance of two tombstone cherubs without their trumpets.

"Oh Tricksy," said Georgie, with diffidently keeping sufficiently grave to be edifying, "how often am I to tell you not to make fun of people in that way? And see, you have led Jack into doing the same!"

Instantly the two little faces returned to their normal proportions, and Tricksy hung her head.

"I'se solly," she said, while Jack puckered up his mouth, ready to aid and abet his companion in ill-doing, in case she should see fit to cry.

"Tricksy's solly," he urged. "Kiss the two of us, sissy." And sissy, nothing loath, did so; after which the children flew off like two birds, and were soon in ecstasies over a large holly-tree already thickly gemmed with berries, here and there beginning to grow rosy.

What happy, quiet days for the father and his children were these first days at Beach House! I linger on them, as we linger in the sunshine when dark shadows are coming up over the heavens, and will soon darken the landscape; when the muttering of the storm will be heard, and the birds fly low, and seek shelter in the thick branches.

But this time is not yet. Georgie, sitting silently at her work that evening, after she has kissed two little sleeping faces upstairs, and while her father is busy with his books, thinks over the day's events, and calling to mind all the banker's wife had said, smiles, as she says to herself:

"Douglas Ainsleigh! what a pretty name that is!"

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LVII. MR. KNOX HEARS AGAIN
FROM THE MARQUIS.

"Do come, papa," said Mary, jumping up and putting her arm round her father's shoulders. She was more than willing to meet them all half-way. She would sit in the arm-chair all the morning and try to drink porter at lunch, if they would receive her father graciously. Of course she was bound to her husband. She did not wish not to be bound to him. She was quite sure that she loved her husband with a perfect love. But her marriage happiness could not be complete, unless her father was to take a part of the intimate home circle of her life. She was now so animated in her request to him, that her manner told all her story, not only to him, but to Lady Sarah also.

"I will say, do come also," said Lady Sarah, smiling.

Mary looked up at her and saw the smile. "If he were your papa," she said, "you would be as anxious as I am." But she also smiled as she spoke.

"Even though he is not, I am anxious."

Who could refuse when so entreated? "Of course I shall be delighted to come," said the dean. And so it was settled. Her father was to be again made welcome at Manor Cross, and Mary thought that she could now be happy.

"It was very good of you," she whispered to Lady Sarah, as soon as he had left them. "Of course I understand. I was very, very sorry that he and Lord Brotherton had quarrelled. I won't say

anything now about anybody being wrong or anybody being right. But it would be dreadful to me if papa couldn't come to see me. I don't think you know what he is."

"I do know that you love him very dearly."

"Of course I do. There is nothing on earth he wouldn't do for me. He is always trying to make me happy. And he'd do just as much for George, if George would let him. You've been very good about it, and I love you for it."

Lady Sarah was quite open to the charm of being loved. She did not talk much of such things, nor was it compatible with her nature to make many professions of affection. But it would be a happiness to her if this young sister-in-law, who would no doubt, sooner or later, be the female head of the house, could be taught to love her. So she kissed Mary, and then walked demurely away, conscious that any great display of feeling would be antagonistic to her principles.

During the hour that Mary had been closeted with her father, there had been much difficulty among the ladies upstairs about the dean. The suggestion that he should be asked to dine had, of course, come from Lady Sarah, and it fell like a little thunderbolt among them. In the first place, what would Brotherton say? Was it not an understood portion of the agreement under which they were allowed to live in the house, that the dean should not be a guest there? Lady Susanna had even shuddered at his coming to call on his daughter; and they had all thought it to be improper when, a short time since, he had personally brought the news of Popenjoy's death to the house. And then there was their own resentment as to that

affray at Scumberg's. They were probably inclined to agree with Lady Brabazon that Brotherton was not quite all that he should be; but still he was Brotherton, and the man who had nearly murdered him could not surely be a fit guest at Manor Cross. "I don't think we can do that, Sarah," Lady Susanna had said, after a long silence. "Oh dear! that would be very dreadful!" the marchioness had exclaimed. Lady Amelia had clasped her hands together and had trembled in every limb. But Lady Sarah, who never made any suggestion without deep thought, was always loath to abandon any that she had made. She clung to this with many arguments. Seeing how unreasonable Brotherton was, they could not feel themselves bound to obey him. As to the house, while their mother lived there it must be regarded as her house. It was out of the question that they should have their guests dictated to them by their brother. Perhaps the dean was not all that a dean ought to be; but then, who was perfect? George had married his daughter, and it could not be right to separate the daughter from the father. Then came the final, strong, clenching argument. Mary would certainly be disturbed in her mind if not allowed to see her father. Perfect tranquillity for Mary was regarded as the chief ingredient in the cup of prosperity which, after many troubles, was now to be re-brewed for the Germain family. If she were not allowed to see her father, the coming Popenjoy would suffer for it. "You'd better let him come, Susanna," said the marchioness, through her tears. Susanna had looked stern as an old sibyl. "I really think it will be best," said Lady Amelia. "It ought to be done," said Lady Sarah. "I suppose you had better go to him," said the marchioness. "I could not see him; indeed I couldn't. But he won't want to see me." Lady Susanna did not yield, but Lady Sarah, as we know, went down on her mission of peace.

Mary, as soon as she was alone, sat herself down to write a letter to her husband. It was then Monday, and her father was to dine there on Thursday. The triumph would hardly be complete unless George would come home to receive him. Her letter was full of arguments, full of entreaties, and full of love. Surely he might come for one night, if he couldn't stay longer. It would be so much nicer for her father to have a gentleman there. Such an

attention would please him so much! "I am sure he would go twice the distance if you were coming to his house," pleaded Mary.

Lord George came, and, in a quiet way, the dinner was a success. The dean made himself very agreeable. The marchioness did not appear, but her absence was attributed to the condition of her health. Lady Sarah, as the great promoter of the festival, was bound to be on her good behaviour, and Lady Amelia endeavoured to copy her elder sister. It was not to be expected that Lady Susanna should be cordially hospitable; but it was known that Lady Susanna was habitually silent in company. Mary could forgive her second sister-in-law's sullenness, understanding, as she did quite well, that she was at this moment triumphing over Lady Susanna. Mr. Groschut was not a favourite with any of the party at Manor Cross, and the dean made himself pleasant by describing the nature of the late chaplain's promotion. "He begged the bishop to let him off," said the dean; "but his lordship was peremptory. It was Pugsty, or leave the diocese."

"What had he done, papa?" asked Mary. "He had promised to marry Hawkins's daughter." Hawkins was the Brotherton bookseller on the Low Church side. "And then he denied the promise. Unfortunately he had written letters, and Hawkins took them to the bishop. I should have thought Groschut would have been too sharp to write letters."

"But what was all that to the bishop?" asked Lord George.

"The bishop was, I think, just a little tired of him. The bishop is old and meek, and Mr. Groschut thought he could domineer. He did not quite know his man. The bishop would have borne much. When Mr. Groschut scolded him, I fancy he said nothing. But he bided his time; and when Mr. Hawkins came, then there was a decision pronounced. It was Pugsty, or nothing."

"Is Pugsty very nasty, papa?"

"It isn't very nice, I fancy. It just borders on the Potteries, and the population is heavy. As he must marry the bookseller's daughter, also, the union, I fear, won't be very grateful."

"I don't see why a bishop should send a bad man to any parish," suggested Lady Sarah.

"What is he to do with a Groschut, when he has unfortunately got hold of one? He couldn't be turned out to starve."

The bishop would never have been rid of him. A small living—some such thing as Pugsty—was almost a necessity."

"But the people?" said Lady Sarah. "What is to become of the poor people?"

"Let us hope they may like him. At any rate he will be better at Pugsty than at Brotherton." In this way the evening passed off; and when at ten o'clock the dean took his departure, it was felt by everyone, except Lady Susanna, that the proper thing had been done.

Lord George, having thus come back to Manor Cross, remained there. He was not altogether happy in his mind, but his banishment seemed to be so absurd a thing that he did not return to London. At Manor Cross there was something for him to do; in London there was nothing. And, after all, there was a question whether, as a pure matter of right, the marquis had the power to pronounce such a sentence. Manor Cross, no doubt, belonged to him, but then so also did Cross Hall belong for the time to his mother; and he was receiving the rent of Cross Hall while his mother was living at Manor Cross. Lady Sarah was quite clear that for the present they were justified in regarding Manor Cross as belonging to them. "And who'll tell him when he's all the way out there?" asked Mary. "I never did hear of such a thing in all my life. What harm can you do to the house, George?"

So they went on in peace and quietness for the next three months, during which not a single word was heard from the marquis. They did not even know where he was, and under the present circumstances did not care to ask any questions of Mr. Knox. Lord George had worn out his scruples, and was able to go about his old duties in his old fashion. The dean had dined there once or twice, and Lord George on one occasion had consented to stay with his wife for a night or two at the Deanery. Things seemed to have fallen back quietly into the old way—as they were before the marquis with his wife and child had come to disturb them. Of course there was a great difference in Mary's position. It was not only that she was about to become a mother, but that she would do so in a very peculiar manner. Had not the marquis taken a wife to himself, there would always have been the probability that he would some day do so. Had there not been an Italian marchioness and a little Italian Popenjoy, the ladies at Manor Cross would still have given him

credit for presenting them with a future marchioness and a future Popenjoy at some future day. Now his turn had, as it were, gone. Another Popenjoy from that side was not to be expected. In consequence of all this, Mary was very much exalted. They none of them now wished for another Popenjoy from the elder branch. All their hopes were centred in Mary. To Mary herself, this importance had its drawbacks. There was the great porter question still unsettled. The arm-chair with the footstool still was there. And she did not like being told that a mile and a half on the sunny side of the trees was the daily amount of exercise which Sir Henry, nearly half a century ago, had prescribed for ladies in her condition. But she had her husband with her, and could, with him, be gently rebellious and affectionately disobedient. It is a great thing, at any rate, to be somebody. In her early married days she had felt herself to be snubbed as being merely the dean's daughter. Her present troubles brought a certain balm with them. No one snubbed her now. If she had a mind for arrowroot, Mrs. Toff would make it herself, and suggest a thimbleful of brandy in it with her most coaxing words. Cloaks and petticoats she never saw, and she was quite at liberty to stay away from afternoon church if she pleased.

It had been decided, after many discussions on the subject, that she and her husband should go up to town for a couple of months after Christmas, Lady Amelia going with them to look after the porter and arrowroot, and that in March she should be brought back to Manor Cross with a view to her confinement. This had not been conceded to her easily, but it had at last been conceded. She had learned in secret from her father that he would come up to town for a part of the time, and after that she never let the question rest till she had carried her point. The marchioness had been obliged to confess that, in anticipation of her Popenjoy, Sir Henry had recommended a change from the country to town. She did not probably remember, that Sir Henry had done so because she had been very cross at the idea of being kept running down to the country all through May. Mary pleaded that it was no use having a house if she were not allowed to see it, that all her things were in London, and at last declared that it would be very convenient to have the baby born in London. Then the

marchioness saw that a compromise was necessary. It was not to be endured that the future Popenjoy, the future Brotherton, should be born in a little house in Munster Court. With many misgivings it was at last arranged, that Mary should go to London on the 18th of January, and be brought back on the 10th of March. It was considered that the baby would be born somewhere about the 1st of April.

It may be said that things at Manor Cross were quite in a halcyon condition, when suddenly a thunderbolt fell among them. Mr. Knox appeared one day at the house, and showed to Lord George a letter from the marquis. It was written with his usual contempt of all ordinary courtesies of correspondence, but with more than his usual bitterness. It declared the writer's opinion that his brother was a mean fellow, and deserving of no trust in that he had continued to live at the house after having been desired to leave it by its owner; and it went on to give peremptory orders to Mr. Knox to take steps for letting the house at once. This took place at the end of the first week in December. Then there was a postscript to the letter, in which the marquis suggested that Mr. Knox had better take a house for the marchioness, and apply Mr. Price's rent in the payment for such house. "Of course you will consult my mother," said the postscript; "but it should not be anywhere near Brotherton."

There was an impudence as well as a cruelty about this, which almost shook the belief which Lord George still held in the position of an elder brother. Mr. Knox was to take a house—as though his mother and sisters had no rights, no freedom of their own! "Of course I will go," said he, almost pale with anger.

Then Mr. Knox explained his views. It was his intention to write back to the marquis and to decline to execute the task imposed upon him. The care of the marquis's property was no doubt his chief mainstay; but there were things, he said, which he could not do. Of course the marquis would employ someone else, and he must look for his bread elsewhere. But he could not, he said, bring himself to take steps for the letting of Manor Cross as long as the marchioness was living there.

Of course there was a terrible disturbance in the house. There arose a great question whether the old lady should or should not be told of this new trouble, and it was decided at last that she should for

the present be kept in the dark. Mr. Knox was of opinion that the house never would be let, and that it would not be in his lordship's power to turn them out without procuring for them the use of Cross Hall—in which Mr. Price's newly-married bride had made herself comfortable on a lease of three years. And he was also of opinion that the attempt made by the marquis to banish his brother, was a piece of monstrous tyranny to which no attention should be paid. This he said before all the younger ladies, but to Lord George himself he said even more. He expressed a doubt whether the marquis could be in his right mind, and added a whisper that the accounts of the marquis's health were very bad indeed. "Of course he could let the house?" asked Lord George.

"Yes—if he can get anybody to let it for him, and anybody else to take it. But I don't think it ever will be let. He won't quite know what to do when he gets my letter. He can hardly change his agent without coming to London, and he won't like to do that in the winter. He'll write me a very savage letter, and then in a week or two I shall answer him. I don't think I'd disturb the marchioness if I were you, my lord."

The marchioness was not disturbed, but Lord George again went up to London, on this occasion occupying the house in Munster Court in solitude. His scruples were all renewed, and it was in vain that Lady Sarah repeated to him all Mr. Knox's arguments. He had been called a mean fellow, and the word rankled with him. He walked about alone, thinking of the absolute obedience with which in early days he had complied with all the behests of his elder brother, and the perfect faith with which in latter days he had regarded that brother's interests. He went away, swearing to himself that he would never again put his foot within the domain of Manor Cross as long as it was his brother's property. A day might come when he would return there; but Lord George was not a man to anticipate his own prosperity. Mary wished to accompany him; but this was not allowed. The marchioness enquired a dozen times why he should go away; but there was no one who could tell her.

CHAPTER LVIII. MRS. JONES'S LETTER.

A FEW days before Christmas, Mary received a long letter from her friend Mrs. Montacute Jones. At this time there was sad trouble again at Manor Cross.

Lord George had been away for a fortnight, and no reason for his departure had as yet been given to the marchioness. She had now become aware that he was not to be at home at Christmas, and she was full of doubt, full of surmises of her own. He must have quarrelled with his sisters! They all assured her that there hadn't been an unpleasant word between him and any one of them. Then he must have quarrelled with his wife! "Indeed, indeed he has not," said Mary. "He has never quarrelled with me, and he never shall." Then why did he stay away? Business was nonsense. Why was he going to stay away during Christmas. Then it was necessary to tell the old lady a little fib. She was informed that Brotherton had specially desired him to leave the house. This certainly was a fib, as Brotherton's late order had been of a very different nature. "I hope he hasn't done anything to offend his brother again," said the marchioness. "I wonder whether it's about Popenjoy!" In the midst of her troubles the poor old woman's wits were apt to wander.

Mary, too, had become rather cross, thinking that as her husband was up in town, she should be allowed to be there too. But it had been conceded by her, and by her father on her behalf, that her town life was not to begin till after Christmas, and now she was unable to prevail. She and the family were in this uncomfortable condition when Mrs. Montacute Jones's letter came for her consolation. As it contained tidings, more or less accurate, concerning many persons named in this chronicle, it shall be given entire. Mrs. Montacute Jones was a great writer of letters, and she was wont to communicate many details among her friends and acquaintances respecting one another. It was one of the marvels of the day that Mrs. Jones should have so much information; and no one could say how or whence she got it.

"CURRY HALL, December 12, 187—."

Curry Hall was the name of Mr. Jones's seat in Gloucestershire, whereas, as all the world knew, Killancodlem was supposed to belong to Mrs. Jones herself.

"DEAREST LADY GEORGE,—We have been here for the last six weeks, quite quiet. A great deal too quiet for me, but for the three or four winter months, I am obliged to give way a little to Mr. Jones. We have had the Mildmays here, because they didn't seem to have any other place to go to.

But I barred the baroness. I am told that she is now bringing an action against Aunt Ju, who unfortunately wrote the letter which induced the woman to come over from—wherever she came from. Poor Aunt Ju is in a terrible state, and wants her brother to buy the woman off, which he will probably have to do. That's what comes, my dear, of meddling with disabilities. I know my own disabilities, but I never think of interfering with Providence. Mr. Jones was made a man, and I was made a woman. So I put up with it, and I hope you will do the same.

"Mr. and Mrs. Green are here also, and remain till Christmas, when the Giblets are coming. It was the prettiest wedding in the world, and they have been half over Europe since. I am told he's the happiest man in the world, and the very best husband. Old Gossaling didn't like it at all, but every stick is entailed, and they say he's likely to have gout in his stomach, so that everything will go pleasantly. Lord Giblet himself is loud against his father, asking everybody whether it was to be expected that, in such a matter as that, he shouldn't follow his own inclination. I do hope he'll show a little gratitude to me. But it's an ungrateful world, and they'll probably both forget what I did for them.

"And now I want to ask you your opinion about another friend. Don't you think that Jack had better settle down with poor dear Guss? She's here, and upon my word I think she's nearly broken-hearted. Of course you and I know what Jack has been thinking of lately. But when a child cries for the top brick of the chimney, it is better to let him have some possible toy. You know what top brick he has been crying for. But I'm sure you like him, and so do I, and I think we might do something for him. Mr. Jones would let them a nice little house a few miles from here at a peppercorn rent, and I suppose old Mr. Mildmay could do something. They are engaged after a fashion. She told me all about it the other day. So I've asked him to come down for Christmas, and have offered to put up his horses if he wants to hunt.

"And now, my dear, I want to know what you have heard about Lord Brotherton at Manor Cross. Of course we all know the way he has behaved to Lord George. If I were Lord George, I should not pay the slightest attention to him. But I'm told he is in a very low condition—never sees anybody except his courier, and never

stirs out of the house. Of course you know that he makes his wife an allowance, and refuses to see her. From what I hear privately, I really do think that he'll not last long. What a blessing it would be! That's plain speaking—but it would be a blessing! Some people manage to live so that everybody will be the better for their dying. I should break my heart if anybody wanted me to die.

“How grand it would be! The young and lovely Marchioness of Brotherton! I'll be bound you think about it less than anybody else, but it would be nice. I wonder whether you'd cut a poor old woman like me, without a handle to her name. And then it would be Popenjoy at once! Only how the bonfires wouldn't burn if it should turn out to be only a disability after all. But we should say, better luck next time, and send you candle-cups by the dozen. Who wouldn't send a candle-cup to a real young lovely live marchioness? I'll be bound your father knows all about it, and has counted it all up a score of times. I suppose it's over forty thousand pounds a year since they took to working the coal at Popenjoy, and whatever the present man has done, he can't have clipped the property. He has never gambled, and never spent his income. Italian wives and that sort of thing don't cost so much money as they do in England.

“Pray write and tell me all about it. I shall be in town in February, and of course shall see you. I tell Mr. Jones that I can't stand Curry Hall for more than three months. He won't come to town till May, and perhaps when May comes he'll have forgotten all about it. He is very fond of sheep, but I don't think he cares for anything else, unless he has a slight taste for pigs.—Your affectionate friend,
MONTACUTE JONES.”

There was much in this letter that astonished Mary, something that shocked her, but something also that pleased her. The young and lovely Marchioness of Brotherton! Where is the woman who would not like to be a young and lovely marchioness, so that it had all been come by honestly, that the husband had been married as husbands ought to be married, and had not been caught like Lord Giblet? and she knew that her old friend—her old friend whom she had not yet known for quite twelve months—was only joking with her in that suggestion as to being cut. What a fate was in store for her

—if it really was in store—that so early in her life she should be called upon to fill so high a place. Then she made some resolutions in her mind, that should it be so she would be humble and meek; and a further resolution, that she would set her heart upon none of it till it was firmly her own.

But it shocked her that the marquis should be so spoken of, especially that he should be so spoken of if he were really dying! Plain speaking! Yes, indeed. But such plain speaking was very terrible. This old woman could speak of another nobleman having gout in his stomach, as though that were a thing really to be desired. And then that allusion to the Italian wife or wives! Poor Mary blushed as she thought of it.

But there was a paragraph in the letter which interested her as much as the tidings respecting Lord Brotherton. Could it be right that Jack De Baron should be made to marry Guss Mildmay? She thought not, for she knew that he did not love Guss Mildmay. That he should have wanted an impossible brick, whether the highest or lowest brick, was very sad. When children cry for impossible bricks, they must of course be disappointed. But she hardly thought that this would be the proper cure for his disappointment. There had been a moment in which the same idea had suggested itself to her; but now since her friendship with Jack had been strengthened by his conduct in the Deanery garden, she thought that he might do better with himself than be made by Mrs. Jones to marry Guss Mildmay. Of course she could not interfere, but she hoped that something might prevent Jack De Baron from spending his Christmas at Curry Hall. She answered Mrs. Jones's letter very prettily. She trusted that Lord Giblet might be happy with his wife, even though his father should get well of the gout. She was very sorry to hear that Lord Brotherton was ill. Nothing was known about him at Manor Cross, except that he seemed to be very ill-natured to everybody. She was surprised that anybody should be so ill-natured as he was. If ever she should live to fill a high position, she hoped she would be good-natured. She knew that the people she would like best would be those who had been kind to her, and nobody had been so kind as a certain lady named Mrs. Montacute Jones. Then she spoke of her coming trial. “Don't joke with me about it any more,

there's a dear woman. They all flutter me here, talking of it always, though they mean to be kind. But it seems to me so serious. I wish that nobody would speak to me of it except George; and he seems to think nothing about it."

Then she came to the paragraph, the necessity for writing which had made her answer Mrs. Jones's letter so speedily. "I don't think you ought to persuade anybody to marry anyone. It didn't much signify, perhaps, with Lord Gibley, as he isn't clever, and I daresay that Miss Green will suit him very well; but as a rule I think gentlemen should choose for themselves. In the case you speak of I don't think he cares for her, and then they would be unhappy." She would not for worlds have mentioned Captain De Baron's name; but she thought that Mrs. Jones would understand her.

Of course Mrs. Jones understood her—had understood more than Mary had intended her to understand. Christmas was over and Mary was up in town when she received Mrs. Jones's rejoinder, but it may as well be given here. "The child who wanted the top brick is here, and I think will content himself with a very much less exalted morsel of the building. I am older than you, my dear, and know better. Our friend is a very good fellow in his way, but there is no reason why he should not bend his neck as well as another. To you, no doubt, he seems to have many graces. He has had the great grace of holding his tongue because he appreciated your character." Mary, as she read this, knew that even Mrs. Montacute Jones could be misinformed now and then. "But I do not know that he is in truth more gracious than others, and I think it quite as well that Miss Mildmay should have the reward of her constancy."

But this was after Christmas, and in the meantime other occurrences had taken place. On the 20th of December, Lord George was informed by Mr. Knox that his brother, who was then at Naples, had been struck with paralysis, and at Mr. Knox's advice he started off for the southern capital of Italy. The journey was a great trouble to him, but this was a duty which he would under no circumstances neglect. The tidings were communicated to Manor Cross, and, after due consultation, were conveyed by Lady Sarah to her mother. The poor old lady did not seem to be made very unhappy by them. "Of course I can't go to him," she said.

"How could I do it?" When she was told that was out of the question, she subsided again into tranquillity, merely seeming to think it necessary to pay increased attention to Mary; for she was still quite alive to the fact that all this greatly increased the chances that the baby would be Popenjoy; but even in this the poor old lady's mind wandered much, for every now and then she would speak of Popenjoy as though there were a living Popenjoy at the present moment.

Lord George hurried off to Naples, and found that his brother was living at a villa about eight miles from the town. He learned in the city, before he had made his visit, that the marquis was better, having recovered his speech and apparently the use of his limbs. Still, being at Naples he found himself bound to go out to the villa. He did so, and when he was there his brother refused to see him. He endeavoured to get what information he could from the doctor; but the doctor was an Italian, and Lord George could not understand him. As far as he could learn, the doctor thought badly of the case; but for the present his patient had so far recovered as to know what he was about. Then Lord George hurried back to London, having had a most uncomfortable journey in the snow. Come what might, he didn't think that he would ever again take the trouble to pay a visit to his brother. The whole time taken on his journey and for his sojourn in Naples was less than three weeks, and when he returned, the New Year had commenced.

He went down to Brotherton to bring his wife up to London, but met her at the Deanery, refusing to go to the house. When the marchioness heard of this—and it became impossible to keep it from her—she declared that it was with herself that her son George must have quarrelled. Then it was necessary to tell her the whole truth, or nearly the whole. Brotherton had behaved so badly to his brother, that Lord George had refused to enter even the park. The poor old woman was very wretched, feeling in some dim way that she was being robbed of both her sons. "I don't know what I've done," she said, "that everything should be like this. I'm sure I did all I could for them; but George never would behave properly to his elder brother, and I don't wonder that Brotherton feels it. Brotherton always had so much feeling. I don't know why George should be jealous because Popenjoy

was born. Why shouldn't his elder brother have a son of his own like anybody else?" And yet whenever she saw Mary, which she did for two or three hours every day, she was quite alive to the coming interest. It was suggested to her that she should be driven into Brotherton, so that she might see George at the Deanery; but her objection to go to the dean's house was as strong as was that of Lord George to come to his brother's.

Mary was of course delighted when the hour of her escape came. It had seemed to her that there was especial cruelty in keeping her at Manor Cross while her husband was up in town. Her complaints on this head had of course been checked by her husband's unexpected journey to Naples, as to which she had hardly heard the full particulars till she found herself in the train with him. "After going all that way he wouldn't see you!"

"He neither would see me nor send me any message."

"Then he must be a bad man."

"He has lived a life of self-indulgence till he doesn't know how to control a thought or a passion. It was something of that kind which was meant when we were told about the rich man and the eye of the needle."

"But you will be a rich man soon, George."

"Don't think of it, Mary; don't anticipate it. Heaven knows I have never longed for it. Your father longs for it."

"Not for his own sake, George."

"He is wrong all the same. It will not make you happier, nor me."

"But, George, when you thought that that little boy was not Popenjoy you were as anxious as papa to find it all out."

"Right should be done," said Lord George, after a pause. "Whether it be for weal or woe, justice should have its way. I never wished that the child should be other than what he was called; but when there seemed to be reason for doubt I thought that it should be proved."

"It will certainly come to you now, George, I suppose."

"Who can say? I might die to-night, and then Dick Germain, who is a sailor somewhere, would be the next Lord Brotherton."

"Don't talk like that, George."

"He would be if your child happened to be a girl. And Brotherton might live ever so long. I have been so harassed by it all, that I am almost sick of the title and

sick of the property. I never grudged him anything, and see how he has treated me." Then Mary was very gracious to him and tried to comfort him, and told him that fortune had at any rate given him a loving wife.

A LANCASHIRE DIARIST.

TWELVE years or so ago, somebody turning over a heap of rubbish in a cottage at Slaidburn, near Chipping, came upon two worn little volumes, which proved on examination to be the diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden, a dissenting minister, who, from 1722 to 1769, officiated on alternate Sundays at two humble places of worship—one near Newton-on-Bowland, and the other at Heaketh Lane, near Chipping. The treasure trove coming into the possession of Mr. William Dobson, he was at the pains of transcribing the defunct pastor's crabbed caligraphy, and printing the diary, that Lancashire men and women might learn how country folk lived in the county of crag and fell, of moss and moor, in the good old days when George the Second ruled the land.

With no thought of posthumous publication, and therefore no temptation to use it as a means of safely vilifying foes and slandering friends, Peter Walkden kept a diary only that it might be to him a mirror to view his life and actions in; that he might know how he walked, and how to humble his soul before God. It is, accordingly, but a quaint and simple record of a commonplace life, detailing with minuteness the way in which every day was spent, each day's account beginning like the opening one, written on the 1st of January, 1725: "This morning, being in health, I rose, and prayed, and praised God, and put on my linen," and ending with a commendation of himself and all his belongings to Heaven's care.

At this time our diarist was forty-one years old, and the head of a household numbering seven besides himself, consisting of "my love," as he invariably terms his wife, three sons and three daughters. We fail to gather whether he had any settled income at all. In all likelihood he was not so well off as Parson Adams with his handsome income of twenty-three pounds a year, but assuredly he resembled "the best Christian in any book," in being a parson on Sundays and a farmer on all other days of the week—

farmer who was his own labourer withal. When not engaged praying, preaching, or expounding the Scriptures, or busy with such ministerial duties as came to him by reason of births, deaths, and marriages among his small and scattered flock, the good pastor was hard at work in his garden or on his farm; sowing with "my love's" help onions, radishes, and lettuces; planting berry trees or potatoes, "minding" his "goods" (cows); cutting turf on the long-since-reclaimed Peacock Moss and stacking it at home for winter fires; "bating" oats, "thacking" straw, mending fences, repairing tools, reaping his wheat "with Mary Richmond," paving the shippen, fetching coals from Preston, and carrying them to the dame's school for his daughters, "Mary and Ann, to warm them by this winter," or gathering cranberries on Longridge Fell.

Industrious as Walkden was and ready to turn his hand to anything, he was obliged to call in outside aid now and again, but in those days a goodly amount of labour was to be had for very little money. When old John Berry claimed eightpence a day for "pointing" the house, "he being old," Walkden thought sixpence a day as much as he ought to pay; but John differed in opinion, "and he and my love had some words about it, but in vain." Possibly the old fellow rated his services at too high a value if payment by results had been the rule in Lancashire, but according to the scale of wages fixed by magisterial wisdom at the beginning of 1725 his demands were by no means extravagant. A shilling a day, nothing found, or sixpence a day with meat and drink, was the maximum wage of men of his class, while the best agricultural labourers—working from five in the morning to half-past seven in the evening, from the middle of March to the middle of September, and from daybreak to sunset for the remainder of the year, with half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for "drinking"—received the same pay; inferior workers having to be content with tenpence or fivepence a day in one season, and ninepence or fourpence per day in the other. And the best of millers was not to have more than five pounds a year with board, and ten pounds a year without; and domestic servants were fortunate if they got two pounds a year—with board and lodging, as a matter of course.

Walkden, past question, lived by the

sweat of his brow rather than by the exercise of his priestly avocation; but, taking all things into consideration, his position was not altogether so bad as it seems. He raised sufficient wheat, vegetables, butter, milk, and eggs to supply his family wants; and his income, whatever it might be, was supplemented by sundry small receipts. For keeping account of "church leys" he received sixpence per annum. Mrs. Walkden had customers in Proud Preston willing to take her surplus butter off her hands at the rate of threepence halfpenny a pound, while every pound of potatoes not required for home consumption was good for a halfpenny; and the little mare that carried the minister to chapel on Sundays was occasionally let out to a neighbour for a consideration. For a journey to Preston, a distance out and in of eighteen miles, the pastor was wont to charge sixpence—a charge the mare, could she have been consulted in the matter, would have pronounced none too high, for if the miles were not many they were weary ones to travel. What the bridle-paths she had to traverse were like, may be guessed from Arthur Young's description of the turnpike-road from Preston to Wigan. "I have not," says he, "in the whole range of language, terms sufficiently expressive to describe this infernal road. To look over the map, and perceive that it is a principal one, not only to some towns, but even to whole counties, one would naturally conclude it to be at least decent; but let me most seriously caution all travellers who may accidentally purpose to travel this terrible road to avoid it as they would the devil, for a thousand to one but they break their necks or their limbs by overthrows or breakings down. They will here meet with ruts four feet deep, and floating with mud, only from a wet summer; what, therefore, must it be after a winter? The only mending it receives is the tumbling in of some loose stones, which serve no other purpose but jolting a carriage in the most intolerable manner. These are not merely opinions, but facts, for I actually passed three carts broken down in these eighteen miles of execrable memory."

Sometimes a basket of winter plums or a few apples, a piece of beef or a cheese, would come to the minister, from a member of the church; sometimes the voluntary contributions took the more welcome shape of coin, as when John Jenkinson's wife gave him a shilling;

William Fell came to thank him for what he had done for him in his last illness, and gave him a shilling to buy what he pleased with; and Ellen Seed bestowed on his love "wool that would be a pair and stockings," and Richard Seed bestowed half-a-crown on the good man himself. Then there were windfalls like this: "Robert Rathwell gave me an account of William Parkinson's verbal will, attested and revealed by John Wilkinson, which is as follows, viz.: to his kinsman at York he bequeathed one table and one ark—that is to say, an oak chest—with one large Bible; to Mr. Peter Walkden, ten shillings to preach his funeral sermon. All that remained over the charges of his burial and the paying of his just debts he gave to his kinswoman, Jane Rathwell." Verbal testaments are no longer recognised, nor would it be held justifiable for the person to whom property had been left to do as Walkden records a certain heir did: "He put the family that lives in the house all out, shut the door upon them, and thereby said that he took possession of the estate and the house."

Sam Slick's poor, dear, good old Joshua Hopewell told the sympathising clock-maker: "I'm e'en a'most starved, and Captain Jack does look as poor as Job's turkey; that's a fact. So I thought, as times was hard, I'd take the bags and get some oats for him, from some of my subscribin' congregation; it would save them the cash, and suit me just as well as the blunt. Wherever I went, I might have filled my bag with excuses, but I got no oats." Things were not quite so bad with our diarist; when he went begging oats for the little mare, he got some—of a sort; the worthy upon whose liberality he relied, he tells us, "put a bushel of oats in my sack, but they were very light and but small feeding in them; so I bought of him a bushel of better to mix with them, to make them better worth the mare's labour to eat them."

Walkden's house, which was, we may be sure, anything but a grand one, bore the unpleasantly suggestive name of Daub Hall. For this, and half the fruit of the newly-planted orchard at the back of it, he paid a rent of twenty-four shillings a year; his garden, situated some distance away, costing another shilling a year. The "Hall" he held on an eleven years' lease. Anent which he writes: "Heard that John Parkinson had said he must give me notice to remove from Daub Hall. I admired it, seeing it is scarce a year since I took it of him for eleven years;" whereupon Mr.

Dobson remarks that the reverend gentleman is rather sarcastic, but we are not inclined to think any sarcasm intended; the minister only uses the word "admired" in its old sense of "wondered." At any rate he was not disturbed in his possession. Besides rent, there were taxes to be paid, for we find him disbursing three shillings and eightpence for "highway gaud," and recording the coming of the "window-peeper" to the parish, in a note ending, "we having ten windows, must make one up or pay one shilling a year."

When he could buy a four-year-old heifer for a little over four pounds, and a cow for three pounds seven shillings, a man's butcher's bills were necessarily less formidable-looking documents than such things are nowadays. Walkden would seem to have spent but little upon meat, and to have got his money's worth for what he did spend. For a loin of mutton he paid fivepence, for a leg, elevenpence, for a neck of veal and a calf's foot, sevenpence halfpenny, a piece of beef weighing nine-and-a-half pounds cost him one and sevenpence, and "a foot of beef," just half-a-sovereign. Even with such prices as these, people of a saving turn adopted a co-operative method of buying. "Robert Seed called on me and said that several neighbours had a design to join and buy a fat cow, and they knew of as many as would take three quarters, and they wanted a fourth quarter. I said I would be willing to take half a quarter, if they could find a partner for the other, and if they happened to find a partner for the whole quarter, I would be easy without any at all."

Clothing the body was an expensive necessity compared with the feeding of it. When "my love" went one day to sell butter at Preston, she spent the gains of her journey in buying "me and my Mary each a pair of stockings, one shilling and fourpence; and me a bottle of ink, one penny; the children's striped woosey one yard and a half, one shilling and threepence; and black Jersey for footing my old stockings, twopence." At another time, Walkden borrows three shillings and elevenpence of son Thomas to pay a webster for two yards and a half of linen cloth, "for me a shift;" and we find him paying eightpence for a pair of gloves, fourpence for a pair of gaiters, four shillings for two hats, one for himself, the other for his wife; twopence for a pair of scissors, and nine shillings in silver "and the old ones," for a new pair of boots for his own feet—

the mare's were shod at sixpence halfpenny a pair.

Lancashire lads were educated cheaply enough, supposing they were taught anything worth learning, for son Harry, destined to succeed his father in his ministry, was schooled by Mr. Nabb for half-a-crown a year; but one, at least, of the three Rs appears to have been ignored by that pedagogue, for Walkden notes the payment of one shilling to a scrivener for teaching son Harry writing for a fortnight.

A frugal liver, contented to make a meal of a pennyworth of cockles, the diarist, when dining away from home, rarely spent more than fourpence upon refreshing the inner man; sometimes threepence sufficed for dinner and a pint of ale. Recording a visit to a relation, he says: "I and my love came home direct and got the Tayler's Supper," that is, little or nothing. It was the custom in the North for the village tailor to work at his customer's house for so much a day and his board, and to show that he had had enough, he left a morsel on the plate, called "the tailor's mense."

With all his economical care, Walkden was at times compelled to go a-borrowing. On one occasion he essayed to borrow eight shillings and sixpence from a brother minister, for a month, but "he had it not;" fortunately a richer acquaintance was found able to spare eight shillings for the required period. Still he was never reduced like "Brother Miller" to sell his hair for five shillings and a neworavat, and could afford to give lodging for a night or two to "an old itinerant mendicant preacher of the Church of England," and find refreshments for "a wandering straggle-brained clergyman," pretending to hold a benefice in Derbyshire, of whose truthfulness he had something more than a doubt.

Of such luxuries as tea, coffee, sugar, and groceries generally there is no mention in the diary, and, although a gallon of claret at three shillings and eightpence, and two quarts of the same at one and sevenpence, figure among the items of expenditure, it must not be inferred that the poor preacher indulged in a little wine for his stomach's sake; that, we may safely take it, was kept for sacramental use. Not that Walkden was of an ascetic's mind as regards drinking; he was that *bête noir* of teetotalers, a moderate drinker, who enjoyed a pipe and a pot of ale, and had such faith in the virtues of malt, that we read, "Not being very well, I set, and got two pots of ale;" and when

he desired to extract some information on family affairs from aunt Dorothy Wood, he was much disappointed because, although he called for a pot of ale for the old lady's delectation, yet she told him nothing.

A penny was the price of a pot of ale, as it was in Elizabethan days, when Adam the smith was made to say: "The ale is good ale, and you can ask but a penny for a pot, no more by the statute." But the pot of the diarist's period held but half-a-pint, for when after calling at Mr. Eccles's shop and buying "a quarten of tobacco" for threepence halfpenny, he went to his cousin's and got two pints of ale, Walkden paid fourpence for the quart of liquor. His notes respecting pots and pints of ale are numberless, and are chiefly remarkable for showing that it was his custom, after service on the Lord's Day, to refresh himself at an inn before setting his face homewards. Here are a few of these Sabbath entries. "I got a pint of ale, and tobacco, and was for coming home, but a mighty rain began to fall, with thunder, which caused me to call for another pint." "Come to Walmsley's and spent twopence and no more, on my love and Alice Martin." "At Walmsley's, after service, with my love and Elizabeth Atkinson, and got one pint of ale, and a pennyworth of brandy mixed with it, and paid for ale." "A pot of ale, a toast, and a pipe of tobacco, threepence." "Dined at Edward Parkinson's; I paid twopence for ale, a penny dinner, a penny tobacco, and a penny for my mare." "After service, called at the New Hollins, and being in a cold and the day cold, I resolved to get a gill of hot ale; so told Brother Miller, and he and John Gardner went in with me, and we got one pint hot between us, and paid pence apiece and came away." On many occasions the good man rode away without "paying his shot," by reason of the host or hostess being too short of "brass" to give him change. They did not mind trusting the minister, whose credit, however, appears to have stood him in small stead with other traders, since he records that Mrs. Walkden "went to the fell and bought for my Mary a pair of shoes, must be one shilling and fivepence, or the shoes again to-morrow."

Our worthy nonconformist was not a man of many books, he had very little time for reading them, and very little cash for buying them. It is not, therefore, surprising that his purchases in that way were exceedingly few and very far between. Seven shillings and sixpence for Ains-

worth's Works, in folio; three shillings and sixpence for Edward's Veritas Redux, and sixpence for an almanack—eleven shillings and sixpence in all—is the sum total expended upon books in the course of half-a-dozen years. He liked, however, to know something of what was going on in the world, for we find one entry of the payment of one-and-sixpence halfpenny for newspapers, and another running: "Paid sixpence to Ellen Seed for what newspapers I have had this year, and was told we must have no more." Nothing is said as to why this stoppage of supplies was to come about, but it was apparently a false alarm, the above-given entry bearing the date of July 3rd, 1729, while on the 16th of May, 1731, he writes: "I sent for twelve newspapers received since the 1st of January, one-and-sixpence, and to-day's newspaper will be the second to pay for. I read the newspaper, and find not much in it remarked as to the public news, but that the Parliament broke up on Thursday last, and that there is still preparations for war carried on between Spain and Germany. As to private news, what is most notable is an account from Coventry that the spouse of the Rev. Mr. Rider, vicar of Nuneaton, near Coventry, was safely delivered of four children, were all living; and that about ten months ago, she had three children at a birth, who are all living." This is the last entry in the diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden. He lived for many years afterwards, not departing this life until the 5th of November, 1769, having attained the age of eighty-four, and survived "my love" just a quarter of a century.

MOSS-ROSES.

WHITE with the whiteness of the snow,
 Pink with the faintest rosy glow,
 They blossom on their sprays;
 They glad the borders with their bloom,
 And sweeten with their rich perfume
 The mossy garden ways.
 The dew that from their brimming leaves
 Drips down, the mignonette receives,
 And sweeter grows thereby;
 The tall June lilies stand anear,
 In raiment white and gold, and here
 The purple pansies lie.
 Warm sunshine glitters over all,
 On daisied sward and ived wall,
 On lily, pansy, rose;
 While fitting round each garden bed,
 With joyous laugh and airy tread,
 A fairer sunbeam goes.
 A little human blossom, bright
 With childish, innocent delight
 Of life yet in its dawn;
 With sunshine prisoned in her hair,
 Deep eyes unshadowed by a care,
 She gambols on the lawn.

She checks the light elastic tread,
 And stays to hear, far overhead,
 The lark's song to its close;
 Eyes shaded by two tiny hands—
 We pray God bless her as she stands,
 Our little daughter Rose.

Yes, bless the Rose, dear God, since we
 Have given the Lily back to Thee,
 That bloomed with her awhile;
 Yes, bless her deeply, doubly now,
 For her dear sake, whose angel brow
 Reflects Thine awful smile.

How often in her childish face,
 Our hungry, longing eyes can trace
 The looks of one away;
 How often in her merry tone
 A music wakes, more sad than moan,
 Of accents hushed for aye!

God bless the child to blossom here,
 Our clinging human hearts to cheer,
 Till life has reached its close;
 To grow in sweetest grace and bloom,
 To beautify the dear old home,
 Our precious daughter Rose!

A PRIVILEGED EXCURSION.

"PULBOROUGH and Hamberley, 'Arry—
 'arf-a-crown, and fourpence privilege."

"Good water?"

"Well, I don't go for salmon myself,
 you know, nor whales, but for brim and
 such-like they tell me it's as bloomin' a
 lay as here and there one."

"That's good enough, old man; I'm on."
 And therewith 'Arry, having effected the
 lighting of his refractory pipe, moves on,
 and makes way for me to study in my turn
 the interesting document which his friend
 has been quoting.

I find that it is the announcement of an
 angling excursion, to be taken every Sun-
 day during the season, from London Bridge,
 New Cross, Victoria, and East Croydon, to
 Pulborough and Amberley, at the not very
 exorbitant charge of half-a-crown each for
 the double journey. I also find that the pri-
 vilege tickets, whatever they may be, for the
 season, at the usual price of fourpence each,
 are now ready, and may be obtained of one
 Mr. J. Clout, at The Berkeley Castle, Rahere
 Street, Goswell Road, St. Luke's, "on
 every Wednesday and Thursday evenings,
 after six o'clock," and that "persons wishing
 to avail themselves of the same must apply
 personally; except members of clubs, who
 can do so through their secretaries." On
 the whole, however, I am inclined to doubt
 whether the affable and obliging secretaries
 of the clubs to which I happen to belong
 would look upon a journey to Rahere Street
 as coming quite within the range of their
 official duties. So I make up my mind to
 look after my own privileges, and make

the best of my way to Rahere Street accordingly.

Not without difficulty. Cabby, picked up at Kensington, has never heard of Rahere Street; requests me to spell it; is decidedly more fogged when I have complied with that request than he was before; finally desires me to write it out on a bit o' paper, and sticking the memorandum into the little pulley of his sashline for careful study by the way, drives off with his hat very much on one side, and the straw between his lips tip-tilted at a very acute angle, as one who should say: "This party's appropriate destination is not St. Luke's but St. Bethlehem."

It is not the first time, however, and probably will not be the last, that genius will have proved its independence of surroundings. As I push open the door of a very unpretending little brown brick house—assuredly one of the last I should have thought of picking out as the probable headquarters of a series of angling excursions, of sufficient dimensions to require the weekly services of a special train—I become aware that, so far, at all events, as liveliness is concerned, the inside of The Berkeley Castle by no means corresponds with the outside. The little bar is so crammed that I have considerable difficulty in making my way to the counter. Half-a-dozen or so of what might very well be taken for conspirators, stand in a closely-packed row, pipe in mouth and glass in hand, along the wall of the dark, narrow little passage which leads to the parlour. I half expect, as I squeeze past them, to hear a whispered watchword, and am quite prepared, if need be, to join in the sotto voce chorus from "Madame Angot." In the parlour itself the crowd is, if possible, a trifle denser than outside. I begin to understand now how it is that Rahere Street is so quiet and lifeless. The entire population is evidently enjoying itself at The Berkeley Castle.

And so my ticket is duly obtained, and I am in a position to claim a place among the favoured few who, on Sunday morning next, and every subsequent Sunday if it so please them, may wend their way to the romantic glades of Pulborough and Amberley, and catch—or at all events fish for—"brim and such-like," to their hearts' content. Or rather, to speak more correctly, I have taken the first step towards the obtaining of that privilege. Why, if it be found remunerative by the Brighton Company to carry third-class passengers to Amberley

and back on Sunday for half-a-crown each, it should be thought necessary to render the process of investing that half-crown as difficult and as complicated as possible, is to me, I confess, a mystery yet unsolved. Even were it desired to be "exclusive," and to restrict the party altogether to the brethren of the angle, it would surely be enough for each applicant to produce at the booking-office his rod and line, with perhaps a creel or two, or half-a-dozen landing-nets, or an assortment of those mighty boots that may be seen, any day, cooling not only their heels but their soles and upper-leathers also, in the little india-rubber tub of water in Mr. Macintosh's window. But as the holder of a privilege ticket in the Pulborough and Amberley Excursion, I am to be subjected to a much more severe ordeal. Every time I propose to avail myself of my privilege, I must present myself at the proper hour of the proper evening, at the bar of The Berkeley Castle, and there duly presenting the large pink ticket which represents my privilege, obtain, in return for the stipulated half-crown, a small blue ticket which shall be voucher for the due payment of my fare. The next step is to carry the two tickets to the London Bridge or Victoria booking-office—the solitary pigeon-hole of which you will find beset by some two or three hundred fellow-anglers, each with his rod under his arm, and a mysterious square box on his back, a little too big for a corneopane and a little too small for a family plate-chest—where, after again exhibiting your large pink ticket, you will exchange your blue voucher for an ordinary railway return-ticket, quaintly striped with many colours. And finally you will submit both tickets, striped and pink, to the stern scrutiny of the inspector at the platform-gate, after which, you will be at liberty to take your seat in the train, congratulating yourself as you do so upon having so successfully mastered this new and ingenious development of the three-card-trick.

And in truth on this sunny May morning, our half-crowns paid, and our day's fun before us, we are ready to congratulate ourselves upon pretty well everything. Even the tall young man in the corner next me, who, not having his privilege ticket with him, has been peremptorily called upon for the full fare of eight-and-sixpence, takes a chirpy view of the situation, and felicitates himself upon having

eight-and-sixpence in his pocket wherewith to pay it; while the still taller young man opposite, who has not only left his own privilege ticket carefully locked up at home, but has successfully cajoled the stern Mr. Clout himself into allowing him just for this once to pass without it, evidently has the zest of his day's entertainment at least doubled by the narrowness of his escape of missing it altogether. The only member of the party who appears to have anything at all upon his mind is a friend of the moneyed young gentleman who is seated, rod in hand, in the opposite corner, and answers to the name of Tommy. Tommy is got up for the occasion with much correctness. His natty little suit of dittoes is just of the proper shade of dark grey; his dapper little boots might have come fresh this morning; his little hat is garnished in the most strictly orthodox fashion, not indeed with flies, but with such dainty little samples of hook and gut as "brim and such-like," may most effectively be beguiled withal. And yet Tommy apparently is not quite happy. His eyebrows have at once raised and contracted themselves until the brim of his hook-studded hat seems to rest upon the apex of a pointed arch of protest. The "pinch-nose," whose natural function it is to endue the general features with an expression of benevolent wisdom, straddles across his uplifted proboscis with a curiously combative air of having its glasses akimbo, whilst every little thread of smoke that trickles slowly out of the down-drawn corner of his mouth, seems to twist and curl itself into a note of supercilious interrogation. I follow the direction of his glance, and find that it rests upon one of the miniature plate-chests, in the lower portion of which—the upper being occupied by a tray closely packed with spare reels, lines, and so forth—the owner is carefully rearranging sundry packages, some apparently containing sandwiches, others worms, gentles, and so forth, which in the hurried run to catch the train seem to have got a little mixed. Then for the first time I notice that Tommy has not got a plate-chest, but only a canvas haversack cunningly partitioned into numerous compartments; which, as I presently learn—or in its place a simple basket creel—is the orthodox equipment of a fisherman on the Thames, to which superior river Tommy himself belongs, and on the dignified banks of which anyone appearing with a mahogany box on his shoulders

would be taken for a peddler with his pack.

Protest having been thus entered on behalf of the true accessories of sport, Tommy clears up; the diverging corners of lip and eyebrow draw together again, the pinch-nose drops its defiant air, and he is even able to reply in amicable fashion to a remark from the offending "peddler," upon the fineness of the day. Which, by-the-way, when one comes to think of it, is really, as a philosophical member of the party observes, the one point in respect of which anglers have the pull of all mankind. His view of the angler's position, as regards weather, is that when it's fine it's fine, and you can't say no fairer than that; and that when it isn't fine, why the finer it isn't, the finer chance you have of catching fish, and so it comes fair all round.

Presently I begin to ask myself whether anglers may, perchance, have some such paradoxically pleasant privilege in the matter of digestion also. We have each of us our little supply of creature comfort of course, and equally of course we all take an early opportunity of testing its quality. And being met on a social occasion, we test it socially. Our little friend opposite, with the plate-chest, is the first. He has finished its re-arrangement now, and his next step is to produce from the corner of the seat behind him a mighty tin flask, originally holding, I fancy, something like a gallon of paraffin, but now comfortably filled with beer.

"Ah," says the little man, with a sigh of satisfaction, as he draws the back of his hand across his lips after a long draught. "Not a bad tap that, Jem." And Jem winks as though the source in question were by no means unknown to him, rubs his cuff lightly over the mouth of the bottle in guise of napkin, and takes a steady pull in his turn. From him it passes to a remarkably clean-looking man in the next compartment, with a broad muscular hand and a smell as of shavings about him, and thence to a gentleman whose acquaintance with soap and water does not appear to be either so recent or so intimate, and on whose purple features and large soft red hands and closely plastered black locks, shining each and all with the unctuous lustre of a Caffre warrior fresh from the butter-tub, the word "Smithfield" is as plainly written as in the books of the Holy Inquisition itself.

"Wery pretty tippie, indeed," is the

universal verdict, as the big can passes from hand to hand, till the last drinker has to tilt the bottom very nearly to a level with his lips.

"It's a little cold on the stomach, though, so early in the morning," observes a gentleman with pale complexion, supple white fingers, and a certain air of being up all night; and therewith produces a flask of stiff brown Irish whisky, certainly well calculated to remove any chill that may have been occasioned by the previous potation. Smithfield follows suit with a bottle of old Tom; Shavings has a very modest little flask of Scotch whisky, of the flavour of which everyone expresses decided approval, but which barely affords one small sip round. I fancy for the moment Shavings, who is clearly something of a connoisseur, is half inclined to regret that original acceptance of the proffered hospitality of the paraffin can, which has to be repaid at so serious a price. However, there is no help for it now, and it must be confessed that the pint bottle of brandy next produced, by the pale little man in the dirty paper collar, who brings a folding corkscrew out of his coat-tail pocket, and draws the cork with a professional flourish, is real good cognac, wherever it may have come from. Finally a lad of fifteen or so, happily compromising between the treacle of youth and the alcohol of maturer years, proudly hands round a handsome wicker flask of "rum and s'rub." And so we fall back upon our old friend the paraffin can, and calculate how long it will be before the train, now dashing in and out and up and down among the picturesquely-wooded hills beyond Dorking, will reach its solitary halting-place at Hotsham, and afford the much-desired "five minutes for refreshment."

Pending which, we beguile the time with playful jests. Our friend Smithfield is a wag, his wit taking on the whole a somewhat practical turn, and developing itself in the abstraction of handkerchiefs and other small articles from his neighbours' pockets, the tilting of their hats over their eyes, and the placing of hard and angular objects in the seat of anyone who may jump up—as most of us do jump up every ten minutes or so—to snatch a passing glimpse of some little cockney paradise, some copse yellow with primroses or purple with solid masses of wild hyacinth, or some tempting little stretch of water, in whose jealously-preserved depths are said to lurk the lordly jack or even the almost

royal trout. On the whole, I am not sorry that our facetious fellow-traveller is in the next compartment; and I fancy that the rather portly old gentleman in the new hat and the broadcloth suit, upon whom he retires in confusion every now and then at the close of some unusually brisk skirmish, would be equally willing to dispense with his company. By-and-by the clean man with the small of shavings introduces a new element into the discussion, in the shape of a stout ash stick, out of the head of which, as he playfully thrusts it at Smithfield's ribs, flies a small iron spike, some six or eight inches long. This, however, is just the sort of weapon to which Smithfield is accustomed, and he dodges it with professional dexterity. The old gentleman is jammed hard and fast into his corner, quite incapable of dodging, even did either his habits or his proportions lend themselves to such an attempt. I have been speculating for some time upon Tommy's probable avocation in life, but the air of intense professional interest with which he now settles his pinch-nose into its place, and watches every movement of the gleaming little bayonet, as it makes its rapid little dashes now at the ribs of the agile meat-salesman, now at the eyes of the unlucky old gentleman in the corner, settles that question beyond dispute. It is satisfactory, at all events, to think that whatever rents may be made in the cuticle of either party, will be promptly and skilfully sewn up again.

And so, with more laughter, and more jests, practical and otherwise, and more skirmishing in the adjoining compartment, from which the stout gentleman has discreetly retired to more peaceful quarters, we arrive at Pulborough, and swarm out into the quiet village still sleeping in the morning sunlight, as though such a contingency as that of having its population suddenly doubled, or quadrupled, by an influx of wild excursionists from town had never entered its rustic head. Here and there a white blind rises slowly, or a frilled hand pulls aside an inch or two of curtain, that a scrap of night-cap border may reconnoitre as we pass. But they vanish quickly again at Smithfield's profound salute, and the more discreet among us restrain the too ardent virtue of some of our younger members, who, in the proud consciousness of having been up themselves since five o'clock, are for forcibly scattering the slumber of "the lazy beggars who are snoring away here at ever so much past

eight." Wherewith the crowd melts away again almost as suddenly as it has appeared, and, box on back, each man hurries off in quest of a promising station. For myself, I pin my faith on Tommy. There is a calm consciousness of superiority about him, which is quite irresistible. The very air with which he tucks the bottoms of his dapper little grey trousers inside the tops of his natty little pink socks, is alone enough to bespeak the experienced fisherman, and I cast in my lot with his, in the full conviction that, between us we shall fill at least as good a basket as will fall to the lot of any two anglers on the Arun to-day. Nor am I disappointed. So far as I can ascertain at the close of the day, Tommy's share of the spoils seems to exceed any other by at least two or three ounces, and as the entire take on this bright, sunny, breezy day, does not seem to have exceeded say a pound and a half, or a couple of pounds, this is an excess which speaks volumes for Tommy's superior strategy and skill. As he stirs up, with an air of careless triumph, the moist amalgam of sand, eels, worms, bread-crumbs, and so forth at the bottom of his haversack, I see among it at least one noble perch of fully a quarter of a pound weight, and wonder within my own mind, whether Tommy will have that Brobdingnagian specimen stuffed, and present it to his club in a glass-case.

There is indeed a little additional triumph in the evening's display of prowess, for to confess the truth, my faith has proved but feeble and short-lived, and I have no personal share in the glories of the achievement. It was rather a shock when, after having made our way by one of those ingeniously circuitous "short cuts across the fields," which seem the special delight of the bucolic mind, we dropped down at last upon the purling stream, at a point which appeared to have escaped the notice of every one of our three hundred fellow-sportsmen, to find the purling stream disappearing after a hundred yards or so under an elaborate brick tunnel, and to be driven, after much discussion, to the reluctant conclusion that we had somehow hit upon the canal instead of the river. Still, after the first momentary shock, this had not damped either Tommy's ardour or his confidence, and half an hour more had seen him established at the edge of a tiny pool, into which the overflow water of the canal came leaping in a miniature cascade at least a foot high, and where he drops

his line with a confident expectation of sport, which can only find vent in the offer of six to one on a fish within ten minutes. But alas! within double that time, Tommy has but three "bites," and of these two are from weeds, and the third from a stone, which latter holds on so tightly that, unless at some sacrifice, either of rod, line, or natty pink socks, poor Tommy seems fairly anchored for the rest of the day. It is a cowardly action, no doubt, to desert him, and yet I can't help fancying that Tommy seems a little relieved, as I turn my back upon the flat banks of the straight canal and meandering river, and promising on arrival at Amberley to turn up stream and meet him, set off towards the woods that are whispering and beckoning to me out yonder on the sunny hill-side.

I don't think I have ever seen any mention made of one immense advantage which England has over more southern countries, from the pedestrian's point of view in the way of atmosphere. I don't mean with regard to the amount of oxygen or ozone, or whatever it is, wherein, perhaps, the atmosphere, let us say, of New Zealand, or the Pacific Islands, or even Italy, or Switzerland, may on the whole be held to have the superiority. But in that far more important quality which gives the pleasant sense of having "got over the ground," that of our native land is quite unapproachable. You may walk for hours over Alp or Apennine, and be no nearer to the peak, on the surmounting of which you have fixed your too sanguine hopes, than you had seemed at starting. Mont Blanc from the terrace at Avignon, the snowy Kaikora peaks from the hills of the Akaroa Peninsula, look surely not so very much beyond the compass of a couple of days of sturdy walking. I wonder, if, by aid of any superhuman lens, we could look from the airy summit of Primrose Hill upon the romantic chimneys of Manchester or Bradford, how many weeks or months we should set down as sufficient for the apparent length of such a journey?

The air seems clear enough this sunny, bright May morning, as I stroll along between the primrose-studded banks and under the flickering shadows of the young spring foliage. I had some five or six miles to go when I started, and I am certainly not half-way as yet. But when I scramble up the bank for a handful of unusually brilliant ragged-robin, and peer out through an opening in the copse, in the direction from whence I

have come, I see the old village church, with its little cluster of white houses, nestling under the dim hills, at least a dozen miles away. By-and-by, the subtle, delicate scent of primrose and violet gives place to a flood of warm rich creamy perfume, and I emerge upon the edge of a broad belt of gorse in full bloom, on the other side of which—miles away again in the flattering English atmosphere—rises an "arrangement in green" that might gladden the heart of Mr. Whistler. In the foreground glows the broad golden glory of the furze; away in the distance, the purple downs melt into the bright blue sky; while between the two rises a steep hillside, where dark masses of fir and pine alternate with the bright green of larch and plane, the yellow of half-opened oak, and the shimmering grey of the young birch. I could almost find it in my heart to wish that the way across the little patch of moorland—where the sheep are cropping their way leisurely among the gorse, each ringing his own little matin-bell as he goes—was, in truth, as long as in the thick warm English air it has seemed to be, were it not that as I pass once more under the soft green shade I begin to realise that even an English sun can make itself felt, and that on a warm spring day arrangements in green have their practical side as well as their picturesqueness to recommend them.

And now I arrive at a cross-road, and am a little puzzled. My instructions have been to "keep on turning to the right;" but I have already turned to the right on three consecutive occasions, and a question arises whether I may not be moving in a pleasant but vicious circle. So I consult a neat little figure trotting demurely along the road, book in hand, and find myself in the presence of a phenomenon.

When the owner of the neat little figure answers my appeal by first informing me that, though I am quite right as to the direction of Amberley, "there is no service there in the morning;" and then goes on to say that there is service at another church hard by, to which she is at that moment on her way, I naturally conclude that I have fallen in with a Phyllis "of the period," and do not congratulate myself accordingly. But, to my extreme astonishment, the expected giggle does not come; nor is the very evident invitation followed up by a solitary comment on the impropriety of such a proceeding. This decidedly good-looking little Phyllis

of a very bygone period indeed is perfectly in earnest, and perfectly simple in her earnestness; has no more thought of being suspected of impropriety than of committing any; chats away as we stroll along, side by side, in perfect good faith, of her work at the farm, of the country rambles in which she delights on Sunday evenings, of the absurdity, as it seems to her, of the gentlefolks shutting up their country-houses and going off to be stifled in town, just when the country is most delightful; and all the time steps out, straight and business-like, across the green turf of the private park through which we are passing at a pace quite as fast as on that warm morning I myself care to maintain, and which certainly does not exhibit the smallest inclination to turn aside into any of the tempting little glades that ever and anon open out on either hand, and where half the village might carry on its bucolic flirtations, if so disposed, without much fear of Mrs. Grundy before its eyes.

And so suddenly, in the midst of the green turf, we come upon the quaint little old-fashioned parish church, standing right in front of the closed windows of the great house; which, in truth, forms, as I afterwards find, the most important, if not the largest, portion of its parish. The bell has ceased long since, and we have come along for the last half-mile or so at such a pace, that I emphatically declare my intention of stopping for a few moments to cool down a little before going in. So, with a gay little laugh at my effeminacy, Phyllis bids me good-morning, trips quietly on into the open door, without so much as looking round, and leaves me to speculate as to what peculiarity of Sussex air can possibly have maintained in such very youthful preservation a little person evidently not born or bred less than a hundred years ago.

So I lie for awhile on the soft turf, and the great rooks sailing overhead caw out their responses to the dim drone of the parson's voice within, and a rabbit comes out of his hole to see if the coast is clear, and scuttles back again with the news that there is still one member of the congregation left outside; and a patriarchal stag, with four wives and only one horn, marches slowly up, stares at me solemnly for a time, then shakes his head, as though in silent disapproval, and stalks away again, evidently not quite easy in his mind as to whether a person who does not go straight into church can be safely approached. And so I gradually recover my breath,

and the break in the service comes, for which I am waiting, and I in my turn make my way into the quaint little old-world church, where the minor magnates of the parish form social little family circles round the deep square pews, and the great house has a great private-box to itself, and the smaller people, who form the bulk of the scanty congregation, group themselves closely on the humbler benches by the door; and the dear old clerk—how many a long year it is since I heard a real parish clerk!—quavers out the responses for them all. And everything is as quaint, and as simple, and as old-world as little Phyllis herself, whose voice presently makes itself heard, sweetly enough, over the shrill voices of a dozen or so of small warblers of either sex, who have not, by any means, attained that agreement with regard to the tune they are to sing which a fastidious ear might find desirable.

A couple of hours later and I am paddling up the river in a punt, borrowed from an obliging villager, who laughs to scorn any notion of payment; and, as I go, making kind enquiries to right and left as to the day's sport. It is a remarkable fact, but every angler of whom I enquire seems to have caught exactly two eels. Not that anyone seems in the least put out or down-hearted. Far from it. We are not fishing for our living, you know; and shall not have to "weigh in" when we get home. Besides, everyone has had at least a dozen splendid bites; and if Tom had only had a landing-net, or Dick a gaff, or Harry had put on a new piece of gut instead of that old bit, that had got so chafed against the edge of the weir ever so many weeks ago there would have been some fish caught, in spite of sun and wind too, that would have astonished some of us.

So we gather once more round the snug little bar, and in the snugger little parlour, and quench our long day's thirst with country home-brewed, and satisfy our long day's hunger with country bacon and eggs; and then the train comes up, and the guard, who has been made happy, by-laws or no by-laws, by a general subscription of a penny a head, looks carefully out before giving the signal for starting, to see that no belated fisherman is left panting within sight of the goal; and the homeward way is beguiled with thrilling tales of the huge fish that have "broke away" from each of us, and made merry—or hideous—by song and chorus, not always exclusively of the "Whoa, Emma!" class.

And as the train at last draws up at the London Bridge platform, Bill says to 'Arry: "Well, 'Arry, fish or no fish, we've 'ad our 'arf-a-crown's worth."

And 'Arry replies to Bill:

"Right you are, old man; and good stint."

And on the whole, I think Bill and 'Arry are right.

GEORGIE'S WOER.

A STORY IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.

"I saw such a pretty picture this morning, mother!"

Thus Captain Douglas Ainsleigh, of her Majesty's Royal Artillery, lounging lazily against the window of the morning-room at Fern Leigh.

Mrs. Ainsleigh was bending over an intricate piece of bead-work, presently destined for a certain bazaar to be held in London, on behalf of the deaf, or the halt, or the blind, or some such afflicted beings, the like of whom this large-hearted lady was ever befriending, and by whom she was constantly preyed upon.

She looked up quickly at her son as he spoke, for he was by no means given to enthusiasm, and there was unwonted warmth in his voice and manner.

"Dear me!" she said, "has some artist suddenly appeared in Sheeling, and set the place in a blaze? Where did you see the picture?"

"On a pony's back."

"What was on a pony's back—the artist, or the picture? Really, Douglas, you are rather incoherent?"

"I know I am," said Captain Ainsleigh, throwing away his cigar, and vaulting into the room as he spoke, "but I will be so no longer, mother."

These two, as mother and son, were simply perfect; you could find no fault and suggest no improvement. It was easy to recognise at once, on seeing them together, that a twofold cord of love and trust bound them to each other. What a holy power this hidden tie had been, to hold him back from tasting of that chalice of evil which life offers to the lips of every man, Captain Ainsleigh alone could tell. When a boy, his mother, early widowed, had been his sole and tender parent; as a man, she was his best and most trusted friend—not to the exclusion of other friendships, but outshining and hallowing them all by the lustre of her

own unselfish, unexacting, ever-ready love and sympathy.

Happy is the mother who thus retains the friendship of her sons as they grow to manhood—who, by her own large-hearted tenderness, her own never-failing honesty of purpose toward them, wins the love of the man's heart, as she did that of the boy!

Mrs. Ainsleigh had been a beauty—nay, was so still; for there is the rich beauty of autumn, as well as the fresh loveliness of spring, and the full maturity of summer.

Her hair silver-white, parted over a brow still smooth and fair; and the soft dark eyes beneath could kindle into fire as she spoke of some high and noble deed, or read some story of great and noble daring.

Her son in no way resembled her. "The fair Ainsleighs" had in bygone generations been a sobriquet of his father's family; and Douglas was a true Ainsleigh—"a grand gunner," some old martinet, rejoicing in the sight of a fine soldier, had once called him; and I do not think I can improve upon the term, it was so well deserved. Tall and powerfully formed, he had the keen grey eye that holds the secret of command. His locks would have been "Hyperion curls," but for the prison-cell style of coiffure prevalent in the service preventing such a development; indeed, the gallant captain would have been hard put to it to supply a "faire ladie" with a love-lock. However, he made up for this sparseness of head-covering by the magnitude of a sweeping moustache, the only hirsute adornment of his clear-cut, high-bred face.

Surely, looking on such a son, a mother's glance may be pardoned if some pride mingle with its love? Mrs. Ainsleigh laid aside her work, so that he might feel her full attention given to him.

"Well, what about this picture?" she said, looking up into his face with ready sympathy in all that interested him. But he turned away, as if to examine some ferns that waved their delicate fronds in a stand of old china.

"The picture was a living one, mother," he said; "a girl with the sweetest, daintiest, brightest face I ever saw."

"And where did you meet this *rara avis*, Douglas? Was she some rustic beauty coming to market with her butter and eggs?"

"Rustic beauty! no indeed. My little lady was aristocrate from the crown of the broad hat that shaded her face, to the tips of the little boots that peeped out from under her dress, as she rode a little rough

Shetland down the steep lane behind Fern Leigh. I stood aside to let them pass."

"To let who pass?" asked his mother, for the recital suddenly stopped, and the speaker was looking through the open window with a dreamy gaze, that seemed to be dwelling yet again upon the "pretty picture."

"Oh, she was not alone," he said, coming back to realities; "her hands were too full of scarlet field-poppies to hold the reins, and an old gentleman was leading the pony. There were poppies in her hat, too, and two children——"

"But, Douglas," interrupted Mrs. Ainsleigh, "have you any idea who these people can be? Your description does not sound at all like any of the aborigines of Sheeling, and I can hardly suppose that pony, and poppies, and young lady, and all, dropped down from the sky."

"Didn't I tell you who she is? She's the daughter of a retired navy fellow; and they're just come to Beach House, that place near the bank with the green door, you know, and long row of windows. Robinson told me his wife had gone to call upon them. Just fancy that sweet little thing delivered over to the tender mercies of that old harridan!" and Captain Ainsleigh pulled his long moustache in the fiercest manner, showing small goodwill to the banker's helpmeet, the mention of whose name always called up an expression of helpless appeal to his mother's face, as much as to entreat that no one would be so unkind as to remind her of the existence of such an individual.

Now, with the aim he had in view, it was hardly, perhaps, politic of Captain Ainsleigh to mention the fact that Mrs. Robinson had already called upon the newcomers; but this mother and son had yet to begin to deal otherwise than with open candour toward each other; therefore, he stated the obnoxious fact, and then looked anxiously at his mother to see how she bore it. He could see that she winced under the infliction, but she soon recovered herself, and so he ventured to proceed, carefully removing one or two faded, drooping fronds from the ferns that were Mrs. Ainsleigh's special pets, as he spoke: "I think it would be kind of you to call, *madre carissima*. Sheeling's not a very lively place, and the girl——"

"I have no doubt the girl is charming, since you say so, Douglas, and I will certainly call if you wish it, though Sheeling is rather out of my beat. However, we

must find out the name of these new people before we can call."

"Their name is Hammond," said the captain, and, whistling softly to himself, he lounged out of the room, while an anxious, troubled look came upon his mother's face, and the beads slipped from her fingers as she tried to resume her work.

I must have sketched Mrs. Ainsleigh very badly, if my reader is ready to suppose that any jealous feeling was at the root of this thoughtfulness on her face. Mrs. Ainsleigh was not one of those women who are capable of the smallness of jealousy toward the girl a son loves, or the friend he values and admires. She was struck by Captain Ainsleigh's manner of speaking of this girl, whom he had met thus by chance, and in her heart was rising up a wish—nay, we might almost say a prayer—that if some new and powerful influence were about to come into her son's life, it might be for good—the influence of a good woman, that would lead him toward all that was grand and high and holy. She had often thought how ill she could endure to see Douglas love unworthily; how jealous she should be, not of him, but for him—jealous lest his wife should not love him with that entire devotion his mother judged to be his desert; and now, perhaps, the time was coming that she had feared, yet longed for.

"There are so few who could be worthy of my Douglas," she said softly to herself, as she looked fondly at his miniature, always on her writing-table, where all things costly and beautiful seemed to vie with each other in adornment, and yet where the most dearly prized object was the pictured face of her son.

"La—la—la la la!" rung out the soft-flowing melody of the "Beautiful Blue Danube," as Douglas Ainsleigh and his mother entered Beach House, two days after the conversation in the morning-room.

It was no tyro's hand that was so clearly yet tenderly bringing out the pathos that underlies the rhythm of Strauss's best creation; and from that day, and for ever, to Douglas Ainsleigh the "Beautiful Blue Danube" was associated with Georgie Hammond—with the fair girl in the poppy-crowned hat, and with the shy, sweet eyes and gentle voice, that greeted him as she rose from the piano to welcome her new guests.

How strange is this association of certain music with events and people in our lives. Have we not all felt it? One melody is sacred to the memory of a friend far away—may be in the burning land of

the East, far from the sound of the voice he loved to hear, and the clasp of the hand he loved to feel—but the "old song" brings him back, and the old days come again as we listen. Another strain is fraught with memories of one gone on a still longer journey, even to "that country from whose bourne no traveller returns;" and yet the voice that is silent for ever on earth, and the smiles, and the tears, and the laughter of dead hours are ours again as the familiar notes fall on our ears, and seem to say, with pleading voice, "Forget me not!"

Again, we hear some passing sweet melody that in the years that are gone we have listened to with a friend beside us—a friend well loved and well trusted, whose heart seemed in harmony with our own, and whose eyes met ours in sympathy as the sweet sounds rose and fell. Now a darker chasm is between us than the distant land or the shadow of death, for the cold, dreary waste of estrangement is there; and saddest of all is the pain with which we listen to that melody, and bitter are the tears that rise, when we think of then—and now.

But such sad associations are not for those who stand upon the threshold of life; those whose future lies before them like an empty canvas—a canvas to be filled presently by the hand of time, with the lights and shadows, and the fair days and dark days, painted in indelible colours.

Nothing but supreme content could find place in Captain Ainsleigh's breast, as he looked on Georgie's face and listened to Georgie's voice.

Some take years, some months, to fall under the potent sway of love in its deepest, truest sense—to feel the "stound," as our Northern neighbours have it, the wound of love in the heart; but Douglas Ainsleigh was like a man plunging headlong into a rapid river, and borne onward by a resistless current toward fair fields and purple, sun-tinted heights of happiness. It was as if he had been looking for something all his life, and had just found it, and could no more pass it by than he could have passed by a jewel that lay glittering in his pathway. His experience of the sex was by no means limited; he had seen "fair" women ready to be "fond" by the dozen—for the heir of Fern Leigh was not likely to escape the watchful eyes of mothers with daughters to marry, and of daughters willing to be married. He had seen the fast and the slow, the would-be blue and the really clever, the sentimentally musical and the

strong-minded, gifted with good common sense; but he had never seen—Georgie.

That was just it; he had never seen a woman of whom the tender thought went straight to his heart, and nestled there, like a bird in its nest, till he saw Georgie.

While he made believe to chat to the two little ones, who had been executing a sort of Indian war-dance to sister's music, and were tumbled and breathless from their exertions, he drank in every sound of her voice, and noted with delight the genial manner of his mother toward the young stranger; for Mrs. Ainsleigh was one of those thorough women of the world who can be perfectly, painfully polite, and yet keep at arm's-length—and at a long arm's-length too—the recipient of their kind attentions. Douglas knew by heart every shade and turn of his mother's manner, and he felt that Georgie was winning her way, even as he would have her do.

When Captain Hammond came in, Douglas saw and comprehended at once the tenderness of the tie between father and daughter. He saw the fondness in the girl's lovely Irish eyes as she looked at him; and with the ready sympathy that is ever the twin-sister of love, he noted the father's worn face and prematurely bowed form, and felt that Georgie's love was resting on a frail object.

Merrily sounded the feet of the horses on the hard road, as Douglas Ainsleigh drove them briskly home to Fern Leigh, fair to his eyes seemed the face of the world, seen through the glamour of a new joy; yet he was very silent, and hardly spoke to his mother, as she sat beside him in the carriage, and smiled just a little to herself as she heard him hum softly a few bars of the "Beautiful Blue Danube."

With the undemonstrativeness of men of his class—men who meet the friend who is Saul to their Jonathan, Damon to their Pythias, after long years of absence, with no more excursive greeting than a "Well, old fellow, how are you?" and the close hand-grip that says so much—Douglas Ainsleigh, once alone with his mother in her own sanctum, said just two words:

"Well, mother?"

She knew all those two words meant.

"Douglas, she is perfect."

It was all he wanted.

There was nothing now needed to make that one afternoon a white mark throughout all Douglas Ainsleigh's life to come.

But alas! "what is one person's meat is another person's poison;" and the banker's

wife, with tears of vexation in her eyes, said to her spouse in the confidence of the nuptial chamber that night:

"If I'd only known, Willerby, that the Fern Leigh people would have called on those folks next door, I'd have waited till I'd seen their carriage there, and gone in promiscuously."

"Well, well, my dear, you can't help it now," said the banker, tired with his day's work, and wishing to sleep the sleep of the just.

But Mrs. Robinson felt she had lost a golden opportunity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Rev. Anthony Featherdew, incumbent of Sheeling Church, was a small, insignificant man, very short-sighted, and with a nervous, hesitating manner that led you to suppose the existence of great weakness of character. Both manner and appearance were, however, deceptive; for where right and wrong were concerned, he possessed the obstinacy of a thorough-bred bull-terrier; and when I say that the blustering of the banker's wife reduced him to a state that seemed to border on imbecility—that he dropped all his detached property successively, and shivered under the infliction of her eloquence like the unwilling tenant of a shower-bath, and that he left, or rather fled, her presence, and straightway went and did exactly his own way, swerving not one "jot or tittle," for all her bitterness and reviling—some fair idea of his character may be obtained by the reader of this story.

It was commonly held that the parson triumphed in the fact that on his own ground—that is, in his church—Mrs. Robinson was powerless to interfere with him.

"He knows I can't contradict him when he's stuck up in his pulpit like a monkey on a stick; and he aggravates me by looking at me, when he's saying things he knows I'd give him my mind about it if I had hold of him," she would say, panting, as the family party walked home after their Sunday morning's devotions.

"Well, well, my dear," the banker would observe, trying to cast oil upon the troubled waters, and hoping thus to prevent his Sunday dinner being served up to the sound of his wife's animadversions on the parson's shortcomings, "next time you have an opportunity, you can speak to Mr. Featherdew, you know."

And she took the opportunity—often. In the privacy of her father's sitting-room,

Miss Robinson said to him, after one of these outbursts, during which the poor pastor had looked peculiarly miserable :

"Papa, I sometimes think Mr. Featherdew will cry, when mamma flies out at him like that."

The banker sighed, and kissed his daughter. Who might say how often he too longed for the relief of tears, when badgered to excess by his liege lady's tongue. At all events, the oppressed parish priest had this advantage over the lady's husband—he could go away; but alas! for Robinson flight was not.

Now, that Mr. Featherdew should call upon the new-comers at Beach House was a matter of course; but he put it off from day to day, in his shy dislike to meeting strangers.

He had seen the family party at church, and noticed the delicate father, the sweet, maidenly girl by his side, and the two golden-haired children; indeed, it would have been a difficult matter not to have remarked these last individuals, for on the very first Sunday after their arrival at Sheeling, the sermon being long, and naturally uninteresting to the little ones, the spirit of mischief entered into Jack, and he made on the sly, out of his diminutive pocket-handkerchief, an attenuated and long-tailed but yet altogether delightful rabbit. Watching for a suitable moment when neither his father nor sister was observing him, he suddenly flaunted this animal in Trickys's face, which so excited and dismayed that little maiden, that she fell with an awful crash into the middle of the square pew. Jack hastily stuffed the rabbit into his pocket, and looked as innocent as circumstances would permit, while Georgie, rosy-red, lifted Trickay into her place again, and Mr. Featherdew with an effort recovered the thread of his discourse.

I must not leave my friend Jack under the imputation of deceit, so I may as well state that no sooner were they home after service, than he pulled the rabbit from his pocket, laid it, all limp and dejected-looking, on Georgie's lap, and said, with a penitent air :

"I maded it, and showed it to Trickys, and she falled down."

But we are wandering from the Reverend Anthony, nervously taking his way towards the green door in the long wall. Scarcely had that portal closed upon him, when the banker's wife hurriedly sought her daughter in the morning-room, and opened her mind thus :

"Annette, I'se just seen a gentleman go

into Beach House. I was only in time to catch a sight of his black coat disappearing through the door, but I feel certain it's that Douglas Ainsleigh gone to call again. Where there's a girl with a pretty face—and she is pretty, though she has red hair—men come about like flies round a honzey-pot; and depend upon it, he's made believe to bring a message, or a basket, or some such thing from his mother."

Oh shade of Piccadilly and New Bond Street! pardon the thought of Captain Ainsleigh, of the Army and Navy and various other clubs besides, carrying a basket! If Mrs. Robinson had only known how easily he found his way to Beach House, without bag, or basket, or parcel, or message of any description!

Determined to improve her acquaintance with the Fern Leigh people, on ground where they could not ignore her presence—namely, the drawing-room of a common acquaintance—Mrs. Robinson in haste equipped herself, and sailed presently into the pretty room, where sat the unhappy Featherdew tête-à-tête with Miss Hammond, who was kindly endeavouring to set him at his ease, and, by reason of her own sweet, unaffected grace, rapidly succeeding. But at the sight of the enemy, all his presence of mind deserted him; he fidgeted on his chair, and looked helplessly at the door, longing to get to it, yet not knowing how to accomplish the feat.

We have all witnessed, and tried not to smile at, the agonies of a shy man, who, having got into a drawing-room, can't, for the life of him, manage to get out again. I myself have known men whom nothing short of the dinner-gong could inspire with courage to depart, and even then they could do so only by means of the imbecile remark, "I'm afraid you are going to dinner?" an observation which might well lead one to suppose the departing guest rather hoped you never dined at all!

But I return to the distressed Mr. Featherdew.

The tall vase on Captain Hammond's reading-table was filled with hot-house flowers, lovely to the eye and delicious to the scent. At once the hawk's-eye of the banker's wife discovered that these floral beauties came not from the Beach House garden.

"What fine flowers you've got!" she said, patronisingly. "Why, where did you get such ferns as those?" and she pointed to some exquisite fronds of the maidenhair.

Strive as Georgie might to look cool and unconcerned, a faint, soft flush rose to

her cheek, and made Mr. Featherdew think that surely never so fair a flower as Georgie Hammond had come to bloom in Sheeling.

"Mrs. Ainsleigh sent them to us," she said, quietly enough, in spite of the rose-flush. "She has been so kind in every way, and even excused me for not having yet called at Fern Leigh. It is a long way, you see, and papa has not been well lately. He is so soon tired, and quite feeble at times," and the dark grey eyes grew bright with the tears that were ready to start.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Robinson, more interested in speaking in a conciliatory manner of the Fern Leigh people than in hearing about Captain Hammond's ailments; "I daresay it's the change to the sea-air. I'm glad you like the Ainsleighs. They are great favourites of mine, I can tell you, Miss 'Ammond—Captain Douglas is as fine a young man as you'll see anywhere. He was in the Crimea war, and, as I hear, much extinguished. Why, bless my heart! what's the matter with the man?" she added, suddenly, turning to Mr. Featherdew, from whose lips had proceeded an extraordinary sound, half-sneeze, half-laugh. Mr. Featherdew's face was crimson, and he was blowing his nose to such an extent as bade fair to endanger the safety of that organ altogether.

"There's nothing the matter with me, indeed," he said, in an agony of self-consciousness, reduced to a state of pitiable confusion.

"It's my opinion you're beginning a bad cold," said Mrs. Robinson. "If you take my advice, you'll go home and put your feet in hot water."

Put his feet in hot water! Good gracious! Fancy making such a remark in a young lady's presence!

All his remaining courage fled; he dropped his umbrella, trod on Dandy, who set up a howl that fortunately gave poor Georgie an excuse for laughing outright, and at last, to his unspeakable content, Mr. Featherdew found himself once more outside the green door. Whether he had left anything behind him more valuable and important than his hat or umbrella, I am not prepared as yet to state.

A long dissertation from Mrs. Robinson on the incumbent of Sheeling, his manifold shortcomings, his "popish"-looking waistcoats, and his innumerable misdeemeanours, followed his departure; but even these congenial topics lost their interest as she heard a ring at the hall-door, and a firm step along the passage.

"At last!" thought Mrs. Robinson, and

certainly the French proverb, that "Tout vient à celui qui sait attendre," seemed about to be verified in her case. But no; the step turned aside, a door opened and shut, and no Captain Ainsleigh appeared.

Did Georgie know the footstep that passed the door? She had risen, and gone to a side-table, as if to search for something, so her face told no tales.

"I want to show you a new kind of fancy-work that I am doing," she said, as she turned towards her visitor again.

Poor, simple Georgie! as well might a little fluttering bird feign a wounded wing, and ruffle all its soft feathers, trying to beguile the intruder from its nest, as Georgie, with her simple artfulness, think to hide her maiden secret from the prying eyes that were upon her—the secret that was changing all her life! teaching her heart to throb at the coming of a step, her cheek to flush at the sound of a voice!

"Sly minx!" thought the banker's wife to herself, as she made believe to examine the embroidered cloth which Georgie held for her inspection; "she thinks I can't see through a stone wall, I suppose!"—a novel and peculiar rendering of the proverb.

Mrs. Robinson would have prolonged her visit to any extent that might have held out a hope of encountering those she wished to see; but shortly she saw, "with her own eyes," as she afterwards expressed it, Captain Hammond and Douglas Ainsleigh walk slowly down the garden, "just as comfortable as if they'd known each other for years and years," and then pass out of the low gate that led to the sea-beach.

Someone else saw them too, and two soft grey eyes had to look away, lest the love-light in them should be seen to burn too brightly. Mrs. Robinson took an abrupt leave, and, once at home, bore down upon the banker without loss of time.

"I've been to call next door," she said to the innocent partner of her joys, "and who do you think I found there but that wretched Featherdew!"

"Well, well, my dear," said her husband, in an abstracted manner, passing his fingers through his hair, as if to clear his brain from the effect of this constant tumult of dispeace, "I've no doubt if Featherdew knew you'd been going there, he'd have kept away."

Oh well-intentioned but unwisely-chosen speech! Let us draw a veil over the scene that followed, and pity from our hearts the worthy Sheeling banker, as we must pity any man cursed with a wife for ever striving to attain some social position

above her own, and for ever visiting the bitterness of failure on his devoted head.

Now turn we to more pleasing contemplation—the dawning love that watches and waits for the coming of the loved one.

Do you think Georgie doubted for a moment that Douglas Ainsleigh would return with her father? Not so ill do even unacknowledged lovers understand each other; she knew he would return, just as he knew she watched and waited for his coming. The girl has retouched the glossy ripples of hair, and fastened her collar with a new, bright, cherry-coloured knot—she would fain look her fairest in the eyes that love to gaze upon her beauty:

And thinking, "This will please him best,"
She takes a ribbon or a rose.

All the previous day Captain Hammond had been in his rooms; there seemed to be no distinct ailment, but he complained of being tired, and said it made his eyes ache to read. So Georgie read to him, and so the day passed. She caught his eyes fixed upon her with a tender, anxious look that was strange to her, and she put down the book and laid her face against his, and said, "What is it, dear?" but he had said "Nothing," and told her to go on reading, for the sound of her voice soothed him; yet when the patter of Shag's little hoofs in the yard below told them that the children had come home from their ride, she had seen that sudden look of pain upon his face again. However, he seemed like himself once more to-day, and now Captain Ainsleigh had taken him out for a quiet stroll upon the shore. Doubtless they would come home by the same way they had gone, so Georgie would go and wait for them at the gate.

It was one of those warm days in autumn that summer seems to have forgotten and left behind her; the tide was up, and a light breeze curled all the surface of the sea with little silver-tipped wavelets, over which the grey gulls floated and skimmed on white wings, while a heron sat calmly on the last visible sand-bank, and varied his meditations now and then by catching an unwary fish.

Happy love has its joys, assured love its deep content and peace; but I think there is a sweetness all its own in the love that hopes, yet fears; that longs, yet dare not give its longing voice—in the days when looks and words are weighed and thought

over, and, like the petals of Marguerite's daisy, taken to mean, "He loves me," or, "He loves me not," as chances and the hour seem to vary the significance.

And in this misty realm Georgie now lingered; misty with the beauty of a frost in the early dawn, when the haze that Southerners call "the pride of the morning" lingers among the trees and flowers.

It may be that ere this Douglas Ainsleigh would have chased those mists away, and put in plain words the truth that eyes and voice said for him every time he met Georgie; but there was an exquisite maidenliness, a gentle dignity about the girl that held her lover back, and made his love still more tender, yet tender with a passionate lovingness that had a strong element of reverence in its warmth.

To-day joy seemed to run riot in Georgie's heart. The beauty of the world around her seemed to speak with a new voice to her soul, awakening to the passionate joy of life lived in its intensity and fulness. She stood by the gate, and looked upon the gleaming, dancing sea, and the blue sky flecked with fleecy clouds. Oh, how fair the world lay outspread before the girl's love-laden eyes, as she watched for the two that were dearest to her on earth!

The two? Nay; there is but one; and he hurries towards her, his face grave, his eyes full of a pitiful tenderness. He stands by her side, and clasps her hand close and fast. . . Georgie looks up at him, and all the light fades from her eyes, all the soft rose from her cheeks.

"What is it?" she cries out, her voice rising to a wail of pain. "Oh, Captain Ainsleigh, where is papa?"

On Monday, the 1st of July, will be published the

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LIX. BACK IN LONDON.

MARY was fond of her house in Munster Court. It was her own; and her father and Miss Tallowax between them had enabled her to make it very pretty. The married woman who has not some pet larses of her own is but a poor woman. Mary worshipped her little household gods with a perfect religion, and was therefore happy in being among them again; but she was already beginning to feel that, in a certain event, she would be obliged to leave Munster Court. She knew that as Marchioness of Brotherton she would not be allowed to live there. There was a large brick house, with an unbroken row of six windows on the first-floor, in St. James's Square, which she already knew as the town house of the Marquis of Brotherton. It was, she thought, by far the most gloomy house in the whole square. It had been uninhabited for years, the present marquis having neither resided there nor let it. Her husband had never spoken to her about the house, had never, as far as she could remember, been with her in St. James's Square. She had enquired about it of her father, and he had once taken her through the square, and had shown her the mansion. But that had been in the days of the former Popenjoy, when she, at any rate, had never thought that the dreary-looking mansion would make or mar her own comfort. Now there had arisen a question of a delicate nature. Might not certain changes be made in the house at Munster Court in reference to—

well, to a nursery? A room, to be baby's own, she had called it. She had thus made herself understood, though she had not said the word which seemed to imply a plural number. "But you'll be down at Manor Cross," said Lord George.

"You don't mean to keep me there always?"

"No, not always; but when you come back to London it may be to another house."

"You don't mean St. James's Square?" But that was just what he did mean. "I hope we shan't have to live in that prison."

"It's one of the best houses in London," said Lord George, with a certain amount of family pride. "It used to be, at least, before the rich tradesmen had built all those palaces at South Kensington."

"It's dreadfully dingy."

"Because it has not been painted lately. Brotherton has never done anything like anybody else."

"Couldn't we keep this and let that place?"

"Not very well. My father, and grand-father, and great-grandfather lived there. I think we had better wait a bit and see." Then she felt sure that the glory was coming. Lord George would never have spoken of her living in St. James's Square, had he not felt almost certain that it would soon come about.

Early in February her father came to town, and he was quite certain. "The poor wretch can't speak articulately," he said.

"Who says so, papa?"

"I have taken care to find out the truth. What a life! And what a death! He is there all alone. Nobody ever sees him

but an Italian doctor. If it's a boy, my dear, he will be my lord as soon as he's born; or, for the matter of that, if it's a girl she will be my lady."

"I wish it wasn't so."

"You must take it all as God sends it, Mary."

"They've talked about it till I'm sick of it," said Mary, angrily. Then she checked herself and added: "I don't mean you, papa; but at Manor Cross they all flatter me now, because that poor man is dying. If you were me you wouldn't like that."

"You've got to bear it, my dear. It's the way of the world. People at the top of the tree are always flattered. You can't expect that Mary Lovelace and the Marchioness of Brotherton will be treated in the same way."

"Of course it made a difference when I was married."

"But suppose you had married a curate in the neighbourhood."

"I wish I had," said Mary, wildly, "and that someone had given him the living of Pugsty." But it all tended in the same direction. She began to feel now that it must be, and must be soon. She would, she told herself, endeavour to do her duty; she would be loving to all who had been kind to her, and kind even to those who had been unkind. To all of them at Manor Cross she would be a real sister—even to Lady Susanna, whom certainly she had not latterly loved. She would forgive everybody—except one. Adelaide Houghton she never could forgive, but Adelaide Houghton should be her only enemy. It did not occur to her that Jack De Baron had been very nearly as wicked as Adelaide Houghton. She certainly did not intend that Jack De Baron should be one of her enemies.

When she had been in London about a week or two, Jack De Baron came to see her. She knew that he had spent his Christmas at Carry Hall, and she knew that Guss Mildmay had also been there. That Guss Mildmay should have accepted such an invitation was natural enough, but she thought that Jack had been very foolish. Why should he have gone to the house, when he had known that the girl whom he had promised to marry, but whom he did not intend to marry, was there? And now what was to be the result? She did not think that she could ask him; but she was almost sure that he would tell her.

"I suppose you've been hunting?" she asked.

"Yes; they put up a couple of horses for me, or I couldn't have afforded it."

"She is so good-natured."

"Mrs. Jones! I should think she was; but I'm not quite sure that she intended to be very good-natured to me."

"Why not?" Mary, of course, understood it all; but she could not pretend to understand it, at any rate as yet.

"Oh, I don't know. It was all fair, and I won't complain. She had got Miss Green off her hands, and therefore she wanted something to do. I'm going to exchange, Lady George, into an Indian regiment."

"You're not in earnest."

"Quite in earnest. My wing will be at Aden, at the bottom of the Red Sea, for the next year or two. Aden, I'm told, is a charming place."

"I thought it was hot."

"I like hot places; and as I have got rather sick of society I shall do very well there, because there's none. A fellow can't spend any money, except in soda and brandy. I suppose I shall take to drink."

"Don't talk of yourself in that horrid way, Captain De Baron."

"It won't much matter to anyone, for I don't suppose I shall ever come back again. There's a place called Perim, out in the middle of the sea, which will just suit me. They only send one officer there at a time, and there isn't another soul in the place."

"How dreadful!"

"I shall apply to be left there for five years. I shall get through all my troubles by that time."

"I am sure you won't go at all."

"Why not?"

"Because you have got so many friends here."

"Too many, Lady George. Of course you know what Mrs. Jones has been doing?"

"What has she been doing?"

"She tells you everything, I fancy. She has got it all out and dry. I'm to be married next May, and am to spend the honeymoon at Carry Hall. Of course I'm to leave the army and put the value of my commission into the Three per Cent. Mr. Jones is to let me have a place called Clover Cottage, down in Gloucestershire, and, I believe, I'm to take a farm and be churchwarden of the parish. After paying

my debts we shall have about two hundred a year, which of course will be ample for Clover Cottage. I don't exactly see how I'm to spend my evenings, but I suppose that will come. It's either that or Perim. Which would you advise?"

"I don't know what I ought to say."

"Of course I might cut my throat."

"I wish you wouldn't talk in that way. If it's all a joke I'll take it as a joke."

"It's no joke at all; it's very serious. Mrs. Jones wants me to marry Guss Mildmay."

"And you are engaged to her?"

"Only on certain conditions—which conditions are almost impossible."

"What did you say to—Miss Mildmay at Curry Hall?"

"I told her I should go to Perim."

"And what did she say?"

"Like a brick, she offered to go with me, just as the girl offered to eat the potato parings, when the man said that there would not be potatoes enough for both. Girls always say that kind of thing; though, when they are taken at their word, they want bonnets and gloves and fur cloaks."

"And you are going to take her?"

"Not unless I decide upon Clover Cottage. No; if I do go to Perim I think that I shall manage to go alone."

"If you don't love her, Captain De Baron, don't marry her."

"There's Giblet doing very well, you know; and I calculate I could spend a good deal of my time at Curry Hall. Perhaps, if we made ourselves useful, they would ask us to Killacodlem. I should manage to be a sort of factotum to old Jones. Don't you think it would suit me?"

"You can't be serious about it."

"Upon my soul, Lady George, I never was so serious in my life. Do you think that I mean nothing, because I laugh at myself? You know I don't love her."

"Then say so, and have done with it."

"That is so easy to suggest, but so impossible to do. How is a man to tell a girl that he doesn't love her, after such an acquaintance as I have had with Guss Mildmay? I have tried to do so, but I couldn't do it. There are men, I believe, hard enough even for that; and things are changed now, and the affectation of chivalry has gone by. Women ask men to marry them, and the men laugh and refuse."

"Don't say that, Captain De Baron."

"I'm told that's the way the thing is

done now; but I've no strength myself, and I'm not up to it. I'm not at all joking. I think I shall exchange and go away. I've brought my pigs to a bad market, but as far as I can see that is the best that is left for me." Mary could only say that his friends would be very, very sorry to lose him, but that, in her opinion, anything would be better than marrying a girl whom he did not love.

Courtesies at this time were showered upon Lady George from all sides. Old Lady Brabazon, to whom she had hardly spoken, wrote to her at great length. Mrs. Patmore Green came to her on purpose to talk about her daughter's marriage. "We are very much pleased of course," said Mrs. Green. "It was altogether a love affair, and the young people are so fond of each other! I do so hope you and she will be friends. Of course her position is not so brilliant as yours, but still it is very good. Poor dear Lord Gosling"—whom, by-the-bye, Mrs. Patmore Green had never seen—"is failing very much; he is a martyr to the gout, and then he is so imprudent."

Lady Mary smiled and was civil, but did not make any promise of peculiarly intimate friendship. Lady Selina Protest came to her with a long story of her wrongs, and a petition that she would take the Fleabody side in the coming contest. It was in vain that she declared that she had no opinion whatsoever as to the rights of women; a marchioness, she was told, would be bound to have opinions, or, at any rate, would be bound to subscribe.

But the courtesy which surprised and annoyed her most was a visit from Adelaide Houghton. She came up to London for a week about the end of February, and had the hardihood to present herself at the house in Munster Court. This was an insult which Mary had by no means expected; she had therefore failed to guard herself against it by any special instructions to her servant. And thus Mrs. Houghton, the woman who had written love-letters to her husband, was shown up into her drawing-room before she had the means of escaping. When the name was announced, she felt that she was trembling. There came across her a feeling that she was utterly incapable of behaving properly in such an emergency. She knew that she blushed up to the roots of her hair. She got up from her seat as she heard the name announced, and then seated her-

self again before her visitor had entered the room. She did resolve that nothing on earth should induce her to shake hands with the woman. "My dear Lady George," said Mrs. Houghton, hurrying across the room, "I hope you will let me explain." She had half put out her hand, but had done so in a manner which allowed her to withdraw it, without seeming to have had her overture refused.

"I do not know that there is anything to explain," said Mary.

"You will let me sit down?" Mary longed to refuse; but, not quite daring to do so, simply bowed—upon which Mrs. Houghton did sit down. "You are very angry with me, it seems?"

"Well; yes, I am."

"And yet what harm have I done you?"

"None in the least—none at all. I never thought that you could do me any harm."

"Is it wise, Lady George, to give importance to a little trifle?"

"I don't know what you call a trifle."

"I had known him before you did; and, though it had not suited me to become his wife, I had always liked him. Then the intimacy sprang up again; but what did it amount to? I believe you read some foolish letter?"

"I did read a letter, and I was perfectly sure that my husband had done nothing, I will not say to justify, but even to excuse, the writing of it. I am quite aware, Mrs. Houghton, that it was all on one side."

"Did he say so?"

"You must excuse me if I decline altogether to tell you what he said."

"I am sure he did not say that. But what is the use of talking of it at all? Is it necessary, Lady George, that you and I should quarrel about such a thing as that?"

"Quite necessary, Mrs. Houghton."

"Then you must be very fond of quarrelling."

"I never quarrelled with anybody else in my life."

"When you remember how near we are to each other in the country—I will apologise if you wish it."

"I will remember nothing, and I want no apology. To tell you the truth, I really think that you ought not to have come here."

"It is childish, Lady George, to make so much of it."

"It may be nothing to you. It is a

great deal to me. You must excuse me if I say that I really cannot talk to you any more." Then she got up and walked out of the room, leaving Mrs. Houghton among her treasures. In the dining-room she rang the bell, and told the servant to open the door when the lady upstairs came down. After a very short pause, the lady upstairs did come down, and walked out to her carriage with an unabashed demeanour.

After much consideration, Lady George determined that she must tell her husband what had occurred. She was aware that she had been very uncourteous, and was not sure whether in her anger she had not been carried farther than became her. Nothing could, she thought, shake her in her determination to have no further friendly intercourse of any kind with the woman. Not even were her husband to ask her would that be possible. Such a request from him would be almost an insult to her. And no request from anyone else could have any strength, as no one else knew the circumstances of the case. It was not likely that he would have spoken of it, and of her own silence she was quite sure. But how had it come to pass that the woman had had the face to come to her? Could it be that Lord George had instigated her to do so? She never made enquiries of her husband as to where he went and whom he saw. For aught that she knew, he might be in Berkeley Square every day. Then she called to mind Mrs. Houghton's face, with the paint visible on it in the broad day, and her blackened eyebrows, and her great crested helmet of false hair nearly eighteen inches deep, and her affected voice and false manner, and then she told herself that it was impossible that her husband should like such a creature.

"George," she said to him abruptly, as soon as he came home, "who do you think has been here? Mrs. Houghton has been here." Then came the old frown across his brow; but she did not know at first whether it was occasioned by anger against herself or against Mrs. Houghton. "Don't you think it was very unfortunate?"

"What did she say?"

"She wanted to be friends with me."

"And what did you say?"

"I was very rude to her. I told her that I would never have anything to do with her; and then I left the room, so that she had to get out of the house as she could. Was I not right? You don't want me to know her, do you?"

"Certainly not."

"And I was right?"

"Quite right. She must be a very hardened woman."

"Oh George, dear George! You have made me so happy!" Then she jumped up and threw her arms round him. "I never doubted you for a moment—never, never; but I was afraid you might have thought—I don't know what I was afraid of, but I was a fool. She is a nasty hardened creature, and I do hate her. Don't you see how she covers herself with paint?"

"I haven't seen her for the last three months."

Then she kissed him again and again, foolishly betraying her past fears. "I am almost sorry I bothered you by telling you, only I didn't like to say nothing about it. It might have come out, and you would have thought it odd. How a woman can be so nasty I cannot imagine. But I will never trouble you by talking of her again. Only I have told James that she is not to be let into the house."

SOME STRANGE BEDFELLOWS.

DURING a wandering life, spreading over a good many years, I have come across a few strange bedfellows; and however unpleasant as companions some of them may have been for the time being, I can now look back at them with a good deal of amusement. Let it be understood that I never sought them; no amateur-casual fever led me into odd nooks and corners wherein they were pretty certain to be found. No; they all turned up in the ordinary course of events, and, in point of fact, more than one gave me cause to regret that I had been thrown in their way, or that they had been thrust into mine. Strange bedfellows are as plentiful as blackberries, if one puts oneself in the direct way to come across them, but in the ordinary passage through life are sometimes curiosities enough.

My first strange bedfellow I picked up during a walking-tour in Kent. By some miscalculation or misunderstanding, I had missed my road in the very centre of the county famous for ruddy-cheeked damsels and cherries, one evening late in September. It was pitch-dark; I was off the main-road, having essayed a short cut over the fields, and I couldn't see the ghost of a light or indication of human habitation;

so I resolved to sleep where best I could, and trust to daylight for the discovery of the right path. I pitched on a huge barn, standing alone in the fields—haunted, I supposed, or abandoned as useless; at any rate, big, bare, and solitary, but sufficiently cosy for me. I chose, after a minute inspection, a snug little corner, wrapped myself in my waterproof, placed my knapsack under my head for a pillow, and in a few minutes was fast asleep. My dreams were wild and erratic, and I found myself at one point addressing a huge revolutionary mob in Trafalgar Square. At every speech I was vociferously cheered, till I suppose I must have made a telling hit, and the enthusiasm of my unwashed auditors awoke me. I was certainly awake, but I was so far in Dreamland that I could not separate my mythical Trafalgar Square mob from a very actual-looking crowd which was surging in and out of the barn. I rubbed my eyes, and remembered that it was the hop-picking season. However, so long as my personal comfort was in no way interfered with, a legion of hop-pickers might have shared the barn with me. So I watched them settling themselves in all directions, fearing every moment that the roominess of my particular corner would be encroached upon; listened for an hour to their exchanges of repartee, songs, curses, and remarks in the choicest Hiberno-Seven-Dials tongue, as they took deep pulls from tin-cans, and puffed inch-and-a-quarter "dhudeens;" and calculating that I was to be left undisturbed, fell asleep again.

How long I enjoyed this my second sleep, I don't know, but it seemed but a minute or two before I awoke from a sensation of being jammed up, suffocated, and generally made a sandwich of. As, with an effort, I jumped up, a reproachful groan was uttered close to my ear, and I discovered that my waterproof, up till now the shelter for my own sacred frame, was likewise affording warmth and protection to a very substantial human form wedged in between my own and the wall of the barn. By the dim light of a horn lantern swinging from a rafter, I observed that my uninvited guest was a very ragged, dirty, and unshorn gentleman, who, when upright, would have more than touched the six-foot measure, and whose breadth of chest, and general largeness of limb, warned me against any attempt at expulsion. He growled as I raised myself, and opened an

evil-looking eye, remarking "that I might as well let a cove sleep." So I lay down again, and for the third time fell asleep. A ray of light through a chink in the wall falling directly on my face, awoke me the next morning. All were fast asleep, and, notwithstanding the freely ventilated nature of the edifice, the combination of odours arising from whisky and tobacco fumes, huddled-up dirty humanity, and unchanged garments, was so powerful, as to decide me to decamp instantly. So I gently disengaged my wrapper from the sleeping frame of my bedfellow, buckled on my knapsack, and stepping over the forms of men, women, and children, mixed together in rather picturesque confusion, issued into the outer air, and hailed the sweet scents and freshness of nature with a sniff of relief. I soon got into the right road, and pulled up at The George at Farnborough for breakfast. This I accomplished satisfactorily, and swinging my knapsack round, was about to call for the bill, when, to my horror, I discovered that the bottom of the knapsack had been slit open; that everything, clean linen, tobacco, pocket-book, and money, had disappeared; and that I was nothing else but a penniless tramp. However, I was well known to the good folk at The George, and they expressed very little surprise when I related to them my bed-seeking adventures of the past night. Of course the six-foot hep-picker was the possessor of my little all, and to attempt to run him in would have been sheer idiocy.

A year or two after this, I tumbled against my next strange bedfellow. I was an enthusiastic volunteer, and had marched down with my corps from London to Brighton on the occasion of the Easter Monday review. It had been a sweltering hot day, and any reader, who knows the Brighton road, may remember that by far the worst half is the bit from Crawley, through Cuckfield and over the Downs into Brighton. Moreover, a rival marching detachment belonging to another regiment was on the road at the same time, so that the last twenty miles was actually a race with them. Very delighted were we to discover that our quartermaster had procured for us the best quarters in the town, and bedtime—I should say "lights out"—was hailed by all with undivided satisfaction — by all, except the unfortunates composing the guard. It was not to be expected, of course, that each of us

should have a bed to himself, but we were granted the privilege of choosing our bedfellows, and I was quartered—or more strictly speaking, halved—with a chum named Davidson, a corporal of my company, and an old schoolfellow, and best of all, warranted by men who had done "campaigns" with him before, to be a quiet sleeper, free from kicking or sleep-talking vices. But, I didn't know that he was corporal of the guard! So we tumbled in. To this hour I believe that he was guilty of high treason, or of insubordination, or of contempt for military authority, or of some other heinous crime for not having slept with his men in the guard-room, but anyhow he tumbled in with me, and thoroughly tired out, we went to sleep. To ease my feet I had stripped off boots, socks, and gaiters, but Davidson lay with his martial cloak, and as I subsequently found to my disgust, his martial everything else around him. I was in the sweetest of well-earned slumbers, when a prod in the fleshy part of the thigh awoke me. It was Davidson's bayonet-sheath, and he, with a grin on his face, was turning out to relieve sentries. There was a flashing of lanterns and a din of heavy boots, amidst which I went off again. Another sweet slumber stole upon me, and was at its ecstatic point, when a thundering kick awoke me for the second time. It was another relief of sentries; Davidson again smiling and apologising for having disturbed me. Again the flashing of lanterns and the tramping of feet that seemed to be made of iron. Mentally and probably audibly, I cursed sentries and everyone else connected with them, turned over again and fell asleep. For the third time I was awakened, and I reproached myself for not having found out beforehand that Davidson was corporal of the guard, with many and bitter reproaches. The march down was all very well, the songs by the road, the halts at little wayside public-houses for refreshments, the open air and the sunshine; but if I had known that at the end of it all my night's rest was to be split up into unsatisfactory fragments, I certainly should have come down with the elderly and obese members by the "special." This time the hulla-balloo was dreadful and Davidson's excitement great. "Grand rounds have come," said he, "and I believe half my fellows have sneaked off to bed somewhere." So I made up my mind that I was not to sleep, lighted a pipe and sat up. But

drowsiness asserted itself, the pipe fell from my lips, and I sank back into slumber. And thus, every two hours, till the bugle sounded the reveille at six o'clock the next morning, went on this infernal changing of sentries, this hasty tumbling out of bed by Davidson, this feeble remonstrance on my part. I turned out with the others (ready at a word to throw off her Majesty's uniform and betake myself to some quiet resting-place for a good, long, undisturbed sleep), utterly unrefreshed. Lamp and good for nothing, I paraded with my brothers-in-arms, nearly all of whom had enjoyed sweet undisturbed slumbers, and I cursed the fate which led me to choose a corporal of the guard for my bedfellow.

It was at Singapore, on an outward voyage to China, that I met with my third strange bedfellow. The foreign settlement at Singapore is some way from the landing-place of the Peninsular and Oriental steamers, and although a "gharry" conveys one quickly enough from one to the other, after dark when the "gharries" have disappeared, the road is not only rather difficult to find but has rather a bad reputation. I had taken advantage of the opportunity offered, by the stoppage of the steamer for twenty-four hours, to look up an old friend, who lived in a bungalow some way out of the foreign settlement, and was returning towards the wharf. The day had been intensely hot, and it was delicious to feel the cool breeze sweeping in from the sea, as I stepped out beneath such a sky as one only sees in the tropics. I even stepped to gaze at the stars, and at the general beauty of the scene. I did not know the Singapore climate, or I would not have stopped as I did; much better had it been if I had looked in the direction from which the delicious breeze was coming. But I didn't, and I paid for my ignorance. I had scarcely walked on five minutes after my star-gazing halt, when I felt the breeze freshen, beheld a huge, deep black cloud come sweeping over the blue sky and its myriads of stars, and in ten minutes was in the midst of a Singapore rain-storm. To say that it poured would convey but a faint idea of what really happened—the water simply came down in a great sheet, and accompanying it swept the wild wind, bending great trees and howling through the bush on each side of the road, driving fragments of branches, bits of wooden paling and

anything it could uproot before it. I was clad in white clothes, and was very rapidly wet through. I looked about for a shanty, but I might as well have looked for the Tower of London, so I strode on. At a turn of the road, to my delight I came upon a cluster of native huts, and bursting into the first, asked if I could be accommodated until the rain was over. Pungent fumes of opium almost sickened me, as I surveyed the hut, and saw that it was a very low-type Chinese refreshment-house; but "any port in a storm," thought I, and called for a drink. A greasy, sly-faced Chinaman, rejoicing in the name of Ah Moon, showed me into a filthy little den, with tables and chairs of European make, and racks of beer bottles all round. He poured me out a tumbler of Singapore concocted Allsopp, and asked if I intended to stay the night. As the steamer started at daylight, I told him that I had merely come in for shelter from the storm, which would doubtless rapidly pass over. "I can secure," said Ah Moon, "this rain"—he called it "lain," Chinamen cannot pronounce the letter r—"no makee stop this side morning; so I think you more better sleep this side." Such a prospect was sickening, for if this were the reception-room of the house, what could the bedrooms be like? However, I poked my head out of the door, and seeing that the storm had, if anything, increased in violence, resolved to sleep it out, and take my chance of catching the steamer. So I directed Ah Moon to show me my bedroom. He grinned all over, and, seizing a lantern, led the way through an adjoining room, where, on filthy mats, in all conceivable postures, lay a crowd of the most villainous-looking coolies I had ever seen; and overcome by the fatal opium, and seemingly dead to everything in the external world. Up a ladder he went, and I followed. Furniture there was none, but there was a roof and a window; so, tired and sleepy, I threw myself on a pile of cocoa-nut matting and went to sleep—after having carefully placed my revolver under the bag of straw which served as a pillow. Whether I had slept two minutes or two hours I know not, but an awful row below stairs awoke me. I presumed that it was the landlord expelling his opium customers—a proceeding in China always attended with much noise and wrangling, inasmuch as the smokers invariably insist that they have not had their full time, and the land-

lords, with equal regularity, insist that they have. As it did not concern me, I fell asleep again. A second time I was awakened, now by a sound close by me; but as I stirred it ceased, and dense silence ensued. Stretching my legs out to recompose myself for sleep, I struck something. The something was soft, and apparently heavy, as it yielded not to my rather vigorous kick. "Some opium-smoker," thought I, "who has crept up here to elude the landlord's vigilance, and to carry out his own notions as to the proper length of his happy hour." With this reflection, I inflicted another kick. Not a sound, not a movement; not even a stertorous breath. I jumped up; opened the window. It was early morning—one of the beautiful early mornings so regular in their appearance at Singapore—the sun just glimmering over the distant hills, and not a trace visible of the night's storm, except in the rain-puddles on the road. The light darted into the room, and showed me my bedfellow—a big Chinaman, stretched out, rigid, and dead! Under his left breast was a sword-cut, from which the blood had flowed on to my heap of matting. Instantly I dashed to the trap-door by which I had ascended—it was bolted. I ran to the window, in the hopes of hailing a passing policeman; but there was not a human being in sight, only the parquets on the trees seemed to mock at me, as I stood alone with this remnant of a human being. The house, like most houses in the East, had but one storey, so I jumped on to the verandah, and from thence slid to the ground. As I left the window, I saw the mail-steamer gliding away towards Hong Kong, but I cared not for that. Alighted, I ran round to the house-door, it was open, and I entered. Not a soul was visible, but I could see at a glance the story of the night's tragedy, in the overturned tables, the broken wine bottles, and the general air of topsy-turvydom. I had often read of Chinese opium-shop rows, of men being murdered in their trance for the money upon their persons, of robberies, of disappearances, and of a thousand and one other creations of fanciful brains; but I little thought, as I read and disbelieved, that a day would see me face to face with one of these occurrences, and I do not remember having ever felt so lonely as in this Singapore opium-den, on the bright morning above alluded to. It was plain that the intention of the

landlord had been to fasten the crime on me, if possible. Chinamen always have hated, and always will hate, Englishmen; we bully them, and they revenge themselves by hook or by crook. However, as I stayed at the place till someone arrived, and sent immediately for the police, the truth was patent. I missed my steamer, but my evidence tended to convict Mr. Ah Moon of the murder, and good effects were very soon appreciable, I afterwards learnt, inasmuch as a raid was made upon the opium-shops, and a good many celestial gentlemen were shipped incontinently off to their native land, under government "protection."

Some months afterwards, I was at the West Coast gold-fields, near Hokitika, in New Zealand, and was brought into contact—very violent contact, as it will appear—with my fourth strange bedfellow. I was with an English naval surgeon, and we were simply travelling together, making notes and sketches in this newly-discovered wild land of gold, jogging along from township to township (mem.: a New Zealand "township" generally signifies a hotel, a general store, a drinking-bar, and a racecourse), and from station to station, as a rule making our route lie through tracts of country as English as possible, and avoiding contact with our Irish brethren.

The West Coast gold-fields were, however, at the date of which I am writing, intensely Hibernian, and tired limbs compelled us to pitch our "six by eight" tent in the midst of the "boys." If we had been diggers it might have fared disagreeably with us, for the feeling in the gold-fields, and indeed in the labour-fields in general, between Englishmen and Irishmen is almost as strong as between Frenchmen and Germans, or Russians and Turks. We were not in the path of gain, however; and as our movements and manners were very harmless, we were not only tolerated but in many places made something of, scarcely on account of any distinguishing personal characteristics, rather perhaps because we happened to have a keg or two of very good whisky, and some packets of extra superfine "negrohead," which we judiciously did not entirely keep to ourselves.

Well, we were snugly curled up in the tent, the door of which, as the night was mild, we left open, and were thoroughly tired after our day's wanderings beneath the broiling sun; we lit our pipes and

chatted a bit, then put out our lantern and turned over to sleep. I suppose that it was amongst the small hours of the morning when I was awakened by a sense of extreme chilliness, and got up to close the door of the tent. As I was doing so I heard a moan, at first I imagined it to be the expression of some dream sentiment on the part of the doctor, but the moan was repeated, and not in the doctor's voice; a few seconds after, a harsh guttural voice in the purest Galway brogue gave out: "Andy, Andy, why the divil didn't ye find the gould before, and ye'd have been a happy man?" This was from the interior of the tent, somewhere in my immediate neighbourhood, so I struck a light, and beheld the sturdy form of an Irish digger ensconced between my own waterproof blanket and that of the sleeping doctor. He was lying flat on his back, his face turned upwards, and his two hands clutched upon something in his coat side-pocket. At short intervals, in a reproachful tone, he repeated the speech, "Andy, Andy," &c. I gave him a prod, but the only result was a groan and the set speech to himself.

I was wondering whether I should wake him up, request him to go, and run the risk of having the hands of the whole of his clan against me for a violation of hospitality, or whether I should let him sleep and groan on till daylight, when without the slightest premonitory sign, he jumped up with an unearthly yell. I had just time to wake up the doctor with a kick, when I felt the whisky-scented breath of the Irishman under my nose, and a heavy, hard hand placed upon my collar—then he continued, trying to look me in the face with a pair of wild, unnaturally-lighted eyes which would wander about: "I knew it was there—I dramed it years ago, and see I have got it!" He mysteriously raised his other hand, and as if he was showing a bird he was afraid would fly away, opened it, and although he had nothing in his clutch but a pebble, closed it rapidly and jealously: "this is gould," continued he, "all gould—they don't know it outside, so kape it dark and I'll be safe intirely." So we promised not to whisper a word, and the poor fellow sat down apparently satisfied. "He's mad," said the doctor; "his mind's been running on gold, and he thinks he's got it. But what the devil are we to do with him?" He had scarcely spoken these words, when the subject of our remarks sprang up,

seized the doctor round the waist and threw him to the ground. The doctor was a powerful Devonshire man, and knew a wrestling trick or two, but do what he might, he couldn't extricate himself from the mad grasp of his assailant. In vain I endeavoured to drag the Irishman off, I thumped his hands and pulled his head back to loosen his hold, a kick from his big knee-boot sent me over, and as I went over, I saw one of his hands slip up to the doctor's neckcloth, and in another second the doctor rolled over again, his face black and his eyeballs starting from their sockets. At this crisis, some of the diggers from the tents hard by, attracted by the doctor's howl, by my cries for assistance, and by the Irishman's yells, rushed in. With their united strength they pulled their countryman off and laid him on the ground—not peacefully though, for it required the force of three pairs of arms to keep him down.

As he lay there, panting and foaming at the mouth, one of the diggers said: "Ah, it's poor Andy McGuire; he's been going silly this last week, all because he'd dreamt he found a nugget; and he's been workin' and diggin', but hasn't come across it. Ye may think yourselves lucky ye've got off as ye have, for he nigh killed one of us yesterday, as he's near killed your friend there," and he pointed to the doctor, lying all of a heap in the corner. A drop of whisky brought him to, but he afterwards scientifically explained to me that by the sensations he underwent he must have been as near strangled as possible. Poor Andy was taken off to die, I believe, in Hokitika. We left the diggings, and returned to civilisation, not at all sorry to escape from the blackguardism and utter depravity of the wild clans there congregated, and thus ended my fourth adventure with strange bedfellows. I have come across one or two since, but the length of this paper warns me that I must stop and wind up with the simple moral—Travel if you like in company, but as a rule, choose very carefully your resting-place at night.

THE ROSE OF EDEN.

ARABIC LEGEND.

FAIR EYE knelt close by the guarded gate, in the glow of the Eastern spring,
She saw the flash of the angel's sword, and the sheen of the angel's wing;
She thought as she held her sobbing breath, she could hear the happy sighs
Of the tiny rivulets that fed the mosses of Paradise;

She knew how the birds were fluttering, among the clustered flowers,
And gorgeous blooms and arching trees, that shadowed Eden's bowers.

And she cried aloud in an agony of wild remorseful prayer,
"Give me one bud, but one, but one, from the thousands that blossom there!"

He turned as he heard her piteous voice, in his grave angelic grace,
And he looked with a wistful tenderness on the beautiful woman's face.

And because it was so beautiful, and because she could not see

How fair were the pure white cyclamens, crushed dying at her knee;

And because he knew this punishment through the weary years must burn,

That through all things sweet and good on earth, her heart would for Eden yearn;

He gathered a rich red rose that grew where the four great rivers met,

And flung it to the frail, fatal hands, that clasped inquiring yet.

And though for many a cycle past, that rose in dust has lain,

With her who bore it on her breast, when she passed from life and pain,

There is never a daughter of Eve but once, ere the tale of her days is done,

She will know the scent of the Eden rose, just once beneath the sun!

And whatever else she may win or lose, endure, or do, or dare,

She will never forget the enchantment it gave to the common air;

For the world may give her content or joy, fame, sorrow, or sacrifice,

But the hour that brought the scent of the rose, she lived it in Paradise.

THE SHADOW OF A DREAM.

A STORY.

I NEVER had any thought of danger during the whole twenty years I made the journey; nothing ever happened to me; and then to think the very first time this youngster goes, he—but I must begin at the beginning.

The way of our bank at Charrendon was just this. We had several branches at distant places—small towns, you understand, where there was not enough business done to pay for keeping a clerk constantly on the spot; so we only had an office, and only opened it on market-days, once a week.

One of us used to go over in the morning and return at night. The railway helped us to three of these journeys, but the fourth, to Meredene, had to be made by gig. The place lay fifteen miles off, in the very bosom of the downs, and the road ran all in amongst them, and sometimes over their topmost shoulders. It was for the most part lonely, and in winter sometimes very rough and bleak. I had to do the day's business at Meredene, but,

beyond bitter winds, snow, and rain, nothing ever befell me, as I have said, for twenty years. In the summer it was a pleasant drive; in winter, of course, in bad weather, it was an unpleasant one—that was all the impression it ever made upon me. Young Chase, however, never seemed to fancy it; from the first, when it was talked about for him to do, he did not like the idea. He told me so, and I laughed at him. I said, "Oh! you won't mind it; after a bit you'll think nothing of it, no more than I do." You understand, he was not used to the country; he had been born and bred in London, and they drafted him from our chief office there, down here, for the sake of his health. He had been ailing a long while; the doctors said he ought to live out of town; and, being a trusty servant, and liked by our manager, an exchange was arranged.

He had been at Charrendon about six months, and did not seem much the better for the change. He was tall and muscular, but a thin, pale-faced, large-eyed fellow, always fond of reading Shakespeare and the like, and had a dreamy, absent kind of way with him at times; and was particularly fond, in his leisure, of wandering over our downs with his book. He often used to talk to me about them, saying how beautiful they were, and that no sort of country that he had ever been in had impressed him so much. I am afraid I did not greatly sympathise with him; the downs had never been anything to me! Indeed, I don't know that I ever gave them a thought, till he used to speak about them, and yet I have lived hard by them nearly all my life.

Well, as I was saying, he had been with us six months, and it was just about the beginning of November, when I was attacked by rheumatism. They said if I did not take care, I should be laid up, and that I must not expose myself through the coming cold weather. This led to young Chase's having to do my work at Meredene. So I drove him over one week, to show him the road, and the way the work was done, that he might be able to take my place the following week and for the rest of the winter.

Now it was when this was settled that he first seemed to shrink the job. He told me that he had been constantly dreaming about the downs, and, as he seemed to say, one particular part of them.

Mind you, he had never seen the place, didn't know there was such a place really; but he said he had dreamt of it over and over again, and it always made him uncomfortable. It was a deep chalk-cutting, he said, past which the road wound up the side of a hill from one of the bottoms or valleys. In a sort of way, he described the place to me, but, bless your heart, I never paid any heed to it; I didn't recognise it as any place I knew; and it was only when I was driving him over to Meresdene, that I found out what he meant.

We were exactly half-way on our journey, and had turned on to what are known as the Whiteways; that is, several narrow chalk tracks which show up very white across the turf, and run side by side with the road for some distance, as it descends the steep hill past a great chalk-cutting. This, perhaps, is the most solitary and exposed part of the drive, and lies on one of the highest ridges of the Downs. There is no habitation for a good mile on either hand; Dene's Gate turnpike, at the bottom of the hill, being the nearest; and when we came to the beginning of the descent, where we could see down into the valley—there's a splendid view, mind you, there—he almost frightened the life out of me by suddenly jumping up from his seat and exclaiming: "There! there it is! that's the place; that's the very place I've seen a hundred times before, in my dreams! I have seen it every night, for a month past!"

Sure enough, the road passes the chalk-cutting, but I had never thought anything of that, and it had never occurred to me as being the place he meant.

"Well," I said, "sit down; don't excite yourself like that, you'll upset the gig. If it is the place, it won't bite you!" And then he sank down quietly by my side, his chin dropped on his chest, one of his dreamy fits came on, and he never spoke another word till we reached Meresdene.

The little town was busy with the sheep market, and he roused up throughout the day. He was always nimble at his work, soon took in what was to be done, and was quite comfortable until we set out homewards. Then the dreamy fit seemed to come on again. It was past five o'clock, and getting dark, when we stopped at Dene's Gate turnpike to light our lamps. Soon after this, we began to ascend the

hill, near the top of which is the chalk-cutting and the Whiteways. I was on the look-out for what he would do here, expecting some oddity, for he was always odd; but he remained silent, and beyond fidgeting in his seat, and looking from side to side of the road, and up at the steep cliff of chalk as far as the twilight and glitter of our lamps would show it him, he did nothing; and when we got back to Charrendon, I said: "Well, there's not much to be afraid of in that day's work, is there? And now that you have seen the reality, perhaps you'll leave off dreaming about the Whiteways." He merely smiled, and said: "Oh no, of course not; it's only a stupid fancy I had. There's no difficulty about the journey; I shall do it all right enough." Yet I thought he forced himself rather to say this, and didn't mean it.

Well, nothing particular happened during the next week, only I noticed that young Chase was a little more dreamy and odd than usual. I said to him on the Tuesday (as he was to go on the Wednesday): "You don't really mind this job, do you? or would you like to have someone with you? We might send the ostler lad, I think." Whereupon he said, very hurriedly and anxiously, I thought: "Oh dear no; no, certainly not; on no account!" and I answered: "Well, I think you are right; it would look rather silly; you might get laughed at!" Though I am bound to say of late years, since the railways have brought London so much closer to us, people have more than once said that they thought it rather foolhardy of me to come back at night alone in the winter, seeing there was always a good sum of money in the driving-seat, the farmers' payings-in, and the like, during the day, you understand. But, bless your heart, I never had any fear, and I could not understand why anybody else should; so I was quite relieved when young Chase plucked up, and would not hear of having anybody with him.

Well, off he went. We were very busy all day, and I thought no more about him. My time home from Meresdene had usually been a little before seven, according to the roads and the weather. I live over the office, you understand, and have done so ever since I was made chief clerk. I looked at my watch after I had had my tea, and was astonished to see it was half-past seven. I was astonished, that is, because young Chase was not back; and

I confess I began to get a little fidgety, when another half-hour passed, and still he had not returned. I looked out of the window and saw there was a thick fog—so thick, I could not see the lamps on the other side of the market-place. This accounted for his delay in my mind; the thing had happened to me; but the roads are so white, and Jenny, the old mare, knew them so well, that beyond going slowly there was no difficulty; but still, when ten, half-past, and eleven came, and no sign of young Chase—well! I didn't like it, and I was going to send over to the chief of the police, when the horse and gig came trotting up to the door.

I looked out. The fog was all gone, and it was a bright starlight night; but you may judge my state of mind when, going down, who should be at the door but Joe Muzzle, the turnpike-man from Dene's Gate, and another.

Says he, very excited, and hurrying over his words: "Your young man, sir, found for dead just below the Whiteways. We can't tell northin' at all about it. My missus and I was just going to turn in, when we heerd somethin' clanking agin the gate like: I goes out, and there be'es a horse and gig, and ne'er a driver, and on examination I find it be'es your gig, reins out or broke, and dragglin' on the road; there be'es a bit of a fog about, and I sings out, but no one answers, so I routs my youngster out o' bed, and sends him off to Gray's Farm, the nearest house, for help, for I know'd there must ha' been an accident, for I let the young gentleman through the gate at the reg'lar time, soon after five this afternoon, on his way home, and he gives me a sort of sleepy nod like, without speaking; and 'Now where be'es 'un?' I says to my missus, for it was just nine then, and chaise and he ought to have been at Charrendon long ago. This man, Farmer Gray's foreman, comes back with my boy in about half an hour, and with a couple of lanterns we goes slowly on to the Whiteways, leading the horse and gig with us, 'specting to find the young gentleman pitched out, or somethin' like that. And, sure enough, just when we gets under that there old chalk-cutting, this man here comes upon his body just above the edge of the slope, for the fog had lifted then, and we could see plainly. He seemed quite dead, and we thought the best thing we could do was to take 'un back to the pike, which we done, in the gig, as quick as possible. Then I sends

my boy to Meresdene for the doctor, and he's with 'un now, and then he sends me on here to tell you. I've spliced the reins up a bit, and we got through, and werry sad it all be'es, bain't it? and now what be'es best to be done?"

This was a puzzling question, truly, but I went and woke up the police, and two or three of our clerks, and then we had some more talk with Joe Muzzle. Joe is quite a character in his way, and if you give him a start, he'll run on, clacking like a clock. I did give him a start, and then he said: "Searching about the place where we found the poor young gen'lman, as well as we could with the lanterns, we finds the cushions pitched out and the whip broke in two—fraid I left that at the pike; but here be'es some proper mar-drous weepsons," and he produced from his capacious pockets a pair of small flint-lock pistols; "there warn't nothin' else to show what had happ'd but the off gig step seems to have got a twist-like, and the off lamp be stove in—that, I reckon, was comin' agin' the pike with ne'er a driver."

Here we adjourned to the stable, to examine the gig, and you'll understand that all this time my mind was running on the cash. Was that safe, I wondered?

To my dismay there was not a sign of it in the driving-seat. This led to more questioning of Muzzle, but he swore there was nothing else found on the road, except what he had produced. It seemed as if he were about right, for, to cut this part of my story short, we could not come on any trace of it, though we knew pretty well to a penny how much young Chase had, and what shape it was in. Afterwards a sort of suspicion did fall on Muzzle, and the man who helped him; their belongings were all overhauled, but with no result. I need not tell you that this affair made a great commotion for miles round. It got into the London papers. We had a host of inspectors and detectives down; our bank offered a reward, and so did the Government, for the apprehension of the thief.

Young Chase lay at the little turnpike for over a fortnight, quite insensible, like a log. He had received a concussion of the brain, the doctors said; but beyond this, there was no injury apparent. They couldn't quite make it out; no more could anybody, for the matter of that; and even when he had shown signs of life and opened

his eyes, he was for a month or two unable to speak coherently, or understand what was said to him. All this while, you can guess that enquiries and examinations were going on in all directions, but there was no clue to the robbery, for robbery there had been, no doubt, or where was the money? One of the pistols was discovered to be loaded, whilst the other, though the hammer was down, did not appear to have been fired; both pan and barrel were quite empty and clean; clearly he had not been shot at. Then to whom did the pistols belong? He was never known to possess any, and they bore no maker's name; at least there were signs that it had been erased. The keenest wits of Scotland Yard were baffled; we could make nothing of it; not a person was apprehended, even on suspicion.

I must now tell you, however, as ill-luck would have it, the news of the poor young fellow's mischance was such a severe shock to his aged mother—the only relative he had, that we knew of—that she died two days after she heard it. Hence I was deputed privately by our directors to look over young Chase's room and effects. This led to our getting a sort of clue—at least, it made a link in the chain, though perhaps on the whole it rather added to the mystery, as you will say, when you have read this paper. I found it in an envelope inscribed with these words: "To be given to my mother, if I do not return this night from Meresdene.—November 15, 1846."

And this is what the paper contained :

"Years have passed since the first faint shadow of the dream fell across my life. I have put it aside again and again, as an idle and vain imagining, but it has always returned; sooner or later, the vision has always revisited my pillow. Still, how could I, a sensible man with my faculties about me, conceive that it should mean anything more than one of those curious freaks of our uncontrolled sleeping thoughts common to all? How could I imagine that it pointed to a reality? yet, when six months ago, I found that circumstances beyond my control had brought me into the sort of country that made the background of this dream, I marked the strangeness of the coincidence. When, too, I found with this that the dream was far more frequent in recurrence, and more vivid and circumstantial

in detail, I was not the less impressed. And when at last I saw that events were conspiring to necessitate my making a night journey across the downs alone, the shadow of the dream oppressed me with a vague dread. I used to think of Hamlet's words: 'O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have had dreams!' I was absolutely sure, when starting on that preliminary drive last week, that I should see the spot. I knew it as a foregone conclusion, so that when we turned the brow of that last big down, and came upon what they call the Whiteways, and the hill road running past the chalk-cutting lay before me, I instantly recognised the place which had for all these years been the one-prevailing picture of my dream.

"There it was! There was the scene, as it first faintly presented itself to my sleeping eyes years ago; as it had ever since continued to come before them at intervals with increasing vividness. The effect on the landscape of a winter's twilight, deepening into night, began to suggest itself after awhile. In addition to this, I could at times discern, but only in that vague manner belonging to dreams, a horse and gig toiling slowly up the hill. This incident also gradually increased in reality, and by the time I had been here at Charrendon a month I could often see that it was myself who was driving. Almost every night I dreamt that I saw myself doing this. I was alone in the gig, the lamps were lighted, and gave to the white horse, and the chalk-cutting under which I was for ever passing, a spectral aspect. I never seemed to get beyond this spot, until there first arose a talk in the office about the possibility of my having to do our chief clerk's (Mr. Shepfold's) work at Meresdene. After this, there was a change and confusion in the vision. A frosty fog hung about; the gig-lamps glimmered through it fitfully, giving an unusual phantom-like look to all I beheld. I saw myself for an instant driving as usual, but the next the horse and gig had vanished, and I was bending over the form of a man prostrate on the road. In one of his hands he held the leather padlocked bag which contained the bank money. A crape mask hid his face, but there was an ominous streak of red upon the white road beside him, and my hands were tinted with the same colour. Intense horror

possessed me, for I felt that I had killed him! Aghast at the deed, I strove to drag his body to the side of the Whiteways, opposite the chalk-cutting, where the down slopes abruptly to a hollow some hundreds of feet below. In my attempts to do this I always awoke. Then, every night for three or four weeks, was I haunted and made miserable by this accursed dream, and when I knew that it was finally settled that I should have to make the journey alone, and discovered that there existed a spot on the road, actually resembling in all its details that which I was only too familiar with, I could no longer mistake the meaning of my dream. It could be nothing but a portent—a warning of what might happen to me. I should be there; I should pass the place on my journey home, in darkness and alone—conditions favourable to the attack which I could not but suppose now would be made upon me, for the sake of the money which my business would oblige me to carry. I should defend it, and I should kill my assailant! Yet why was the veil, which it is the privilege of man to find ever hanging before his future, lifted for me? What have I done, that the one shield which guards the happiness of human beings, that ignorance of what the next day or the next hour may have in store for them, should be dashed from my too far-seeing eyes? Why has my life been gradually and irresistibly embittered by a sight of what might justifiably, though unintentionally, be forced upon me?

"That a man, in the contemplation of some hideous crime, should be warned from it in a dream that showed him to what it would lead, seems feasible; and we have heard that such things have been, and that men have been warned from their evil purpose thereby. But that I, knowing of no malicious intention; having, as God is my judge, none in my heart; should have thus been persecuted by some fiendish, uncontrollable phantom of the brain, which, by its persistent nightly presence should have shed its horrid shadow on my daily life, was unaccountable.

"Yet there was more behind; more mystery to aggravate the terror. Coming home after that visit to Meresdene with Mr. Shepfold, I threw myself on my bed, with a dread of sleep that I cannot express. Perfectly certain now that I should go on dreaming till the end was reached, I determined I would not sleep. I lay there,

devising some plan by which I could avert this impending catastrophe. It was my duty to do so, both to myself and my employers; for the sum of money I should have with me would be very large. I would detail to them exactly what I have said above; I would urge them to see it as I saw it—that it was an unmistakable warning which we had no right to disregard. They might think me a fool, a lunatic, a coward—what they pleased; but I would not take that journey alone, and I hoped they would not wish it! Yes, I would state my case the following morning. An infinite sense of relief came over me when I had made this decision, a calm to which I had been a stranger for months—a calm, indeed, that, despite my resolution, soothed me to sleep.

"Instantly I dreamt. Of course I was upon the downs, under the usual circumstances; the frosty fog, the gig with glimmering lights, the chalk-cutting, the hill road beneath it, the Whiteways, as I now knew the spot to be called; then the prostrate form upon the road, the red stain upon the chalk, my figure with the bloody hands, bending over it; details which I had always been able to discern plainly in my dreams, notwithstanding the want of light; and the effort I myself am making, to drag the body across the road, to hurl it down the steep slope!

But ah! what new and strange revelation is this? what new and terrible solution to this mysterious dreaming is about to be made to me? The crape mask, that has always hitherto hidden from me the man's face, is gone! and I behold in my assailant and robber the unmistakable features of . . . but I dare not write his name, lest this fall into other hands than yours, mother—but you will understand who it was I thus saw in my dream, when I say that it was he who is the unhappy cause of our great grief and sorrow, and whom we suppose now to be far away. I was awake again the instant after this, in a frame of mind exceeding in its agony anything I had ever felt. If I might accept all that had gone before as a portent, why should I doubt that the catastrophe was to be brought about by this unhappy man? it would not be more marvellous than any other part of my never-failing dream. Should these heavy truths in it, and it was my destiny to be attacked and robbed by him, then there was sufficient reason for my not claiming the protection which a compassion on that

journey might give me. No; I now knew I must go alone to meet whatever might befall, or to dispel at once and for ever the shadow of the dream. If I was really so to meet him in the flesh, if he really be in England, no one must know it but myself. Then the dream may, after all, become the beneficent means of saving him, and preserving me from the committal of a deed that would weigh upon me to the end of time.

"Thus concluding on the morning after my expedition with Mr. Shepfold, I had but to wait for this the momentous day. It has come, and in a few hours I shall be on my road. For the last seven successive nights, the vision, with all its latest circumstances, has been present whenever, through sheer fatigue, I have given way to sleep; whilst by day, its shadow has darkened on me hourly, to the exclusion of all but that scene on the Whiteways.

"I start, at least prepared."

Very dim was the light, however, that this statement let in upon the catastrophe. To be brief, it led to nothing practical; nothing more could be done until young Chase had recovered sufficiently to be able to give a personal account of the affair. Months passed before this was possible; his health returned very slowly. The doctors forbade any questioning or excitement, and I really didn't know the details of anything that had transpired until he was pronounced fit to appear before our board of directors.

Then I was present, with the rest of the people concerned. It was like a private court of justice, and young Chase was arraigned, as it were, like a criminal. When he came into the room his altered appearance was startling. I had only seen him twice since his setting out on the fatal journey: once, when he was lying quite insensible at the turnpike; and once, when he was only a little better, at the county hospital. He now looked twenty years older; his thin, pale face was deeply furrowed, his long dark hair thickly tinged with grey, and the dreamy expression in his large eyes had changed to one of wildness, whilst his black clothes added to his weird, ghost-like appearance. He pulled himself together, however, by a great effort, and, in answer to the questions the chairman put, this is about what he said, as near as I can remember.

"The statement which you, gentlemen, found addressed to my poor mother, and which you have just read to me, is strictly true to the letter. It is fuller than any account I could give now, of my feelings and state of mind, prior to the 15th of November. I have very little to add, but I will tell you what I can.

"As I approached the Whiteways, on my return homeward journey, all the conditions of my dream were realised. I appeared to have been within them so often before, that I might have been dreaming them. Everything was so familiar. There was no difference between my sensations asleep or awake. I had no sense of being, of actual existence, in one state more than in the other. I felt I was gliding to my destiny, gliding without movement, without bodily effort, precisely as one does in sleep. I can give no better account of what happened. The fog wrapped me round. There was an interval, an impression that I was struggling, I appeared to fall; and then I awoke in the hospital, two months back. I can tell you no more."

"But did you see no one? Did no one stop you?"

"No one, that I am aware of; but I could not swear it," was the answer.

"But the pistols; were they yours?"

"Yes; mechanically I had provided myself with them; but with no thought of using them. If I remember rightly, I took them from my pocket, and placed them between my feet when I left Dane's Gate. I wished no one to know that I was armed."

"And, on your word and honour, Mr. Chase, you do not remember being attacked?"

"On my oath, I remember no more than I have told you."

"And the money; where was that?"

"In the driving-seat under me, in the padlocked leather-bag which Mr. Shepfold always used."

"You know nothing more of it than that it was there when you started?"

"Nothing; on my oath."

Then, after a long pause, during which many signs of dissatisfaction spread through all listeners, the chairman continued, as he referred to Chase's statement:

"It is now my duty to ask you to whom, in this extraordinary story you have given of your dream, you refer as your visionary assailant. It is most essential—vital to

your interests—that you keep nothing back from us, whether asleep or awake.”

Here Chase was visibly moved. He shrank, as it were, within himself; he dropped his eyes, cowering. Presently he said, recovering slightly:

“I had hoped to have been spared this, seeing that my words were intended for no eyes but my mother’s.”

“The whole business,” went on the chairman, “is so visionary and unsatisfactory, that you are bound to explain to whom you refer; your position with us demands it. You have been a tried and trustworthy servant, but you will forfeit all the past if you do not aid us in our efforts to discover the perpetrator of this robbery. An indication of who this mysterious person is may give us a clue. I conjure you to tell us everything, Mr. Chase.”

Again he resisted; again he was urged to speak; he continued silent, growing paler every moment. There was a nervous clutching of the hands and twitching of the mouth; he staggered as if he were going to faint; he sank upon a chair, and his head drooped; it was a very painful scene now, for he was much respected. Once again, the chairman insisted, commanding him to say to whom he alluded?

At length he arose, looking more like a ghost than anybody I ever saw, and, gazing vacantly round the room with a return of his old dreamy air, said, in a faint and hollow voice, and without seeming to address anyone in particular: “It matters little now. The shadow falls upon me for the last time; it can never lift again. He casts it upon me; he has blighted my life; he hastens my death.”

“Who? Whom do you mean?” cried the chairman. For one minute Chase seemed brought back to a waking state. He looked straight at the chairman as he replied: “My brother, sir; my twin-brother. I will conceal nothing from you now. When only sixteen years of age he was transported for forgery. We contrived to hide the business from our friends; had we not done so, I should never have obtained the post of trust I have held in your bank. Had the fact of his existence even reached your ears while I yet held it, you would have taken it from me, and I and my mother would have been irretrievably disgraced. This is why I did not write his name in that statement. But his name was Edward,

and you will find the record in——” The speaker suddenly stopped, put his hand to his forehead, once more staggered back into the chair, and thence fell heavily to the floor.

The doctor, who had watched his case throughout, was by his side instantly, and, after the very slightest examination, pronounced him dead!

There is no occasion to dwell upon what immediately followed. His dying statement was found to be correct, and an Edward Chase—twin-brother to John—proved to have been transported two years before the latter obtained his bank appointment.

Our directors made it their business, through the Home Office, to get every information concerning this man, and the whole of this strange business is made the stranger by what they thus discovered. It turned out, after the most careful scrutiny and comparison of dates, that the convict, Edward Chase, had not only never left the Australian penal colony to which he had been consigned, and therefore could never have had a hand in the robbery on the Whiteways, but that, after committing a series of crimes as a bushranger, he was convicted of having robbed and killed a man on a lonely highway, on the 15th of November, ’46; that he escaped, and being recaptured at the end of some months, was actually executed on the very day that poor John fell down dead in our board-room!

These are the facts, and, I suppose, justify the name which, in this neighbourhood, is given to the story. It has been a terrible shadow indeed. It rested on the whole of us for a long time, I can tell you; but, for my part, I think it all came from poor John’s encouraging his dreamy fancies for wandering about the downs and lonely places, and reading poetry, Shakespeare, and the like. I don’t hold with that sort of thing; it partly turned his head, poor fellow, I’m sure—at least, you will understand that’s the way in which I account for it all, for you’ll never convince me that there was anything more than coincidence in it. The poor fellow’s queer, odd nature was so worked upon, that he probably had a fit when he got to the Whiteways, and fell out of the gig. The doctor told me privately that was his opinion; and it was a fit that killed him in the end. I am not going to believe, as some folks do hereabouts, that there was any spiritual influence at work in his

dreaming. Why, I know a man who wants to make out that it was the villainous life the brother in Australia was leading, and his contemplation of the murder which he committed on the 15th of November, that affected the mind of John Chase, here in England—through their twinship, you understand. Bah! I'm not going to believe that kind of stuff—no, I'm too matter-of-fact for that, I hope. You shake your heads, but the end proves I'm right, I think.

Eight years and a half passed, and the matter was almost forgotten, when, one spring, the little mere, which lies between Gray's Farm and the town of Meredene, was drained, and, amongst the white chalky mud, what did the workmen come upon but an old brown leather bag, with a padlock! My old leather bag, with all the money that poor John Chase had with him when he left the bank that night—every penny of it intact, except for the rotting which the notes and cheques had got from the wet.

Well, for a day or two this was the greatest wonder of all. However could it have got there? The neighbourhood all round was talking about it, and, as a matter of course, it comes to the ears of a certain man, lying sick, well-nigh to death, of a fever at Gray's Farm. When he hears of this find he turns very uncomfortable, sends for the parson, and says he:

"I can't die with it on my soul—I flung that bag into the mere, I did."

"How did you come by it?"

"Why, when Joe Muzzle and I came upon the body of that poor young Chase, lying upon the Whiteways, and were groping about with the lanterns, and picking up the whip, and the cushions, and the pistols, and all the rest of it, I kicked against the bag. Joe never saw me. I guessed what it contained. I slipped it into my pocket, and said nothing about it. When I got home I found I couldn't open it, and I hid it for two or three days under my bed. Then, when it got wind that the police were likely to search Joe's crib and mine, why I grew frightened lest it should be found on me. I slipped out in the middle of the night, and flung it into the mere."

With this confession on his lips, the man died; and the man was Farmer Gray's foreman!

CONCERNING CANDLES.

WHOEVER invented candles must be considered as a benefactor to his fellow-men. To honour him by name is an impossibility, for that appears to have been lost in the mists of antiquity. Of the benefits his invention have conferred upon mankind there can be no question; and of the antiquity of the invention there can be as little doubt. We find mention of the candle in the Bible as early as the time of Job, though it may be a question whether the word translated "candle" in that book would not be better expressed by "lamp." The candle is also referred to in Proverbs, in the prophecy of Jeremiah, and in the Book of Revelation. Mention is often made of it by our Lord as recorded in the Gospels. Indeed, this by no means exhausts the list of places in the Bible in which the candle is referred to.

In keeping with these frequent references in the Scriptures to candles, is the prominent position they still hold in the religious ceremonies of a large section of mankind. The Roman, Greek, and now the English Churches are, amongst Christians, the three great religious bodies distinctive for their use of candles as adjuncts to public worship. But, among other and non-Christian systems of religion, that of Buddha is conspicuous for the same usage; and, although we cannot say whether its symbolism is as defined as in the Christian Church, still, as with those of us who follow the usage, it is not omitted at any important religious ceremony or service. Dr. Anderson, in his recently published book, *Mandalay to Momien*, in a description of the laying of the foundation-stone of a native pagoda at Shuaykeenah, says that tapers were used; and that wooden pins, covered with silver tinsel, and bearing a lighted yellow taper, were one of the accessories upon the occasion. An offering to the great earth serpent consisted of a round earthen vase; containing gold, silver, and precious stones, besides rice and sweetmeats; closed with wax, in which a lighted taper was stuck. In depositing the bricks in a trench dug for the purpose, a silvered brick, with a lighted taper on it, was handed to the Shan's grandmother; while his wife took a red brick and its taper; the daughter a green one; and the Shan, a gold one. Dr. Anderson also states that candles are used on the altars of Buddhist

Khyoungs or temples during the intoning of the vesper prayers.

Among western nations, candles have always been regarded as necessary accessories to public worship. "Christmas," says Blount, "was called the Feast of Lights in the Western or Latin Church, because they used many lights or candles at the feast." What was then customary is not less so in these modern times. At St. John's College, Oxford, a candle used formerly to be burned at Christmas in an ancient stone socket, upon which was engraved a figure of the Holy Lamb. It was in use during the twelve days of Christmas, and stood on the public supper-board. In Belgium, from Christmas to Epiphany, the children carry about the streets paper stars having a lighted taper in the centre, singing at the same time some verses of a carol. "Some years ago," says a writer in *Notes and Queries*, "the colliers at Llynymaen, two miles from Oswestry, were in the habit of carrying from house to house in Oswestry, boards covered with clay, in which were stuck lighted candles. This was done at Christmas only, and by colliers only." Both these latter customs had, no doubt, something to do with the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem. On Easter Eve it used to be customary in the past to light the paschal taper in churches, and our forefathers sometimes succeeded in making this three hundred pounds in weight.

Candles are not without their place in the calendar, for on the 2nd February is the Feast of the Purification, otherwise called Candlemas Day. This feast is said to have originated with the Romans, who prayed to Februa, the mother of Mars, that she would influence her son in their favour. And upon the night of the second day of February they went about the city of Rome, with torches and candles burning in honour of Februa, from which circumstance the day was called Candlemas Day. Pope Sergius, seeing that Christians took part in the ceremony, "thought to undo this foul use and custom, and turn it unto God's worship and our Lady's, and gave commandment that all Christian people should come to church and offer up a candle brannyng, in the worship that they did to this woman Februa, and do worship to our Lady and to her Sonne our Lord Jesus Christ. So that now this Feast is solemnly hallowed thorewe all Christendome."

The blessing of candles is an important

ceremony of the day. In the Roman calendar we find that

Torches are consecrated,
Torches are given away for many days.

Dunstan's Concord of Monastic Rules directs that the monks shall go in surplices to church for candles, which shall be consecrated, sprinkled with holy water, and censed by the abbot. After this a procession is to be formed, Thurs and Mass celebrated, and the candles, after the offering, be offered to the priest. And in the Doctrine of the Masse Books there is an office for the hallowing of candles on Candlemas Day. Naogeorgus, in George's paraphrase, gives the following account of the festival:

Then comes the Day wherein the Virgin offered Christ
unto

The Father Child, as Moyses law commanded him
to do.

Then numbers great of Tapers large, both men and
women beare

To Church, being halowed there with pomp, and
dreadful words to heare.

This done, eche man his Candell lightes where chiefest
somewhat bee

Whose Taper greatest may be seene, and fortunate to
bee;

Whose Candell burneth cleare and bright, a wondrous
force and might

Doth in these Candels lie, which if at any time they
light,

They sure beleve that neyther storme or tempest dare
abide,

Nor thunder in the skies be heard, or any Devil's
spite,

Nor fearful sprites that walke by night, nor hurts of
froste or hails.

Scot, in his Discoverie, says that "men

are preserved from witchcraft by

candles hallowed on Candlemas Day."

Stowe tells us that on Candlemas Day,

1547-8, "the bearing of candles in the

church was left off throughout the whole citie

of London." Bishop Cosens reintroduced

the discarded Roman ceremony into the

cathedral of the Reformed Church at

Durham in 1627, as appears from Smart's

Vanitie and Downefall of Superstitious

Popish Ceremonies. The County Almanack

for 1676, under February, has the following:

Foul weather is no news; hail, rain, and snow

Are now expected, and esteems'd no wee;

Nay, 'tis an emen bad, the yeomen say,

If Phoebus shows his face the second day.

Which is but another version of the

proverb:

If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,

Winter will have another sight;

If on Candlemas Day it be shower and rain,

Winter is gone, and will not come again.

A MS. of the time of Henry the Seventh

gives us an insight into the customs of

the court in those days: "As ffor Candilmasse Day: Item, on Candilmasse Day the chambrelayn or a baron may bere the kyng's tapere, goinge on the king's right hand againste the swerd goinge in p'cession."

Candles as timekeepers were used by King Alfred the Great, according to the well-known account in most histories, which is noticed by so good an authority as Brand. That different makes existed even in those early times must appear from the following lines, taken from a Boke of Curtasye of the fifteenth century:

Now speke I wylle a lyttalle while
Of the chandeler withouten gyle.

Of wax these candels alle that brennen,
And morder of wax, that I well kenne.

In chambur no lyght ther shall be brent,
Bet of wax, thereto yf ye take tent.
In halle at seper schalle caddels brenne
Of Parys, therein that alle men kenne.

With regard to the Paris candles referred to, Elisha Cole states that Paris Garden—the house of Robert de Paris—was made a receptacle for butchers by Richard the Second; and he suggests that Paris candles were those made at Paris Garden from the tallow deposited there. Of the price of candles at that time an idea may be formed from the following entry in the Wardrobe Accounts of Edward the Fourth, anno 1480: "William Whyte, tallough chaundeller, for iij dozen and ix lb' of his candell' for to light when the king's highness and goode grace on a nyght come unto his said grete wardrobe, and at other divers tymes—price of every lb' jd. q' iijs. viijd. q'."

A writer in Notes and Queries assumes that in 1561 candle-making was not a separate business, from the lines in Tasser's Points of Huswifry:

Provide for thy tallow, ere frost cometh in,
And make thine own candle ere winter begin.

But this would hardly prove the assumption to be correct. Candles made at home are still in common use in the country. The writer has a distinct recollection of seeing them made in his own home, and the mould into which the tallow was put was only recently lost during a transfer of the lares and penates.

The customs and superstitions connected with candles are extremely numerous. A letter in The Times of 25th March, 1873, relates to sales "by inch of candle:" "when the bidding is opened a small candle—similar to a vesta—is lighted; at each bid a new one is lighted, and if no

new bid is given before it goes out a second, and on that going out without a bid a third candle is lighted. The last bidder at the time the third candle goes out is declared the purchaser." In Pepys' Diary, under the date, 6th November, 1660, we read: "To our office where we met all for the sale of two ships by an inch of candle—the first time that I ever saw any of this kind—where I observed how they do invite one another, and at last how they all do cry, and we have much to do to tell who did cry last." The word cry used here is evidently the same as our modern word "bid." The custom, like many another, has not wholly died out in England, as the following from a Bristol paper of the 29th March, 1873, proves: "The practice of letting by inch of candle still prevails in the county of Dorset. At the annual letting of the parish meadow at Broadway, near Weymouth, which occurred a few weeks ago, an inch of candle was placed on a piece of wood nine inches square, and lighted by one of the parish officers. The biddings were taken down by one of the parish officers, and the chance of taking the meadow was open to all while the candle was burning. The last bidder before the candle went out was the incoming tenant. This year the candle was extinguished suddenly."

Among the customs need at death is that sometimes practised of putting a plate of salt and a candle upon the corpse, and Moresin conjectures that the latter "was an Egyptian hieroglyphic for life, meant to express here the ardent desire of having the life of the deceased prolonged." Among modern Jews it is customary, according to Levi, to set a light at the head of a dead person, after the corpse has been laid out; and among Roman and Anglo-Catholics the same custom, it is almost superfluous to add, is practised. In the time of Henry the Eighth, says Hazlitt, quoting from Scogin's Jests, it was the custom to set two burning candles over the dead body. Among the Welsh it is the practice, when a person dies, to hold a wyl nôs, or watching-night, the evening of the day previous to the interment; and Pennant says the friends and neighbours come, "each bringing with him some small present of bread, meat, drink—if the family be something poor—but more especially candles, whatever the family be." These are, doubtless, intended for purposes of light while the wyl nôs lasts.

The phenomena known as corpse-candles are, according to Grose, very common in the counties of Cardigan, Caermarthen, and Pembroke, and also in some other parts of Wales. "If a little candle is seen, of a pale bluish colour, then follows the corpse, either of an abortive or some infant; if a large one, then the corpse of someone come to age. If there be seen two, three, or more of different sizes, some big, some small, then shall so many corpses pass together, and of such ages or degrees. If two candles come from different places, and be seen to meet, the corpses will do the same; and if any of these candles be seen to turn aside through some by-path leading to the church, the following corpse will be found to take exactly the same way. Sometimes these candles point out the places where persons shall sicken and die." A corpse candle, or canwyll corph, as it is called in the vernacular, is said to appear in the diocese of St. David's when a person is about to die, and to pursue the same path from the house to the churchyard which the funeral afterwards takes.

Candle omens are numerous and various. Some are almost too well known to need mention, while a knowledge of others is not so general. "A collection of tallow," says Grose, "rising up against the wick of a candle, is styled a winding-sheet, and deemed an omen of death in the family." The same writer tells us that a spark at the candle denotes that the person opposite to it will shortly receive a letter. To find to whom the letter is to come, according to another popular superstition, the candlestick should be struck on the table, and whoever the spark falls opposite will receive the letter. If it falls after one knock, it comes the next day; if after two, the second day, and so on. A kind of fungus in the candle predicts the visit of a stranger from that part of the country nearest the object. Upon this that pedantic writer, Sir Thomas Browne, observes: "The fungous parcels about the wicks of candles only indicate a moist and pluvius air, which hinders the avolation of the light and favillous particles, whereupon they settle upon the snast. That candles and lights burn blue and dim at the apparition of spirits, may be true, if the ambient air be full of sulphureous spirits, as it happens often in mines." Candles when they burn blue are a sign of a spirit in the house or not far from it, says Melton in his *Astrologaster*.

And Hero says to her lover in Ovid *Travestie*:

For last night late, to tell you true,
My candel as I sate burnt blew,
Which put poor me in horrid fright,
And expectation of black spright,
With sawcer eyes, and horns, and tail.

And the following beautiful lines, from the Knight of the Burning Pestle, show the significance of bluish burning candles:

Come you whose loves are dead,
And whiles I sing,
Weep and wring,
Every hand, and every head
Bind with cypress and sad yew;
Ribands black, and candles blue,
For him that was of men most true.

A candle burning blue seems, however, to be, besides, a sign of frost:

CONSTABLE. My watch is set, charge given, and all in peace,
But by the burning of the candle blew,
Which I by chance espied through the
lanthorne,
And by the dropping of the Beadle's
nose,
I smell a frost—

Candles are said to be difficult to light when there is an approach of wet weather; and the same reason will cause their wicks to swell and emit small excrescences. A person who burns three candles accidentally, and not by intention, is supposed to secure for himself the office of sheriff before the expiration of the year. The amiable Vicar of Wakefield, referring to his daughters' waking dreams, says: "The girls have their omens too; they saw rings in the candle." A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1795, states that the Irish, when they put out a candle, say: "May the Lord renew or send us the light of heaven." George Herbert also refers to the saying in his *Country Parson*. The Venetians have a bit of folk-lore, which reads: "On the wedding-night leave the candle burning, as the one who puts it out will die first."

Candles appear to have been a necessary part of Jane Shore's act of penance; for we read that she was condemned to walk barefooted through the streets of the city, and to do penance in St. Paul's church in a white sheet, with a wax taper in her hand.

GEORGIE'S WOOPER.

A STORY IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V.

MEANWHILE, this was what had happened on the shore. From the first, Douglas Ainsleigh had noticed a strange hesitation

in Captain Hammond's way of speaking, and as they sauntered slowly down the pathway to the sea, it seemed to increase. He appeared conscious of this difficulty, and to be struggling against it; but as they came to a low sea-wall at the upper part of the beach, Captain Hammond said to his companion :

"I think I'll rest a little here, Ainsleigh. It's odd how tired I get, and yet I thought a quiet stroll with you would do me good. I'm hardly in trim to face the banker's wife, you see," he added, with a quiet smile.

So they sat them down and listened to the "lap-lap" of the waves upon the shore, and watched the sea lying rippling in the sunlight.

Suddenly Captain Hammond drew a long breath, and put out his hand as if seeking some stay and support; and Douglas, startled by his pallor, sprang to his feet in alarm.

"I fear you are ill," he said. "Let me run to the house and fetch some brandy."

"No, no," he answered, "don't go away; I shall be all right directly. I'm tired, you know, and want rest—rest, nothing else."

His thoughts seemed to have wandered far away from the scene about him, and from his troubled companion. He leaned his arms upon his knees, and rested his weary head upon his hand, and still that grey pallor was round his mouth and eyes; and as he spoke, something seemed to impede the utterance of his words: "Anxious letters those; I wonder what will come of it! What will come of it?"

Douglas was going to suggest that he should hurry to the nearest fisherman's cottage, only some hundred yards distant, and despatch a messenger for Georgie; but Captain Hammond became violently agitated on seeing him look away toward the town, as if, divining his intention, he would fain frustrate it.

"Don't go," he said, grasping his companion's arm with a trembling hand. "Don't tell Georgie! don't break my darling's heart! It'll all come right yet, you know;" and here he laughed to himself, like a child amused at some quaint fancy of its own, and repeated the words over and over again: "All come right—all come right!"

"Why, what would the little love-birds do?" he went on, looking up piteously

into Douglas Ainsleigh's face. "Poor things! poor things! But it'll all come right. And the berries are getting red for Christmas. We'll have a fine time then, won't we?" and he peered curiously into his companion's face.

"Do you think you could walk home, with my arm to help you, you know?" asked Douglas, anxiously. But he shook his head.

"No, no; not yet. Did you ever feel the ground uncertain to your feet? Did you ever see the floor, and yet not be able to touch it? I did yesterday; but don't tell Georgie. It's all want of rest, you know—want of rest. Did you ever lie awake all night long? I don't mean for an hour or two, but whole nights, and all night long—all the time it's so dark you can't see anything; and then watch the least little bit of light steal in—the early light that wakes up some of the first flowers, you know; and all the time a voice saying in your ears: 'What will they do? what will they do?' It kept on saying that, and never once stopped. But don't tell Georgie; she'd be so vexed with the voice, and she couldn't stop it."

"I fear," said Douglas, hardly so firmly as he could have wished, "I fear you are in some great anxiety, Captain Hammond. Don't you think I could help you, if you told me all about it?"

"All about what?" he asked sharply. "Who said I was in trouble? Who told you that? It'll come all right—all right in time. Harper says so—and he ought to know. But it is all this waiting—oh my God!" and he raised his weary eyes to the heaven whence we all look for aid in time of trouble.

"He must be got home," said Douglas to himself, more and more alarmed. "Listen to me, Captain Hammond; you must stay here—while I— Do you hear me?" he added, distressed, as he saw the sick man's mind had wandered away again.

As he stood there, silent in his perplexity, the one thought in Douglas Ainsleigh's heart was the thought of her—of Georgie—and what he should do to break this gently to her.

At that moment he saw a tall figure emerge from one of the fisher dwellings. Surely never was sight more welcome. In a moment he had rushed across the sand and low-lying rocks, and was at Dr. Babbiecomb's side, and in a

few hurried words trying to make him understand the state of matters.

"Life and death! what busy things they are!" said the doctor, as he and Douglas walked quickly toward the motionless figure seated on the wall. "I have just come from the birth of a fresh atom of humanity——"

"You cannot possibly tell if there is any cause for fear in Captain Hammond's case yet," interrupted his companion, as a quick shudder passed over him, thinking what someone would feel, if she could hear the doctor's words.

Dr. Babbiecomb looked sharply at him, for Douglas Ainsleigh was a man whose courtesy, alike to rich and poor, was a proverb in Sheeling.

However, when the two men reached Captain Hammond, the doctor had something else to think of than anyone's manners, abrupt or otherwise. One glance at the sick man's face was enough to show his practised eye the serious nature of the case.

"We must get him home as quickly as possible," he said, hurriedly, to Douglas. "I will stay here while you go to the fisher's cottage I just came out of, and tell the man to go at once to The Salmon-tree Arms, and bring a carriage down here by the roadway. Then I think you had better go and prepare Miss Hammond for— for our coming, you know; and tell her to have his room ready."

All this time, Captain Hammond took no notice of his two companions. He still leaned his head upon his hand and looked out seaward, while now and again a faint smile passed over his face.

Douglas lost no time in setting off upon his errand; and having seen the willing fisherman tear off at his utmost speed to fulfil the doctor's order, he hurried toward Beach House, and, as we have already seen, met Georgie at the garden-gate—met her waiting and watching for one whom she might never wait and watch for again—met her with her eyes full of light and joy and love, and then saw the light die away, and a white, terror-stricken face look up into his.

Oh, it was hard for him to be the one to drive that gentle light away!

In a few plain, straightforward sentences he told her that her father was ill—very ill—he feared seriously so; that Dr.

Babbiecomb was with him, and was bringing him home.

Now, warm, impulsive Irish natures are not always given to much calmness and self-command, and Douglas had been prepared for the girl breaking down and shedding tears at his news; but in this he was mistaken: the hands he held grew cold as death, the mouth quivered pitiously for a moment; she drew a long, deep breath, and then Georgie was ready for action.

"I will go and see that his room is ready, and tell Nurse Hughes to keep the little ones in the nursery; and will you watch, Captain Ainsleigh, and let me know when the carriage is coming up the hill?"

He bowed his head in token of assent, but without speaking. Somehow words did not come easily to him just then, and he passed through the house, and out into High Street—where, happily, Mrs. Robinson did not see him, or she would have worked herself up into a perfect frenzy of anxiety as to what he could possibly be about.

Very shortly came the noise of wheels, and there was no need to call Georgie, for her straining ears had caught the sound, and it was she who opened the carriage door, and on her arm the stricken man leaned, as he stepped on the threshold which he was never to cross again until others bore him on their shoulders.

Georgie smiled as she looked in his face, and said, without a tremor in her voice:

"I'm so glad you've come home, dear; you walked too far."

"Yes, yes," he said, his eyes growing to her face, as if they had found some source of light and comfort which he had lost for awhile; "I walked too far. I want not—rest, my darling."

Then they made Georgie walk up the stairs before him, turning toward him, as the two men supported his feeble, dragging steps, and murmuring many a word of fond encouragement.

At last his room was gained, and Douglas saw the girl draw a laboured breath of relief, like one who lays down a weary burden.

When Captain Hammond was resting on the couch by the window, Douglas went up to his side to say good-bye, promising to call and see him early on the following day; and the poor man looked gratefully up at him, and said,

glancing round warily to make sure his daughter was not present:

"You didn't tell Georgie, I know; because she smiled when she met me. I'm glad you didn't tell her—about the voice, I mean; for it will all come right—all come right."

Douglas turned away; and if something blurred his sight as he did so, who shall call him unmanly, soldier though he was?

At the foot of the stairs he met Georgie, and carried away with him the picture of two sorrow-laden eyes, looking up at him through such a cloud of pain as hid away the love-light, of which, of late, he had so fondly watched the dawning. Yes, for Georgie the world now held but one thought—the bitter dread that she and her father, they who had walked so closely hand-in-hand, were about to be sundered by the chill messenger whose shadow seemed already fallen upon her life.

"My dear Douglas!" cried Mrs. Ainsleigh, her rich dress making a soft rustle on the terrace floor as she came forward to meet her son, "how late you are! Why, lunch has been waiting an hour; and I hardly knew if I ought to send Mason after you with this. It came just after you left, thanks to our country post which seems to recognise no times or seasons."

She held up to him a long official-looking envelope, bearing the ominous words, "On her Majesty's Service."

Now, we all know the sort of communications such missives generally contain; at least all of us who "have taken the shilling," and vowed to serve our Queen and country.

"On her Majesty's Service." You are ordered to India, Jamaica, or the West Coast of Africa, and must hold yourself in readiness to embark at the shortest notice. You furnished a house some few months ago, and settled down, as you thought, to two or three years of home service. It is a bright, sunny day, and your wife sits chatting with a friend at the open window; outside, the birds are singing gaily, and a small person, aged four years, is trundling a miniature wheelbarrow, and shouting with delight at the performance. You think, with a sickening pang, the like of which you have never felt since you were a small boy, and an order was issued

for a visit to the family dentist, that for young people of four years the salubrious climate whither you are bound is not to be thought of. Your wife looks round and says, "What is it, dear?" and you at once sacrifice your veracity, say, "Nothing," and cram the long blue messenger of evil into your pocket. You will tell her when you and she are alone, and you can kiss away the tears that you know will dim the eyes that have yet to give you their first unloving look. So you stroll out into the garden and watch the little one playing, and, to tell the truth, you don't feel particularly loyal just then.

"On her Majesty's Service." The authorities find you have been paid ten-pence three farthings over and above your lodging allowance for the quarter ending September the 30th, and you are requested to refund the same, with five per cent. interest since date of payment, with the least possible delay. You make some muttered comment on the Government, in which the word "cheese-paring" is distinctly audible.

"On her Majesty's Service." You are requested to give your reasons in writing why you were five and three-quarter minutes late on parade on the august occasion of General Sir Bangus Fitz-Noodle, K.C.B., holding his inspection of the regiment to which you have the honour to belong; and also explain why a certain dog, reported to be your property, and answering to the name of Timothy, sat up on end on the same important occasion, and barked, as Sir Bangus FitzNoodle rode along the line, accompanied by his distinguished staff.

Such pleasant topics as the above generally form the subject of these long blue-enveloped letters, and therefore we can hardly expect that Douglas Ainsleigh shall be peculiarly fortunate in this particular missive.

As he reads it his face changes, and, ever answering to and sympathising with his moods, she goes close up to him, and slips her hand through his arm.

"What is it, my dear?" says the sympathetic voice.

"It is this, mother," he says; "I must rejoin at once. Carstairs, who was commanding my battery, is taken suddenly ill, and our brigade is ordered to Woolwich."

There is that in his face that holds his mother silent. She knows not that Georgie

is in dire distress, and that to leave her in her trouble is to Douglas Ainsleigh like tearing the heart out of his breast!

PENAL SERVITUDE*—[NOTE].—A correspondent from St. Louis, Missouri, United States, writes as follows: "The April number of your magazine has just arrived here, and my attention has been called to the following on page 326, in article on Penal Servitude. 'Although the labour of convicts is to some extent utilised, we are still far behind the United States in this particular.' It is unnecessary to state that, at the present time in this country, there is considerable trouble about the labour question, and that there has been a strong protest issued from the working-men's party, an increasing and powerful political organisation, against the employment of convict labour, and to people who are not acquainted with the facts, this may seem to be somewhat unreasonable; but when we come to examine into the matter, the complaint assumes a different character altogether. A shoemaker with whom I am intimately acquainted, has, until lately, for the last few months, been employed as foreman to superintend shoemaking by convict labour in the State prison here, and he has supplied me with the following facts. The labour of the convicts is let to contractors. These contractors pay a mere nominal sum for each prisoner to the Government; so small a sum, indeed, that neither the interest on the cost of the prisons, nor even the expense of the prisoners themselves, can be paid out of it, and, consequently, the deficit has to be made up from the taxes which good citizens, of which the working-men are the largest proportion, have to pay. This injustice is bad enough, but it would be trivial if it ended here! Compared with what it really is, it is monstrous. The contractor in question pays for each prisoner forty cents a day, or about one shilling and eightpence; and as the convict's labour is worth from five to six times that amount, the contractor is coining money. In this way the contractor is able to come into ruinous competition with the honest shoemaker, and undersell him in the market. Some of the prisoners are naturally slow, but woe-betide the convict who does not get through a certain amount of work. My friend told me that, under threat of the lash, or even of more cruel punishment, one man, who said at first he could not do his allotted task, found that even he, slow as he was, could, under such pressure, satisfy the cupidity of the contractor. It is therefore not difficult to imagine why the working-men of the United States are so strongly opposed to convict labour as at present utilised in the United States. They cannot compete with it, for under its present system, which is not confined to shoemaking, but to a host of other trades, where in some cases the contractors pay as low as ten cents per day, or fivepence, for each prisoner, the working-men of the United States are becoming paupers. If, as stated in the accompanying petition, the fair amount was charged for the work done in prisons, and the money used to pay the expenses, the complaint would not be reasonable; but as the money paid by the contractor does not, as I said before, anything like pay expenses, the honest working-man outside may be said to be robbed by the contractor with the connivance of the State, and taxed by the State to supplement the expense of prison and prisoners, while the profit goes into the pocket of the contractor. I have said cruel punish-

ment is used, so cruel that it ended in murder in the Illinois State Prison at Joliet. A man was drowned in the punishment tank, and another, a negro, named Read, was gagged to death lately at the same place. The former murder was hushed up, for I suppose the convict had no friends outside.

"The following petition, which was signed by thousands, will explain itself:

"To the House of Representatives of the State of Missouri.

"We, the undersigned citizens of the State of Missouri, believing that the law of our State, allowing private individuals to contract for prison labour to be used for the profit of said contracting parties, is inimical to the welfare of the industrial classes of the State; as the product of such labour, being so cheaply attained, is brought upon the market for sale at figures much lower than goods can be sold for that are manufactured by free labour, not only reducing the already too low wages of free operatives, but causing much inconvenience, and at times great loss to our merchants and manufacturers, by breaking down the marketable value of such wares. Whereas, it is not the intention of the undersigned to advise non-employment of convict labour, but only to take such steps as will prevent them from injuring the free labour of the State; therefore we respectfully suggest the justness of allowing convict labour the regular rate of wages as paid for free labour, first deducting State expenses of their keep; the remainder to be paid to the families of married convicts, to the widowed mothers, or unprovided-for minor brothers and sisters of those who are orphaned, or, if none depending upon them for natural support, to be funded to their credit, and paid them at the expiration of their term of imprisonment; thereby giving them a fair opportunity to again reinstate themselves as orderly and respectable citizens of the State.

"Believing that the within petition conforms to the strictest principles of justice, we respectfully submit it to your honourable body for incorporation in the laws of the State."

"The above passed the House of Representatives, but failed to become law, as it was vetoed by the governor.

"I have just been informed that a saddler here has dismissed seventy workmen, and that he now employs one hundred convicts at a few cents a day. In cigar-making and other trades it is the same. You do not want such a state of affairs in Great Britain."

On Monday, the 1st of July, will be published the

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No. 499. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1878.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LX. THE LAST OF THE BARONESS.

At this time, Dr. Olivia Q. Fleabody had become quite an institution in London. She had obtained full, though by no means undisputed, possession of the great hall in Marylebone Road, and was undoubtedly for the moment the Queen of the Disabilities. She lectured twice a week to crowded benches. A seat on the platform on these occasions was considered by all high-minded women to be an honour, and the body of the building was always filled by strongly-visaged spinsters and mutinous wives, who twice a week were worked up by Dr. Fleabody to a full belief that a glorious era was at hand in which women would be chosen by constituencies, would wag their heads in courts of law, would buy and sell in Capel Court, and have balances at their bankers'. It was certainly the case that Dr. Fleabody had made proselytes by the hundred, and disturbed the happiness of many fathers of families.

It may easily be conceived that all this was gall and wormwood to the Baroness Banmann. The baroness, on her arrival in London, had anticipated the success which this low-bred American female had achieved. It was not simply the honour of the thing—which was very great and would have been very dear to the baroness—but the American doctor was making a rapid fortune out of the proceeds of the hall. She had on one occasion threatened to strike lecturing, unless she were allowed a certain very large percentage on the sum taken at the doors, and the stewards

and the directors of the Institute had found themselves compelled to give way to her demands. She had consequently lodged herself magnificently at the Langham Hotel, had set up her brougham, in which she always had herself driven to the Institute, and was asked out to dinner three or four times a week; whereas the baroness was in a very poor condition. She had indeed succeeded in getting herself invited to Mr. De Baron's house, and from time to time raised a little money from those who were unfortunate enough to come in her way. But she was sensible of her own degradation, and at the same time quite assured that, as a preacher on woman's rights at large, she could teach lessons infinitely superior to anything that had come from that impudent but imbecile American.

She had undoubtedly received overtures from the directors of the Institute of whom poor Aunt Ju had for the moment been the spokeswoman, and in these overtures it had been intimated to her that the directors would be happy to remunerate her for her trouble, should the money collected at the hall enable them to do so. The baroness believed that enormous sums had been received, and was loud in assuring all her friends that this popularity had, in the first place, been produced by her own exertions. At any rate, she was resolved to seek redress at law, and at last had been advised to proceed conjointly against Aunt Ju, Lady Selina Protest, and the bald-headed old gentleman. The business had now been brought into proper form, and the trial was to take place in March.

All this was the cause of much trouble to poor Mary, and of very great vexation

to Lord George. When the feud was first becoming furious, an enormous advertisement was issued by Dr. Fleabody's friends, in which her cause was advocated and her claims recapitalated. And to this was appended a list of the nobility, gentry, and people of England, who supported the Disabilities generally and her cause in particular. Among these names, which were very numerous, appeared that of Lady George Germain. This might probably have escaped both her notice and her husband's, had not the paper been sent to her, with usual friendly zeal, by old Lady Brabazon. "Oh George," she said, "look here. What right have they to say so? I never patronised anything. I went there once when I came to London first, because Miss Mildmay asked me."

"You should not have gone," said he.

"We have had all that before, and you need not scold me again. There couldn't be any great harm in going to hear a lecture." This occurred just previous to her going down to Manor Cross—that journey which was to be made for so important an object.

Then Lord George did—just what he ought not to have done. He wrote an angry letter to Miss Fleabody, as he called her, complaining bitterly of the insertion of his wife's name. Dr. Fleabody was quite clever enough to make fresh capital out of this. She withdrew the name, explaining that she had been ordered to do so by the lady's husband, and implying that thereby additional evidence was supplied that the Disabilities of Women were absolutely crushing to the sex in England. Mary, when she saw this—and the paper did not reach her till she was at Manor Cross—was violent in her anxiety to write herself, in her own name, and disclaim all disabilities; but her husband by this time had been advised to have nothing further to do with Dr. Fleabody, and Mary was forced to keep her indignation to herself.

But worse than this followed the annoyance of the advertisement. A man came all the way down from London for the purpose of serving Lady George with a subpoena to give evidence at the trial on the part of the baroness. Lord George was up in London at the time, never having entered the house at Manor Cross, or even the park, since his visit to Italy. The consternation of the ladies may be imagined. Poor Mary was certainly not in a condition to go into a court of law, and would be less so on the day fixed for

the trial. And yet this awful document seemed to her and to her sister-in-law to be so imperative as to admit of no escape. It was in vain that Lady Sarah, with considerable circumlocution, endeavoured to explain to the messenger the true state of the case. The man could simply say that he was a messenger, and had now done his work. Looked at in any light, the thing was very terrible. Lord George might probably even yet be able to run away with her to some obscure corner of the Continent in which messengers from the queen's judges would not be able to find her; and she might perhaps bear the journey without injury. But then what would become of a baby—perhaps a Popenjoy—so born? There were many who still thought that the marquis would go before the baby came; and, in that case, the baby would at once be a Popenjoy. What a condition was this for a marchioness to be in at the moment of the birth of her eldest child! "But I don't know anything about the nasty woman!" said Mary, through her tears.

"It is such a pity that you should ever have gone," said Lady Susanna, shaking her head.

"It wasn't wicked to go," said Mary, "and I won't be scolded about it any more. You went to a lecture yourself when you were in town, and they might just as well have sent for you."

Lady Sarah promised her that she should not be scolded, and was very keen in thinking what steps had better be taken. Mary wished to run off to the Deanery at once, but was told that she had better not do so till an answer had come to the letter which was of course written by that day's post to Lord George. There were still ten days to the trial, and twenty days, by computation, to the great event. There were, of course, various letters written to Lord George. Lady Sarah wrote very sensibly, suggesting that he should go to Mr. Stokes, the family lawyer. Lady Susanna was full of the original sin of that unfortunate visit to the Disabilities. She was, however, of opinion that if Mary were concealed in a certain room at Manor Cross, which might, she thought, be sufficiently warmed and ventilated for health, the judges of the Queen's Bench would never be able to find her. The baby in that case would have been born at Manor Cross, and posterity would know nothing about the room. Mary's letter was almost hysterically miserable. She knew nothing

about the horrid people. What did they want her to say? All she had done was to go to a lecture, and to give the wicked woman a guinea. Wouldn't George come and take her away? She wouldn't care where she went. Nothing on earth should make her go up and stand before the judges. It was, she said, very cruel, and she did hope that George would come to her at once. If he didn't come she thought that she should die.

Nothing, of course, was said to the marchioness, but it was found impossible to keep the matter from Mrs. Toff. Mrs. Toff was of opinion that the bit of paper should be burned, and that no further notice should be taken of the matter at all. "If they don't go they has to pay ten pounds," said Mrs. Toff with great authority—Mrs. Toff remembering that a brother of hers, who had "forgotten himself in liquor" at the Brotherton assizes, had been fined ten pounds for not answering to his name as a jurymen. "And then they don't really have to pay it," said Mrs. Toff, who remembered also that the good-natured judge had not at last exacted the penalty. But Lady Sarah could not look at the matter in that light. She was sure that if a witness were really wanted, that witness could not escape by paying a fine.

The next morning there came a heart-rending letter from Aunt Ju. She was very sorry that Lady George should have been so troubled—but then let them think of her trouble, of her misery! She was quite sure that it would kill her—and it would certainly ruin her. That odious baroness had summoned everybody that had ever befriended her. Captain De Baron had been summoned, and the marquis, and Mrs. Montacute Jones. And the whole expense, according to Aunt Ju, would fall upon her; for it seemed to be the opinion of the lawyers that she had hired the baroness. Then she said some very severe things against the Disabilities generally. There was that woman, Fleabody, making a fortune in their hall, and would take none of this expense upon herself. She thought that such things should be left to men, who, after all, were not so mean as women—so, at least, said Aunt Ju.

And then there was new cause for wonderment. Lord Brotherton had been summoned, and would Lord Brotherton come? They all believed that he was dying, and, if so, surely he could not be

made to come. "But is it not horrible," said Lady Susanna, "that people of rank should be made subject to such an annoyance! If anybody can summon anybody, nobody can ever be sure of herself!"

On the next morning Lord George himself came down to Brotherton, and Mary, with a carriage full of precautions, was sent in to the Deanery to meet him. The marchioness discovered that the journey was to be made, and was full of misgivings and full of enquiries. In her present condition, the mother-expectant ought not to be allowed to make any journey at all. The marchioness remembered how Sir Henry had told her, before Popenjoy was born, that all carriage exercise was bad. And why should she go to the Deanery? Who could say whether the dean would let her come away again? What a feather it would be in the dean's cap if the next Popenjoy were born at the Deanery. It was explained to her that in no other way could she see her husband. Then the poor old woman was once more loud in denouncing the misconduct of her youngest son to the head of the family.

Mary made the journey in perfect safety, and then was able to tell her father the whole story. "I never heard of anything so absurd in my life," said the dean.

"I suppose I must go, papa?"

"Not a yard."

"But won't they come and fetch me?"

"Fetch you? No."

"Does it mean nothing?"

"Very little. They won't attempt to examine half the people they have summoned. That baroness probably thinks that she will get money out of you. If the worst comes to the worst, you must send a medical certificate."

"Will that do?"

"Of course it will. When George is here we will get Dr. Loftly, and he will make it straight for us. You need not trouble yourself about it at all. Those women at Manor Cross are old enough to have known better."

Lord George came and was very angry. He quite agreed as to Dr. Loftly, who was sent for, and who did give a certificate, and who took upon himself to assure Lady George that all the judges in the land could not enforce her attendance as long as she had that certificate in her hands. But Lord George was vexed beyond measure that his wife's name should have been called in question, and could not refrain himself from a cross word or two.

"It was so imprudent you going to such a place!"

"Oh George, are we to have that all again?"

"Why shouldn't she have gone?" asked the dean.

"Are you in favour of rights of women?"

"Not particularly—though if there be any rights which they haven't got, I thoroughly wish that they might get them. I certainly don't believe in the Baroness Banmann, nor yet in Dr. Fleabody; but I don't think they could have been wrong in going in good company to hear what a crazy old woman might have to say."

"It was very foolish," said Lord George. "See what has come of it!"

"How could I tell, George? I thought you had promised that you wouldn't scold any more. Nasty fat old woman! I'm sure I didn't want to hear her." Then Lord George went back to town with the medical certificate in his pocket, and Mary, being in her present condition afraid of the authorities, was unable to stay and be happy even for one evening with her father.

During the month the Disabilities created a considerable interest throughout London, of which Dr. Fleabody reaped the full advantage. The baroness was so loud in her clamours that she forced the question of the Disabilities on the public mind generally, and the result was that the world flocked to the Institute. The baroness, as she heard of this, became louder and louder. It was not this that she wanted. Those who wished to sympathise with her should send her money—not go to the hall to hear that loud, imbecile American female! The baroness, when she desired to be-little the doctor, always called her a female. And the baroness, though in truth she was not personally attractive, did contrive to surround herself with supporters, and in these days moved into comfortable lodgings in Wigmore Street. Very few were heard to speak in her favour, but they who contributed to the relief of her necessities were many. It was found to be almost impossible to escape from her without leaving some amount of money in her hands. And then, in a happy hour, she came at last across an old gentleman who did appreciate her and her wrongs. How it was that she got an introduction to Mr. Philogunac Cœlebs was not, I think, ever known. It is not improbable that having heard of his soft heart, his peculiar

propensities, and his wealth, she contrived to introduce herself. It was, however, suddenly understood that Mr. Philogunac Cœlebs, who was a bachelor and very rich, had taken her by the hand, and intended to bear all the expenses of the trial. It was after the general intimation which had been made to the world in this matter that the summons for Lady Mary had been sent down to Manor Cross.

And now in these halcyon days of March the baroness also had her brougham and was to be seen everywhere. How she did work! The attorneys, who had the case in hand, found themselves unable to secure themselves against her. She insisted on seeing the barristers, and absolutely did work her way into the chambers of that discreet junior, Mr. Stuffenruff. She was full of her case, full of her coming triumph. She would teach women like Miss Julia Mildmay and Lady Selina Protest what it was to bamboozle a baroness of the Holy Roman Empire! And as for the American female—

"You'll put her pipe out," suggested Mr. Philogunac Cœlebs, who was not superior to a mild joke.

"Stop her from piping altogether in discontry," said the baroness, who in the midst of her wrath and zeal and labour was superior to all jokes.

Two days before that fixed for the trial there fell a great blow upon those who were interested in the matter—a blow that was heavy on Mr. Cœlebs but heavier still on the attorneys. The baroness had taken herself off, and when enquiries were made, it was found that she was at Madrid. Mr. Snape, one of the lawyers, was the person who first informed Mr. Cœlebs, and did so in a manner which clearly implied that he expected Mr. Cœlebs to pay the bill. Then Mr. Snape encountered a terrible disappointment, and Mr. Cœlebs was driven to confess his own disgrace. He had, he said, never undertaken to pay the costs of the trial, but he had, unfortunately, given the lady a thousand pounds to enable her to pay the expenses herself. Mr. Snape expostulated, and, later on, urged with much persistency, that Mr. Cœlebs had more than once attended in person at the office of Messrs. Snape and Casset. But in this matter the lawyers did not prevail. They had taken their orders from the lady, and must look to the lady for payment. They who best knew Mr. Philogunac Cœlebs thought that he had escaped cheaply, as there had

been many fears that he should make the baroness altogether his own.

"I am so glad she has gone," said Mary, when she heard the story. "I should never have felt safe while that woman was in the country. I'm quite sure of one thing. I'll never have anything more to do with disabilities. George need not be afraid about that."

A TALK ABOUT PLACE-NAMES.

"NORMAN, and Saxon, and Dane are we;" that, and something more. If the blood of the old Vikings sometimes runs riot in our British veins, it is sobered, probably, by a few drops of Flemish blood. If Saxon and Danish elements in our composition have made us a hardy, hard-headed, practical, and go-ahead race, the Celtic ichor that stirs our pulses, has afforded us a share of ideality, and has lent us a poetic element. The truth is, that we are not, like the Jew or the Red Indian, a pure race, but, on the contrary, we combine the virtues and the vices of many races. History tells us this; but if we had no historic record to that effect, we have internal evidence of our mixed parentage, in the names of the towns, villages, hamlets, and farms that are scattered over the surface of the land. We include "farms," for it is a singular fact, that the large majority of names of farmhouses have been handed down from times previous to the Norman Conquest.

It may be confidently asserted, that all names of places have, or have once had, a meaning. The Emperor Constantine founded a new city on the site of ancient Byzantium, and commemorates the achievement by calling it, after himself, Constantinople. Some rude sailors make for themselves a temporary shelter on a newly-discovered coast, by stretching an old topsail over poles, and they call the place, in memory of the incident, "Old Topsail Inlet;" a name to be found on the North American coast, latitude thirty-four degrees forty minutes north, longitude seventy-seven degrees west. Wide as is the difference between these two examples, they at least have this in common, that each has a definite meaning.

Let us suppose a ship's crew to discover an island of large dimensions, and that in due time it is colonised by Englishmen. It is, we will suppose, previously inhabited

by a native race, having here and there towns or villages of their own. If we conjecture how the various settlements made by the colonists would be named, we shall obtain a useful clue to the solution of place-names of ancient date. Probably, some of the names would be records of incidents, or would mark the period at which the colonisation, or the original discovery, took place. Loyalty might induce the discoverers to call the island "Albert Edward's Land," or some district in it "Alexandra." This would mark the epoch of its discovery or settlement. Perhaps, near some extremity of the island, the discoverers are unable to land, are baffled and compelled to sail to another part of the coast, and they record their vexation by calling it "Cape Disappointment;" just as we have Disappointment Island, to the south of New Zealand, and Mount Disappointment, in the south of Australia, recording the baffled hopes of explorers. Or the bay from which the mariners took their departure on the homeward voyage, they might call "Farewell Bay." Similarly, again, in New Zealand and elsewhere we find Cape Farewell. All names of this class we will, for the sake of distinctness, call "Historical" names. Another name-source would be in some natural feature, or the peculiar position of some village site. For instance, a stretch of beach covered with white sand, might be called, as in an instance recorded by Herodotus, "The White Strand." A village on a hill summit commanding a fine prospect, might be called Mount Pleasant. Another placed at the foot of a precipice, might be named "Cliff-foot," or "The Rocks," or "Rock-foot," or the like. A property on a sandy soil might be called, like a village in Derbyshire, Sandyaere, or Sandiacre. Such names as this we will call "Descriptive." In other cases, no doubt the names previously assigned by the natives would be retained, and would record to all future generations, that a race existed on that island previous to the English colonisation. We have now noticed three sources of place-names; and there yet remain two more, which we may call "Home" names and "Personal" names. The recollection of the dear old homes in England would be sure to cause the colonists to reproduce their names in the land of their adoption. We might have villages called Westminster, Waterford, Bournemouth, or what not, applied altogether irrelevantly, and without any sense of fitness, but simply as

repetitions of names beloved for the sake of the old folks at home.

As for personal names, these would be sure to abound. The Englishman likes to look at his own name, even if it be but carved upon a bench in the park. How much more gratifying, then, to see a village, the home of future generations, growing up and bearing one's own name. Jackson makes a clearing in the forest and builds himself a hut (progenitor of a fine stone-built town of the future), and names it "Jackson's Clearing," "Jacksonstown," "Jacksonville," or plain "Jackson."

These five indicated sources, the names "Historical," "Descriptive," "Native," "Home," and "Personal," might be expected to supply the nomenclature of the newly-settled region. If, however, the natives were altogether nomadic, having no villages, there would, of course, be no village names. The native names would, in such a case, be confined solely to the natural features of the country.

If now we turn from theory to fact, we may observe how this theory is borne out in practice, by investigating the place-names of some country, the history of whose nomenclature we have on record. This opportunity presents itself in the case of the Holy Land, as settled by the Israelites. The names, together with the meaning of those names, are recorded for our use, and afford an excellent case in point. We will therefore take our name-sources in order, and see whether we can find examples of them in the Holy Land, as recorded in Scripture.

First, historical names. Such a word we have in Bethel, "The House of God," recording the heavenly vision beheld by Jacob; in Allon-Bachuth, "The Oak of Weeping," given to the place where Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried; in Abel-Mizraim, "The Mourning of the Egyptians," where Jacob was buried; in Meribah, "chiding," or "strife," where the Children of Israel contended with Moses. Of descriptive names, we find Tamar, "The City of Palm-trees;" Sharon, "a plain," or "field;" Zebul, "a habitation;" Rehob, "space," or "extent." Of native names, or names given by the aborigines before the Hebrew conquest, we have Luz, Jebus (afterwards Jerusalem), and others; but in most cases it is difficult to determine with certainty which of the names date back to the Canaanite times. Of home names, from the nature of the case, we cannot expect to find instances,

as the nation which conquered and occupied the land had never possessed a home. In the early period of their history they had been nomadic, never owning any soil; and in their later history they had been strangers in a strange land, living in a degraded servitude, and little likely to wish to reproduce place-names which would remind them of the days of their bondage and ignominy. Of personal names, however, we have many instances. "Jacob's well," "The City of David," and "Dan," which was the name both of a tribe and a city, as well as of the patriarch from whom they were named.

To turn from ancient to modern history, let us examine the place-names of some country, the settlement of which is within recent memory.

First, we will take the United States. Of historical names we have many, as Georgia, named after one of our Royal Georges; Virginia, after the Virgin Queen of England; and Maryland, after Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles the First. And of names which are historical in that more limited sense which we have indicated, we find such names as Philadelphia (the city of "brotherly love") and Concord; recording the aspirations of those who fled from England, for conscience' sake. Of descriptive names we have abundance. We find Long Island, Cape Cod, Bloody Ground, Sandy Creek, Mount Pleasant, and a multitude of others. Of native names, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, Iowa, Minnesota, and many no less euphonic, at once recur to the mind. But after all, the home names and personal names are by far the most frequent. Places named London and York occur by the dozen, and Boston, Plymouth, Darlington, Oxford, Whitby, and very many more, carry the thoughts back across to the old home in England, and prove, even if we had not the written record, that the race who have mainly colonised the immense tract now known as the United States, sailed from the shores of the British Isles. The multitude of personal names, Washington, Greensborough, Wadesborough, Walterboro, Charlotte, &c., confirm this, if confirmation were needed.

If, turning from the United States, we investigate the names of places in the colonies of the British Empire, we shall find them derivable from similar sources, only in different proportions. In India, the vast majority of place-names will be found to be of native origin. In Australia, on the contrary, by far the larger number

will be seen to be of English, or at any rate of British origin. And the reason of this is twofold. In the first place the difference between Indian and Australian names is due to the fact that the Indian natives, previous to the British conquest of their country, were possessed of a large amount of civilisation. They had, in every direction, villages and towns of their own, which naturally retain the native names; whereas the natives of Australia were of the lowest type of barbarians, having no permanent groups of dwellings, and consequently no village names. Still, however, native Australian names do, in a great measure, cling to the natural features of the land, to the rivers and lakes more especially. But a second reason why the nomenclature of India differs so widely from that of Australia, is that we have never in any true sense colonised India. In Australia we are true colonists; in India we are not so. In Australia we have settled down, bag and baggage. Our emigrants have made it their home and the home of their children; whilst in India, on the contrary, every Briton looks to England, Scotland, or Ireland, as his home, to which he hopes eventually to return. The British occupation of India is analogous to the Roman occupation of England, and not widely different from that of the Normans. And when we come to trace the names of places in England to their founders, we shall see that, for reasons similar to those which account for the paucity of English place-names in India, the places which have Roman or Norman names are few and far between.

To enter into any general investigation of English place-names, would be too large an undertaking for the space at our disposal. We may, however, remind the reader that the Celtic race, which we regard as aboriginal in our island—since we have no historical record of any antecedent race—still retains among us its primitive speech. The Gaelic-speaking races of Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Highlands of Scotland, and Wales, are the lineal descendants of those who succumbed to the superior discipline and weapons of the Romans. They do not, it is true, speak the same language: but the affinities between, for instance, the Welsh language and that spoken by the Scottish Highlanders, are very close and obvious. Thus "Pen" signified a hill in Wales, "Ben" in Scotland. "Aber" is the mouth of a river in both languages: we have Aberyst-

with and Abergwilli in Wales; Aberdeen and Abergelly in Scotland. And this Gaelic tongue affords the only clue we possess to the meanings of many of our mountain names, and most of our river names, throughout the island. We propose, as more within our compass than any general investigation of English names, to take a small specimen district, and to examine that with some degree of care; and we have chosen for this purpose a section of central Yorkshire, viz. that around Ripon, where we shall find traces of all the nations which from time to time have occupied our land. We shall, however, find them in very different proportions. Saxon names are largely predominant, then come in order Danish, Norse (or Norwegian), Norman, Roman, and Celtic (or British).

Had the British civilisation been of a more advanced type, had they dwelt for the most part in settled abodes, there can be no doubt that the names they gave to their villages would have been—at least, in some instances—handed down. But presumably the Celts, more especially in the North, had but little acquaintance with domestic architecture, and lived in groups of temporary huts, leading a more or less nomadic life.

Besides this, the nature of the Saxon invasion was such as was likely to obliterate the few village names that existed; for their inroads were wars not merely of subjugation, but of extermination. They swept the Celtic population before them, and made a complete clearance. It is, therefore, only in the names of natural features, chiefly of hills and rivers, that we may expect to find traces of those who, so far as our knowledge goes, were the aborigines of this island. It is not unlikely, indeed, that some Celtic names of places may still survive, but so disguised by the form into which they have been moulded by subsequent occupants of the soil, as to be no longer traceable. The writer did, indeed, flatter himself that one Celtic village name survived in Wharfedale. Benrhydding, the name given to a sanatorium near Ilkley, is purely Celtic in form. That "Ben" means hill is very generally known, whilst "Rhydding" is Welsh for a ford. What could be more clear or more satisfactory? If there were any ground of suspicion it would be in the fact that the name was too correct—that it exhibited none of that abrasion which time ought to have effected in a

name, the original meaning of which had long ceased to be understood. But then there was the hill on which the village stands; and there, at its foot, the shallow river Wharfe—fordable still. The temptation to accept the Celtic origin of the word was therefore irresistible.

But, alas, a friend, who knew the place, and had known it for many years, upset the whole theory by a simple statement of facts. A "ridding" is, it seems, in that district, a name given to a field. A small farmer, whose christian-name was Benjamin, owned there a field or "ridding," which came to be spoken of as "Ben's ridding," and when the plot of ground was purchased for the site of a hydro-pathic establishment, the name of the field clung to the new institution. Meantime, some one of the originators—possibly a Welshman—to give an air of dignity to the name, converted it from "Ben's ridding" to "Benrhydding," thereby, whether consciously or unconsciously, laying a cunning trap for future onomatologists. This instance affords a warning of the need there is for caution—a caution for the most part too little exercised—in the interpreting of place-names.

To return, however, to Ripon and its surroundings, we may as well dispose at once of the Celtic, Roman, and Norman names; and the others—the Norse, Danish, and Saxon, which are so much more abundant, we will discuss as they occur. To find Celtic names we must make a rather wide circuit. At the entrance of Wensleydale, perhaps fifteen or twenty miles from Ripon, we find Pen-hill. The original name, no doubt, was simply "Pen," the head or hill. The Saxons, finding but not understanding the name, called it Pen-hill or Hill-hill. On the northern confines of Yorkshire we have also Penyghent, and the Penine Chain. Of river names we have, near Thirsk, the Wiske, which is scarcely corrupted from the Welsh "Uisge," water; whence we have the name of the limpid spirit whisky. Then from a Welsh root, "Rhe," rapid, we have the Rye, which flows near the beautiful ruins of Rievaulx. It is probable enough that other river names, such as Swale, Ure, Nid, Wharfe, may be of Celtic origin; but if so, they are corrupted so as to be untraceable, at least, with any certainty. As to remains of the Roman conquest, we have so few in the names of the places, as to point pretty clearly to the fact that the Roman occu-

pation was, as before said, not a colonisation, but merely a military occupation. Even the names they did assign have, for the most part, been superseded. Eboracum is now York; Isuricum is now Aldborough. Still, however, we have Catterick, the ancient Catteractonium; and we have to go as far afield as Tadcaster, to find a name marking the site of a Roman camp. One curious relic of Roman occupation we have in the name "street," still popularly given to the great north road running near Ripon, and which coincides, more or less, with the old Roman road. That "street" is the dying echo, as it were, of the Latin "strata," there can be but little doubt.

As to the Norman names, there are a few still surviving in that part of Yorkshire. Richmond speaks for itself. Rievaulx and Jervaulx, the names of two of the beautiful remains of Yorkshire abbeys, are old Norman. Rievaulx signifies the valley of the Rye, the pretty trout stream that runs below the abbey; and Jervaulx is undoubtedly a corruption of Ure-vaux or Ure-valley, for the abbey stands in Uredale. But, for the most part, we find the Norman village names in a compound form, the name of some Norman proprietor being added on to a Saxon or Danish place-name. Thus we have Hutton Bonville, Hutton Conyers, Norton Conyers, Allerton Manleverer, Kirkby Malzeard, and others.

And now we arrive at the Saxon names, which form the staple of the place-names over the whole of the non-Celtic part of both Great Britain and Ireland. In the sample district we have chosen, as elsewhere, the Saxon names pervade the whole. And though, later on, we may have to speak of the limits of the Danish and Norse settlements, it should be understood that these settlements everywhere are mixed up with a Saxon population. The Danish settlement may exclude the Norse, but it does not exclude the Saxon element.

Again, the Norse settlement is almost free from admixture of Danish names, but is freely interspersed with Saxon. Clearly, the Saxon immigration has been by far the most complete colonisation that England has been subjected to. Even where Danish names are most plentiful, they do not exist to the exclusion of an abundant Saxon nomenclature.

These Saxon names we will consider as they occur on the map of that section of Yorkshire, which we somewhat vaguely

indicate as surrounding Ripon, together with the Norse and Danish names with which they are intermingled. Before doing so, we may notice that the present form of many place-names is very different from that which they bore at the Conquest. As a sample of change of spelling may be instanced Borrowby, near Thirsk, spelt in Domesday Book, Bergebi; and of an adjacent village of Knayton, in Domesday Book spelt Keneuetune. Again, the village of Galphay—pronounced Gárfá—near Ripon, is spelt in forty different ways, in existing documents. If we consider how Domesday Book was compiled, viz. by Norman scribes who took down each name according to the sound—for of course the spelling was not then fixed—we may suppose what a bungle they would often make of names which would sound harsh and strange, if not altogether incomprehensible in their ears. All this introduces a certain element of insecurity, in our attempts to explain the meanings of the names of places. Still, without being too dogmatic, we may assume a large proportion of them to be yet capable of explanation.

When we consider the above conditions, we may lay it down as a pretty general rule, that the sound of a place-name should have at least equal weight with the spelling in determining its meaning.

And now, taking a map of central Yorkshire in our hands, we will see what we can gather by way of sample, to show the sort of archæological information to be gained from names of places.

In the first place, we notice that the river Ure, or Yore, in the immediate vicinity of Ripon, takes a more or less southerly course, so that we may for convenience describe the country on each bank as lying to the east and west of it. Turning first to the western bank of the river, we find the very noticeable fact that a number of the village names end in "ley." Thus we have Mickley, Azerley, Stainley, Winksley, North Leys, Grantley, Studley, Sawley. And if we pass over to the adjacent valley of the Nid, we find also Ripley, Darley, Pateley. Then turning our investigation to the eastern side of the Ure, we search miles of country without discovering a single name with this suffix. This surely is curious, and we may conclude that it is not accidental. The explanation is, that the suffix "ley" is a woodland word, supposed to signify the place where cattle "lie," the lying-down place.

The Rev. Isaac Taylor, to whom this article is largely indebted, describes "ley" as signifying a natural opening in a forest. Possibly it signifies an opening either artificial or natural—whether, in American phrase, a "clearing," or an accidental opening in the woodland. Supposing that a man, by the use of his woodman's axe, had made a clearing, we can easily suppose that he or his neighbours would be apt to call it by his name. Thus we might have Brown's, Jones's, or Robinson's Clearing. We need not, then, be surprised if we find the termination "ley" following a personal name. The same remark will equally apply to "field," and to "thwaite;" "field" being a Saxon suffix, signifying a place where trees have been "felled," and "thwaite" being a Norse suffix, also implying an opening in the forest. By the aid of these woodland names we can trace with remarkable accuracy the bounds of the ancient forest; which, in the immediate vicinity of Ripon, we shall find to be almost coincident with the course of the river—the land to the west being old forest land, and that to the east having been open country at the time of the original settlement of the nations by which the place-names were assigned.

The next broad feature of the district we are investigating is the distribution of the various colonies by which it was peopled. Here again the lines of demarcation are traceable in a remarkable manner. As before stated, the Saxon names prevail everywhere. Not so with the Danish and Norse names. Looking at the map, we find along the line of the old north road (Leeming Lane), which runs in a direction parallel with the river Ure, a number of names ending in "by," and in "thorpe"—Langthorpe, Milby, Ellinthorpe, Helperby, Leckby, Kirby Hill, Asenby, Newby, Baldersby, Ainderby, Sinderby, Melmerby, and others. Now these two suffixes, "by" and "thorpe," are distinctively Danish; and we shall find these Danish place-names, intermixed with Saxon names, covering the whole surface of the county from the east coast to the immediate vicinity of Ripon.

The tide of Danish invasion seems to have swept over the land from the east, and to have been abruptly arrested at this point. In fact, the line of demarcation will be found to coincide, very nearly, with the Leeming Lane, the old coaching road to Scotland. Westward from Ripon,

Danish names may be said to be wanting. One or two such names (of places probably settled at a later period, when the mutual hostility between Dane and Saxon had subsided), do not invalidate the broad fact that these Danish names, so general to the eastward, come to an abrupt termination at or near Ripon.

And then we find, that from the place where the Danish names cease, Norse names begin to mingle with those of Saxon origin, sparsely at first, but in increasing numbers as we go westward. Perhaps the frontier Norse names are those of the two Hewicks and Sharow, about two miles east of Ripon: in other words, we find the first Norse names where we find the last Danish. The Norse names, like the old forest, just and only just cross the river Ure. Another interesting fact is, that the Danes, coming from their level home in Jutland, occupied, as congenial to their habits, the vast level plain of York; while the mountain-loving Norseman found his home in the hilly districts of western Yorkshire. And the boundary line between the Danish and Norse settlements coincides with remarkable exactness with the termination of the level country, and the commencement of the hills. Ripon stands just on the dividing line between hill and plain. Westward from Ripon the ground begins to swell towards the not inconsiderable altitudes of Netherdale, Wensleydale, and Wharfedale; and among these uplands the emigrant from Norway reproduced in imagination the homelike scenes of his native "fjelds."

The true Dane made constant use of the terminations "by" and "thorpe." But there seems to have been another lowland-loving race which made use of "by," but not of "thorpe." This race, whatever it was, appears to have settled the coast of Cumberland, where "by" is plentiful, but "thorpe" is wanting. And the same race or tribe is traceable up the greater part of the comparatively level coast of Sweden, to the extreme north of the Gulf of Bothnia, and far within the Arctic circle, until we reach the village of Lebesby, actually standing on the verge of the frozen Northern ocean.

We have pointed out the broad features of interest suggested by the names of places. Let us now enter into a few details, and take up some of the individual names of places, omitting those

which would involve in their interpretation too large an element of conjecture. We will keep, as far as may be, to names which are a type of a class. Let us take first two Nortons, Norton-le-Clay, which lies due north of Borobridge, and Norton Conyers, due north of Ripon. The names Norton, Sutton, Easton, and Weston, prevail very widely. In a gazetteer of England, we count up no fewer than fifty-nine Nortons, ninety-three Suttons, twenty-six Eastons, and seventy-one Westons, not to speak of many other places in which the points of the compass indicate the position of the village in regard to some older settlement, such as Eastby, Northham, Southwick, and Westwick, &c. In fact, we have the last-mentioned name in the district under consideration, being that of a hamlet lying due west of Borobridge, otherwise spelt Boroughbridge. Next let us take Middleton. Middleton and Middleham are both found within a drive of Ripon. Middleton Quernbow is situated just halfway between Ripon and Thirsk; hence the name. Of Middletons, or Middletowns, forty-six are named in the gazetteer. The mention of Middleton Quernbow, or Churn Hill—quern being the old spelling of churn—reminds us of a mountain name in the west of Yorkshire, where Whernside is a corruption of Quernside—the "Churn-shaped" hill. Also Quernbow, and the adjacent Howgrave, are—like the Hewicks or Howwicks before-mentioned—among the frontier Norse settlements: "how" being the Norse for a small hill. Near the last-named villages we find Skipton Bridge. Skipton is the type of a class of names derived from various animals. The letters k and h are interchangeable, Skipton and Shipton—both frequently-occurring names—being probably identical, and deriving their name from the sheep. Not far from Ripon we find Cowton and Cowthorpe, from the cow; in the east of Yorkshire, Beverley, from the beaver; and nine miles from Ripon, Swinton, from the swine. Near Skipton we have the name of Wath, a frequent place-name, and still in use in the north-country vocabulary, to signify a ford. Again, a typical name is found close to Wath, in Kirklington. Nearly all names in "ing" are the names of families or clans, of which clan names we have hundreds on record in old Saxon genealogies; among them being that of the Kirtlyngs, after whom Kirklington may have derived its title. Similarly the Myrkings seem to have left their patro-

nymic in Markington and Markingfield, south of Ripon.

Some names can only be explained by the aid of local knowledge. We may illustrate this by the name Dishferth, four miles east of Ripon. The old spelling of this name was Ditchforth. Now "forth" is usually a corruption of ford; and close to the village we find a small stream, not more than a "ditch" in compass, which is crossed on the level by the high-road, but which must in old days have been "forded" by the traveller. Hence we have Dishforth, the "Ford of the ditch." Farther south, near Borobridge, we find Branton, on a sharp declivity; the word "brant" being still in use in Cumberland to signify "steep," and north of Borobridge occurs the name of Brampton, probably a corruption of the same. These names are all presumably Norse. But we have the Saxon equivalents not far off, in Topcliffe and Roccliffe. It would be easy, as well as tempting, to extend these remarks indefinitely, but our limits forbid. We will only call the reader's notice to two other names, Marton and Ripon. There are, south-east of Ripon, two Martons, Marton-le-Moor and Marton-cum-Grafton. If, as some assert, names including the word "mark," indicate the boundary prescribed to some race or nationality, it is interesting to inquire whether these Martons (Marktowa) are instances in point. On a careful examination of the map, we shall, I think, find these names coincident with the Danish boundary at this particular locality.

As to the name Ripon, a late Latin derivation has been assigned to it, from Riponensis; and again another, from the bridge over the Ure, Uri-pona. Both these must be unhesitatingly rejected. Ripon was never a Roman station, nor is there any evidence of a Roman bridge, to say nothing of the unscientific nature of the latter derivation. There is in Denmark a village name, Ripen, from which it might be derived. But more probably it is, like Ripley—which lies to the south, near Harrogate—a personal name.

We have another Ripley in Derbyshire, and Rippenden in the West Riding. There is a personal Scandinavian name Rhypp, which may be the original of these and other names.

And now we may be permitted to dip for a moment into the heart of the Norse region, a few miles farther west, in order

to show that this was colonised from the greatest of the Norse settlements, viz. that in the Lake district. In the lakes and in the mountainous western part of Yorkshire, Norse terms are in common use. The hills are called "fells," the valleys are "gills," the waterfalls are "forces," the cliffs are "scars," the heather is "ling." Now we find among the lakes, near Bas-senthwaite, two closely-adjacent village names, Braithwaite and Thornthwaite. In the valley of the Nidd, some twelve miles from Ripon, we find the selfsame names, in similar proximity to each other. In Cumberland, near Ulleswater, we have Daore and Daore-banks, close together. In the Nidd valley we have again Daore and Daore-banks, a mile apart. These coincidences cannot be accidental; but rather they establish an undoubted kinsmanship between the two districts.

And now nothing we had proposed to ourselves remains, but to trace a similar connection between the place-names in Yorkshire and those in the north of Europe. In Yorkshire, we find the district of Cleveland (celebrated for its breed of coach-horses); in Norway we have the name Kleveland. The name Braithwaite has just been spoken of as that of two villages, one in Cumberland, the other in Yorkshire; in Norway we find Braathveit, the familiar thwaite being usually so written in Norway. Ten miles from Ripon stands the market-town of Thirak, formerly Thorsk; in Norway we find the hamlet of Thorske. Near Ripon is the village of Sharow; in Norway, Skarö: "h" and "k" being, as before mentioned, interchangeable letters, the names may be regarded as identical. In the west of Yorkshire, we have Applethwaite, in Norway, Eplethvet; in Yorkshire, Lofthouse, in Norway, Lofthus; in Yorkshire, Gool and Howden, in Norway, Gool and Hovden. Again, the Yorkshire names of Milby, Starbeck, Swainby, Rogan, are reproduced in Malby and Melby, Stabek, Svenneby, and Rogu. These are but a few of many proofs which might be produced, that the home names were not forgotten by the colonisers of Yorkshire. They also show what good evidence we have, as to the places in the north from which our ancestors came. The subjects we have rather touched upon than exhausted are full of interest, and will repay much study and careful investigation. If any reader should wish to

become a student of place-names,* there is no book we can name so generally useful for the purpose, as that we have referred to in the course of this paper.

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

BLACKBURN ON STRIKE.

OF all the insignificant rivers puffed into glory by the people who congregate on their banks, the Blackburn, which gives its name to a great Lancashire manufacturing town, is perhaps the most contemptible. Other important towns have but poor streams running by them, it is true. There is the Irwell, for instance, the shabbiest and dirtiest of all possible rivers, slinking through Manchester as if ashamed of its own squalor, and the Sheaf, a minute but blustering stream which gives its name to busy Sheffield. There are the Aire and the Calder, streams so charged with dye-stuffs and other filth, that one can write one's name with their inky fluid; but none of these are quite so diminutive as the tiny stream of Blakey Moor, which debouches into the Darwen, and helps to feed the joyous flow of the Ribble. The town which takes its name from this Blackburn is, however, an important place in its way, and, as the youngest born of English centres of industry, is noteworthy enough. When I say that Blackburn is a new—an almost painfully new place—I must not be misunderstood. The townlet, parish, hundred, and shire of Blackburn, have existed from time to which the memory of the oldest inhabitant of Plantagenet England ran not to the contrary. Hard by the Roman station of Ribchester, Blackburn was a post on the great road bending northward, but in olden times never rose into prominence. Perhaps the greatest event connected with early Blackburn was the birth of the Peel family, whose home was near to the Fishergate. Since then, Blackburn has grown apace, and the old family-house of the Peels has been utterly abolished. New Blackburn has a very new air, the aspect of a place dropped down from the clouds but yesterday. All is spick and span, fresh and new, Town Hall and Exchange, churches and market. In the size and comfort of its workmen's houses, it stands before even Birmingham, and the interior of these dwellings is furnished in a style putting other factory towns to the blush. I should very much

like to ask one of those gentlemen who write interesting accounts of the improvident habits of the working classes, to take a walk with me down the clean wide streets of Blackburn, and make a call or two on some of my artisan friends there. He would find houses far beyond the ordinary rank of workmen's cottages, furnished with good solid chairs and tables, with abundant looking-glasses and crockery, and a pianoforte into the bargain. I cannot say much for the æsthetic aspirations of my Blackburn friends; their taste in carpets and wall-papers would make the Misses Garrett turn pale, and would give Mr. William Morris—poet and paper-hanger, excelling in both professions—a chill in the small of his back; but there is substantial comfort, and plenty of it.

Here, for instance, is Mrs. Sally Pickup, a "four-loomer," an admirable woman, who can make twenty-six shillings per week against her husband's twenty-two. Mrs. Pickup, now on strike, but with a little store of hard cash, and a velvet jacket, fearfully and wonderfully made, to wear in Blackburn Park on Sundays, welcomes the writer very heartily. "Eh, lad," the dame begins, "ye must be just clammed running round Town Hall, and listening to a lot o' gaumless chaps nigh frightened out their wits." The "gaumless" ones and I have been maintaining the cause of law and order by eating sandwiches and drinking champagne; but this is a detail I think it unnecessary to communicate to Mrs. Pickup, who proceeds to make tea—not from dastardly one-and-eightpenny, but from the best three-and-sixpenny article—and to cook ham and eggs, not in the best way, but after her lights. She is a worthy and a hospitable woman, with a husband who consumes twenty-five per cent. of his earnings in drink; but not a bad father of a family, as fathers go. He has a weakness for an undersized greyhound, good at coursing rabbits; and the prime out of the joint is always for Teaser, an awkward-tempered, but fleet dog withal; while the second-best piece falls to the lot of Jet, so called because he is a pure white Pomeranian, full of pretty tricks, waltzing included. The earnings of these two excellent people hardly explain the substantial comfort of their house, and the account at the Savings Bank near The Green Cow; but as the "lasses," with their Rob Roy cloaks drawn tightly over their ears, drop in, I begin to understand the income of the Pickup family. Lizzie is a

* Words and Places, by the Rev. Isaac Taylor. Macmillan & Co.

"four-loomer," like her mother; Jenny and Polly work three looms apiece; while Tam and Jack, "half-timers," add a fair contribution to the wealth of the family. Papa Pickup thinks the "childer" eat him out of house and home; but I have a shrewd notion that that easy-going specimen of the working man makes a snug per centage out of his family, and is now enjoying the fruit of that dreary period of transition during which he, with a wife and small bairns, had enough to do to make both ends meet. Mr. and Mrs. Pickup have but one opinion on the strike, and that opinion is fortified less by arguments than reminiscences. "Why," asks Mrs. Pickup, the head of the family, "why should Greenway, who was nobbut a weaver himself, and Brownby, whose feyther was a weaver, want to put poor folk down? I mind the time when they were both poor, and now they talk about employers' interests, and capital and stuff. Since Long Strike they have put many a thousand in their pockets, and now they grudge us our share. Out of twenty-eight years of profit they have two of loss, and now they want us to share it." Thus Mrs. Pickup, with a rattle of her clogs—her very well-made clogs, by-the-way—on the floor. My entertainer is a dame with opinions of her own, having no kind of deference for her husband. I gather, indeed, from her general demeanour, that she takes small account of husbands as a body, holding them to be mainly of the "gaumless" order of beings, given to spend at least one-fourth of their earnings in beer, and taken altogether to be creatures rather to be endured than paid any particular attention to. She is a wonderful woman altogether, and a not unfavourable specimen of what our English women will come to, if they are taught to leave off considering "marriage as a profession," to earn their own living, and to exhibit those qualities of self-reliance hitherto supposed to pertain almost exclusively to the other sex. There is nothing of the clinging ivy about her, and the suggestion that her husband is in any way the stay and support of the house is treated with a sniff of scorn. All this woman-power, which I am informed does not exist in any other stratum of English society, proceeds from the very simple, but well-ascertained and demonstrated truth—that while Pickup himself cannot for the life of him earn more than two-and-twenty shillings per week, his wife has earned, for months before the strike, an

average of twenty-six. This superiority of working power, coupled with moderation in the consumption of beer, makes her a fifty per cent. more productive artisan, so far as the family exchequer is concerned, than her husband; who, good man, is overmuch given to the bowling and rabbit-coursing, which, with drinking, form the staple amusements of the locality. I have no kind of doubt that it is by Mrs. Pickup's hard work, and skill as an administratrix, that things are kept together in the Pickup household; that money is stored in the Savings Bank; that summer trips are indulged in; and that on Sunday, at least, a prime joint is on the table. During the rest of the week, so far as my experience goes, the family subsist on ham and eggs. Perhaps this uniformity of a thirst-provoking, bilious, and indigestible diet has something to do with the sallow complexions of my friends, who, being weavers, are not exposed to an unhealthy temperature when at work. I have heard a great deal of the exhausting atmosphere of a mill, but I have always found the great weaving-sheds, as they are called—in which sometimes as many as a thousand power-looms may be seen at work—excellently ventilated, and, save for the perpetual noise, comfortable enough to dwell in. Another explanation of the pallor of the operatives was furnished me by a Burnley employer, quite as rough in speech as the people whom he was denouncing. "Mill!" he roared; "dunno' believe it, lad. It's the butter. They make so much wages that they swim in butter. Lots of weavers here eat a pound and a half of butter a week. That's what makes them so sallow." I suggested mildly that perhaps these folks like bread-and-butter, adding that, although that innocent and wholesome article of nourishment was out of favour with jaded voluptuaries, my simple taste preferred bread-and-butter and the marvellously fine water-cress sold at Blackburn to any other breakfast. The reply was pungent: "They don't eat it all, man alive. They cook everything in butter, swimming in butter; and here have I lost over five thousand pounds last year because the hands must live like fighting-cocks." So indignant was my friend from Barnley, that I am almost in doubt whether I am not going too far in hinting that the masters generally, and he in particular, seem also to be addicted to the scheme of existence favoured by fighting-cocks—that is to say, if these

courageous birds relish a diet of brandy-and-water during the working-hours, enlivened by plentiful libations of champagne at luncheon and dinner; the whole being solidified, as it were, by enormous quantities of broiled salmon, roast and boiled joints, poultry, and the eternal ham and eggs. Somehow he was flattered by my appreciation of Lancashire fare, and appealed to me, whether, as the employer of eight hundred hands, he was not entitled to something more than a common hand. Now this man's father was an ordinary mill-hand, and he, and his son after him, true to the saying against "rankers" in the army, have ever been hard on their work-people. Part of his statement is nevertheless true, for my friend Mrs. Pickup, with all her virtues, is a diabolical cook. Ham and eggs is the favourite food of the mill-hands, for the one reason that they are quickly and easily cooked. The dish is not a very cheap refreshment, but it has the peculiarity of being difficult to spoil altogether, and of requiring no particular preparation of the fire; and is thus suited to the hurried ways of housewives who cordially hate housework. That cooking and cleaning are hated by the female-workers is not a consequence of mere over-fatigue. It is nonsense to pretend that the work of minding power-looms for ten hours a day, with proper intervals for refreshment, is crushing toil, and that the last effort is exhausted in getting home, where every stroke of work seems irksome. Power-loom weaving is not hard work. It is looking on sharply at machinery which does the work almost entirely, save when a thread breaks, or some other hitch occurs; and is not to be compared with a day's reaping and binding, or potato-gathering, or hop-picking, or domestic work.

I will not deny for an instant that the exercise of unceasing vigilance is not work in its way, and that it is not good for women to remain on their feet for ten hours a day; but, on the other hand, the physical exertion required in minding a power-loom is of the slightest. I take it that the feeling that the day's work is done, or ought to be done, when the mill is closed, and the shawl drawn over the ears, after the curious Lancashire fashion, has something to do with the contempt for housework which prevails in the factory districts, and causes many "hands" to employ a woman to "tidy up" the house. It is also true that girls sent to the factory

at the age of ten years have scant opportunity for the study of housewifery, and thus come to regard a fire hastily built, without regard to economy of fuel, and the eternal frying-pan, as the only possible solution of the cooking question. There is no doubt that this plan is costly, wasteful, and unwholesome, and that the ham and eggs produced at considerable outlay is a very different comestible to the slice daintily broiled and served with poached eggs; but when I talk to Mrs. Pickup on this point, she puts me down very easily: "Eh, lad; thee thinks thyson' mighty clever, like all the writin' chaps; but ye're poor bits of bodies at best, and know nowt of what ye're scribblin' about. Ma and my old man have read lots o' stuff about French cooks, and toadstools, and frogs, soup maigre, and t' loika. Now list to me. Ye call yerselves political economists, I mind. Pretty economists, I doubt! D'ye think the poor devils of foreign women ye make such a fuss about, would be all day long stewin' and messin' with broths and traab, if they could go into weavin' shed and mind fewer looms? Which makes most, think ye—t' foreign lass with her stewin', or me at my fewer looms?"

This, I must add, is an extraordinarily sustained flight of eloquence for Lancashire lad or lass, the humour and character of the northern artisan being rather expressed in short utterances, such as the giving of nicknames, a trick at which he is particularly apt. So strong is the tendency to give nicknames of adhesive quality that it is sometimes difficult to find a man's real name. He is called something, and retains that name to the oblivion of his own. In the mill of a friend of mine are two lads, brothers—rare good workmen, too—whose name, as registered at their birth, is Greenwell. Neither of them is known by his proper name, this having been entirely suppressed in favour of nicknames, which are daily "answered to," and are, moreover, entered on the books. The elder brother having, at some remote period, possessed a dog singularly clever at rats, is known as Hunt; while the younger, from his skill at football, is known as Bouncer. These names are used without a smile of any kind, and are accepted as a matter of course by their owners.

In the same manner, several mills at Blackburn are known among the inhabitants by nicknames. Having occa-

sion, one dark night, to make my way to the Commercial Mills, in a part of Blackburn called, I believe, Nova Scotia, I was directed to walk straight down the Darwen Road till I saw the said mills on my right. This was all very well so far as it went, but when I found about a score of great buildings, more or less, to my right, I felt in the humiliating position of requiring further and more precise information. I must say in all truthfulness and candour, that I never was treated even on the Continent with greater kindness and civility. I was a stranger, quite alone, the night was dark, and if ever the traditional compliment to a stranger of "arf a brick at un" could have been paid with safety, it could have been paid at that moment. People were on strike and sulky too, but I was received almost affectionately by everybody I spoke to. But the Commercial Mills were unknown. Lads and lasses gazed on me in pity, as one sent on a wild-goose chase, and looked in utter puzzlement at each other. At last I advised me of a corner grocery, kept by a sturdy black-browed dame, engaged in selling bacon over her little counter and chatting to her customer. I descended on the humble shop and asked for the Commercial Mills. I was received with a shake of the head, and the calm statement that there was no such place. Being of a mild but obstinate disposition, I insisted that something of the sort must be there or thereabouts, whereupon the grocer and her friends resolved themselves into a kind of committee and went into the case. After some discussion, these good-natured people came to the conclusion that as a stranger I must mean "big bree factory," otherwise "Eccles's," and directed me to—nay, sent a boy with me to show me the spot. It seems that, in years gone by, one Eccles had founded a brick factory on the spot now occupied by the Commercial Mills, and that the people had stuck through thick and thin to the primeval designation. There are other curious names for mills in Blackburn, some of them of witty application. A small mill of no particular pretension was dubbed "Bang the Nation," and goes by no other name. It fell, out too, that a barber, a prudent man, saved enough money to build a mill and go into the cotton trade, whereat his edifice became "Latherbox," and remained Latherbox forever. Another mill, started by an enterprising cheesemonger, was at once called "Buttertub;" but per-

haps the cleverest bit of local nomenclature was that applied to a mill built by a prosperous publican, the insinuation conveyed in "Pinchnoggin" being a thorough stroke of Lancashire humour. The odd part of all this is, that these names, like those applied to people, are accepted seriously. A "hand," on being asked where he works, replies "Pinchnoggin" or "Latherbox" without a smile.

When I paid my last visit to my Lancashire friends, they were not in laughing mood. While work was going on, they were always ready to discuss the merits of Mrs. Fawcett's theory, that ever-legislation and restrictions on female labour are wrong in principle and vicious in effect; but I am bound to admit that, as a body, they accept the Ten Hours Bill and subsequent legislation in the same key heartily enough. Widows, upon whom the support of a family depends, would perhaps prefer the long old hours, that they might earn more money; but, as a rule, the women are quite as great sticklers for short hours as the men. They are quite content to begin early on the conditions of leaving off early, but they prize their evenings and their half-holiday on Saturday afternoon. Altogether they form a society from which some useful hints as to the future, when women shall work and exercise the rights of citizenship like men, may be gathered. Increased power of producing work is purchased at a certain sacrifice of the domestic virtues, and a decided weakening of parental authority. The young birds learn to fend for themselves, while yet over young, and an overturning of traditions is the result. Recent events, to which I have been witness, prove the difficulty of exercising the slightest control over the "felly-lads" or hobbledheys, who, with the active assistance of a few roughs, and the tacit co-operation of the adult factory hands, wrought so much mischief in North-east Lancashire, a few weeks ago. I cannot conscientiously say that, either at Blackburn or at Burnley, did I see a genuine full-grown mill-hand hurl stone or brick-bat. But they looked on stolidly, if not approvingly, while the work was being done, making no attempt to discourage the fiercer and readier of the wreckers. The presence of women and children in every vast crowd of rioters, is another peculiarity of recent scenes in Lancashire. How far the feminine element thrust itself spontaneously into the press, or how far the

women were encouraged to appear, in order to act as a check upon the charges of police, or the more dreaded onslaught of infantry and cavalry, must I presume remain unknown. On the one side it is urged that the women and children were brought out by a cowardly species of foresight; on the other it is stoutly maintained that "t'lasses" could not be kept at home when a riot was to the fore, and that the "childer," being left without natural guardians, went whither they listed. Be this as it may, there was in the vast crowd which filled Blackburn market-place, on the day after the first outbreak, and among the thousands who on the same night burnt a warehouse in Burnley Wood, and utterly sacked a cotton-master's house in another direction, a great preponderance of women and boys. A leader of the workpeople tried hard to persuade me that the whole mischief was the work of "nobbut boys," and that he himself, on the previous night at Burnley Wood, had seen a "bit felly-lad" with a bag of stones in his possession, ready for the sport which commenced a couple of minutes afterwards. I gave a Burleigh-like shake of the head at this, and asked my friend why he had not taken the boy's bag of stones from him and boxed his ears. The reply was characteristic: "Ah'm nobbut a weaver. Ah'm not in the police." Now, persons like my friend the weaver cannot expect much sympathy if they are mistaken for actual rioters, even to the extent of being knocked down or ridden over by police or soldiery. They, if not mingling in the fray, "assist," to borrow a French word, in a passive way in the mischief, and have only in a tardy way exhibited any regret for what has been done. Yet they are fertile in excuses, and anxious apparently to shift the weight of iniquity from their own shoulders to those of their neighbours, in a way which reminds me curiously of a saying at a fair held near the junction of four English counties. It was not an edifying fair—in fact, the conduct of the persons gathered together was such as to lead to its suppression; but the inhabitants of the county in which it happened to be held, always insisted that all evil deeds were done by the people who came out of the other three counties, and that it was an infamous shame that their quiet town should be made a meeting-place for extraneous blackguardism.

This is precisely the argument advanced by every section of the great industrial

population stretching from hill-encircled Burnley to proud Preston, from castle-crowned Clitheroe to dreary Darwen. I have not had the advantage of probing the feelings of a native of Darwen, but I am profoundly conversant with those of other dwellers in the same district. The Preston people, who have had only the merest semblance of a riot, put down by the police at once, declare emphatically that not a soul in Preston lifted a hand against person or property. "Roughs from Blackburn" is the explanation vouchsafed to me as amply sufficient, and I am entertained with a somewhat lengthy account of sundry Blackburn men being found on the road to Preston late at night, close to the last-named town, and obviously bent on mischief. At Burnley, I am told roundly that the entire riot, saving the co-operation of the "felly-lads," always ripe for mischief, is the work of "roughs from Blackburn"—not weavers at all, but persons in other trades, taking advantage of popular excitement to indulge in their vicious propensities. These vigorous denials bring me back to Blackburn, where another leader of the working classes, when I ask him whether or not Blackburn is guilty of sending forth a rioting propaganda, and if all the blackguardism of a great industrial district is concentrated in that thriving town, replies that nothing is farther from the truth, but admits that what he is pleased to call the "residuum"—evidently a word which pleases him mightily—is tolerably thick in his native town. But he scorns the idea of a propaganda, and affirms that, for poverty, filth, and blackguardism, Blackburn is far exceeded by Burnley and Preston. "Just recollect," he adds, "what parson said to you in schoolroom yesterday—that a garrison always brings drunkenness and debauchery, and remains a focus of wickedness. Now Blackburn has had no soldiers here till now, and they are only temporary." I reply that soldiers are more easily brought into a district than gotten out of it, that nobody will ever feel safe there without soldiers again; and that, moreover, the "lasses" of Blackburn had shown no disinclination to forgather with the troops, for I had seen them with my own eyes dancing in the Royal Exchange with the Fifteenth, and flirting terribly in the cattle-market with those famous lady-killers, the Fifth Dragoon Guards and Seventeenth Lancers. "Girls," he replies gloomily, "will run after

soldiers; but it will not be for long." I am sorry to undeceive him, but it would be cruel not to tell him, the father of a family, that the tramp of the cavalry charger heard recently for the first time in Blackburn will never depart from it; that the military authorities have decided on building barracks there, and raising the old home of the Peels to the dignity of a military station. Without discussing the advantage or disadvantage of a garrison with either priest or proletarian, I am well instructed in affirming, that a permanent occupation of Blackburn has been brought upon it by its conduct during the present strike; a sad disappointment to those who had faith in the moral as well as material progress of mankind—that working out of the tiger and development of the man, recommended by Mr. Tennyson; and a mournful triumph to their opponents, who hold that the quantity of human black-guardism is constant, and only variable in its form of manifestation.

YOUR EVENINGS IN PARIS.

You are going to the Paris Exhibition, of course. You know perfectly how to employ great part of the day, but not quite the whole of it.

Whether you shave or not, whether you bathe or not, after dressing you breakfast. After breakfasting, you betake yourself to the show, exposing yourself at the said Exposition to the certainty of distraction and bewilderment. When your mind is improved and your legs fatigued, until no more improvement or fatigue are that day possible, you have recourse to "tired Nature's sweet restorer," balmy dinner, according to your taste, and perhaps still more, according to your pocket. Only, permit me to observe that extra work demands extra sustenance; and, at a cheap fixed-priced restaurant, you will run a good chance of a Barmecide feast—that is, of not dining at all, unless you adjourn immediately afterwards to some establishment where people do dine, seriously, materialistically, and absolutely. If you start for Paris, bound by vows and penalties that impose the necessity of abstinence and fasting—which, in the present instance, amounts to starvation—might you not just as well stop at home? Is not workhouse fare obtainable on this side the English Channel? But I am wandering from the point at issue. Diet is not the subject of the present lecture.

Up to the end of dinner, then, you see your way clearly. So far, it is all plain sailing. But after dinner, what? A dark dreary void. It is too soon to go to bed—though that might not be so very bad a move now and then, taking a book, to be hereafter suggested, with you—and you may have no friends residing in Paris with whom to spend your evenings. Even if you had, you could not tax them with all your evenings. Popular and essentially mixed balls and drinking-places are hardly resorts to be recommended; because, however imperfectly acquainted you may be with the language—which will often be argot or slang—current there, you are still more imperfectly acquainted with the tone and manners of that stratum of French society. The Cafés Chantants of the Champs Elysées are well enough for once, when the weather is fine and hot, but will scarcely bear frequent repetition. Strolling after dark in unfrequented and doubtful haunts, cannot be indulged in without risk. Paris is not safe at all hours and everywhere. It is not a pleasant sensation to find yourself lying on your back at the Morgue, waiting for friends to identify and claim your body. So that you might do worse than inscribe on your programme, "After dinner, to the theatre."

To dine at ease, and yet reach your seat in the theatre with a calm and tranquil spirit, undisturbed by fears, you are recommended to take your place at the Bureau de Location, or box-office, of the house, a day or two beforehand—this is particularly needful at the Opera—or at latest, if you can then find a vacant place, on the morning of the same day, on your way to the Exhibition. It costs a little more; but you avoid having to bolt your food at dinner, à l'Américaine, without chewing it, and you escape putting yourself into a perspiration preparatory to getting chilled in the evening breeze, while taking your turn as one of the joints of that excellent Parisian institution, the queue.

Another point to be determined beforehand is, what class of theatre you select for your patronage; whether grave or gay, heavy or light, serious or trifling, spectacular or intellectual. And here let me remark, as an apropos, that many events have produced results that were never expected from them, and which seemed to have no connection with them whatever. The Paris Exhibition of 1867 was planned for other purposes than to influence the theatre; and yet such has

been the case. The visitors took the theatres by storm, filling them with an indulgent and not over-particular public; who, if they went once or twice, out of duty, to listen to the performances of the Théâtre Français, preferred, in their heart of hearts, the féeries, or fairy spectacles, and rarely hesitated between Cinderella and the Misanthrope. Such a choice is easily accounted for.

A man must never have stirred from his own fireside, not to know how the traveller regards the theatre—namely, as a means of killing time and filling up his evening. He cannot forever lounge on the Boulevards. Paris, the inexhaustible, is soon exhausted by a non-resident explorer; and, as a last resource, he goes to the play, less through curiosity than from the want of something better to do. Worn out with the labours of his sight-seeing day, he has often hard work to keep awake. Such a spectator will be better pleased with dazzling scenery, with ballets bright with electric light, with bacchic and Offenbachic melodies, than with refined wit or a well-constructed plot. He is reduced to the condition of "the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise." But, that Exhibition over, the operettas, the féeries, and the révues, have remained, because social circumstances and railways ensure them a long run. And it is only a long run which can repay a manager, for the ten or twelve thousand pounds which such a spectacle will cost him.

If therefore you prefer legs and wings to brains, your proceedings will be delightfully simple. Your place being secured, you can dine at ease. If you miss the first act, the loss is not great; subsequent tableaux are sure to be more splendid. When once arrived at the theatre, it may be better to defer sleeping till you creep between the sheets, in order to get your money's worth; but if you indulge in a doze, it is of little consequence. When you wake up, you will understand what is going on, just as well as if your attention to what preceded had been unremitting from first to last. When a certain portion of the audience walk out for a breath of air and a bock of beer, you will guess that it is an entr'acte, or interval, to give the dancers time to change short petticoats for others shorter still. When all and everybody go out at once, after a grand flare-up called an apothéose, you may conclude that the performance is ended, and can wend your weary way to your hotel.

But if you can brace up your intellect to the point of wishing to see what good French acting is like, you will take your exhibitioning quietly that day, going later and leaving a little earlier than usual. As you probably read and even speak French with greater facility than you understand it spoken, as soon as you know what is to be given at the Français—whether one of Molière's masterpieces, or one of Alfred de Musset's depressing comedies; perhaps both—you are advised to procure the text and carefully peruse it the previous evening, while reclining in your chamber, before dropping off to your well-earned night's rest. This is far better than taking the book to the play, to follow the actors—which may be a good lesson, but hardly an entertainment. And not only is it desirable to make this preliminary acquaintance with the pieces to be performed, but, really to profit by the French theatre, other books should be consulted before your visit to Paris; and, though tolerably numerous, they are not heavy reading.

To appreciate their value, we have only to consider what a treasure-trove it would be, could we disinter a few Greek and Latin newspaper records by contemporary critics, of special performances of tragedies by Sophocles, or comedies by Terence. They would enlighten us about many interesting details, now hopelessly engulfed in the abyss of past time. The learned have much to learn respecting those matters, while the unlearned have to submit to a provoking lack both of knowledge and of the means of getting at that knowledge.

Our posterity will not have to make the same complaint in regard to theatricals at the present epoch, and especially as to what is occurring on the French stage. With our neighbours, the theatre is an institution, claiming to be seriously considered, both from an artistic and a social point of view. To meet those claims, there have risen up authors who, in consequence of their signing their articles—which are not printed in the body of the newspaper, but at the bottom of the page, as feuilletons—are completely detached from the editorial "we," and assume, and are allowed to wield, a distinct individual authority. It may be added that most of those writers are very able, have the subject at their fingers' ends, and are impartial as far as it is possible to be so, in matters dependent on opinion and taste. Indeed, were they otherwise, they would

soon have to abdicate their position. Their criticisms, consequently, are written in good faith, with reasons alleged for the judgment given. There is an evident desire to render justice. The reader may differ from the opinion expressed, but he will rarely have to complain either of the writer's unfairness or his incapacity. All men do not worship the same idols. The essential point required is that a criticism should be sincere, and not pronounced without good show of reasonable conviction.

A proof of the value and interest attached to these theatrical feuilletons is that they are often republished in volumes, which will be curious reading fifty years hence. If the player's object, both at first and now, was and is to show the very age and body of the time, its form and pressure, the chronicles recording such manifestations render permanent the actor's fleeting and transitory pictures.

To indicate only a few reprints of dramatic gossip; there is *Les Premières Représentations Célèbres*—Celebrated First Performances—by Charles Monselet, the gentleman who, returning from a dull tragedy on Cleopatra's death, said: "I am quite of the asp's opinion." Another compilation, derived from sundry sources, is the *Histoire Anecdotique de la Collaboration au Théâtre*—The Anecdotal History of Dramatic Pieces written in Partnership—an interesting and curious book, recording how two heads, and sometimes more, have laboured at the same production. In company with M. A. Burtal, M. Goizet has also published his *Dictionnaire Universel du Théâtre*, a most accurate encyclopædia of matters relating to French dramatic art. Another collection of articles rescued from dispersion as waste-newspaper, is *La Vie Moderne au Théâtre*—Modern Life on the Stage—by M. Jules Claretie, of the *Opinion Nationale* daily journal, and himself a dramatic author, who treats his subject seriously as well as good-humouredly, regarding theatres as something more than mere places of amusement, never looking at them from an Alhambra or Cremorne point of view, and speaking of actors as if they had some higher task than to make women cry or bumpkins laugh. He even discusses their professional duties—what they may, and what they may not do.

Thus, an agency had been set up in Paris, which undertook to provide for private theatricals, exactly as there are others which supply actors to provincial

attractions of their evening parties could find there dramatic artists who, for a consideration, consented to perform at the house of anybody who would pay them. It was Thespis's waggon transformed into a cab, and placed at your service at so much per hour. But the Committee of the *Comédie-Française*—a company of actors enjoying special privileges and governed by peculiar rules of partnership—cut the matter short by forbidding any of their body, under penalty of a fine, to act for hire at private houses. The decision was not received without protest; and yet nothing could be more just or logical. The *Théâtre Français*, a theatre subsidised by the State, pays its artists for performing in the *Rue Richelieu* the pieces accepted by its committee, and not for running here and there at their own discretion. It has all the more right to be jealous of any wasteful dispersion of their faculties, because these "ordinary comedians"—lately of the emperor, previously of the king—are in reality the ordinary comedians of France, assisted by the public money. Nor should it be forgotten that the question of partnership was of some importance. By multiplying himself in this way, an actor runs the risk of weakening his powers, and consequently of lessening, by his extra work, the profits of the community. On our own stage, it may be questioned whether two performances, afternoon and evening, in one day, do not deteriorate the quality of each representation.

Then there is the moral aspect of the question, which, because it concerns the comedian's dignity, deserves serious consideration. The dramatic artist, the well-conducted actor or singer, has long since got the better of the stupid prejudice which excluded him from society. In that respect, his cause is gained. During a few hours only, the footlights separate him from the public; after which, the paint once washed of his face and the peruke laid aside, he mingles with the crowd, and is only distinguished from it when he can show himself superior to the ordinary run of men. In long bygone days, a Roman senator could not cross a comedian's threshold, nor a chevalier accompany an actor in the street. Three revolutions have occurred since the time when Frenchmen were obliged to hurry away Molière's body to the *Cimetière St. Jacques*, throwing money all the way to the mob howling at the excommunicated corpse; '89 raised

men; '30 promoted them to the rank of electors; '48 did better, rendering them eligible candidates. A French actor, now, is a citizen. You may hiss him, if he be a bad actor, so long as he is upon the stage; in the street, if he be a worthy man, you take off your hat to him. Nevertheless, the actors themselves show little wish to take part in the movement. They mostly live apart amongst themselves, cut off from the progress of ideas.

To excuse, as well as account for their exclusiveness, it should be remembered that, in many cases, artists are invited for the sake of hearing them cheaply. For a glass of negus or a cup of tea, you get a gem from an opera or a dramatic scene. It cannot be denied that this is often how and why the pleasure of an actor's or singer's company is requested. But a distinction ought assuredly to be drawn between the artist and the man. A lady who invited Chopin the pianist to dinner, with the intention of getting "a piece" out of him in that way, on his gently excusing himself, had the brutality to intimate that, as he had had his meal, she expected his music. Chopin replied, "Oh madame, I ate so little!" and almost immediately took his departure.

There is one bad example you are not likely to imitate; nevertheless I will point it out. French dramatists and novelists fill their works so chokeful of duels, that it is hardly a paradox to state that theatrical duels are the cause of duels in ordinary life. By seeing them so frequently in literary productions, people get to consider them as natural events and matters of course. Dramatis personæ fight with such prodigious facility, that a spectator of this picture of Parisian society might conclude that it comprises a considerable percentage of bullies. Nor indeed would the suspicion be absolutely unfounded, if the debates in the Chamber of Deputies are correctly reported.

GEORGIE'S WOOER.

A STORY IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT a change sudden illness brings into a household!

Everyone moves softly about, the doors are opened and shut noiselessly, the very domestic animals seem to know something is wrong, and go about in a depressed, spiritless manner, that shows their subtle sympathy with their human friends. All the happy clatter that is to be heard in

every household now and again, where healthy little ones run riot at privileged times, is hushed; and if the sound of a child's voice breaks the quietude, it is quickly silenced by some watchful authority. Nay, even the very rooms seem to share the general disconsolateness, for deft fingers that have been wont to renew the groups of flowers here and there have other work to do now, and drooping blossoms fill the vases once so fair to see.

All these changes came to pass at Beach House after the day when Dr. Babbicomb brought home the "house-father," stricken down by sore sickness.

On the morrow of that sunny day that had, for all its outer brightness, been so sad a one for Georgie Hammond, Captain Ainsleigh paid a hurried visit to Beach House. Georgie's father was asleep after a restless night, and she stole down to speak to Douglas, not knowing it was to say good-bye.

Of the pity and the love that wrestled in Douglas Ainsleigh's heart for mastery, and strove to escape from his lips in words of passionate tenderness; of the longing that he felt to clasp the girl in his arms, and kiss the weary eyes and sorrowful lips, it is of little use to tell; for, looking in her troubled face, he felt that hour would be ill-timed indeed to plead a lover's cause, when every thought of her heart was absorbed in the bitter grief that had come upon her.

Even as she stood beside him at the window, he could see she was listening with painful intentness for the slightest sound in the room above; and though Douglas told her with cruel abruptness of his own departure, she seemed hardly to realise the meaning of his words, nor did the long clasp in which he held her hand at parting, bring even the faintest tinge of colour to her cheek, to tell if the loving pressure awakened an echo in her own heart.

"My mother will come to you to-day or to-morrow; she feels so deeply for you in your troubles, and I know no one who has the art of bringing comfort so well. You won't let any thought of the short time you have known her keep you from taking what comfort you can from her, will you?" he said, at last letting the little cold fingers go.

"Oh no," said Georgie; "one feels the comfort of anyone's kindness at a time like this. I'm sure, Captain Ainsleigh, I never can forget yours!"

"Anyone!" that was not what he

wanted; he wanted himself and his belongings to stand out in clear relief from all other earthly beings for Georgie Hammond. Thus he parted from her in that irritable, dissatisfied state of mind and temper which is the twin-sister of love in its dawning; and he left Beach House with bitterness in his heart, and almost resentment against the girl whom he loved with every fibre of his being! He accused her of coldness—of a want of gratitude—of any failing you like to name, in fact—for the time being; and yet, when he came to the corner of the road where a few more steps would hide the windows of the quaint old house away from him, he stood a moment and looked back, while a thought arose in his heart that if it had been clothed in words, would have run thus:

“Heaven bless and keep my darling while I am away from her!”

An hour later he was posting to Collingford, with Mason, his soldier-servant, whose melancholy countenance showed how unwillingly he had left the delights of the Fern Leigh establishment for the unpleasant discipline of garrison life. Mason pitied himself, and he also pitied his master, and with more understanding of the thoughtful look upon his face than perhaps his master would have approved.

There is one respect in which I think men and women are very different. If a woman loves a man, she likes to talk about him; she even finds fault with him occasionally, in order to hear others defend him—anything sooner than not hear his name at all. But with a man it is not so; when a man loves, hopefully or hopelessly, happily or unhappily, be it but well, he shrinks from hearing others discuss the woman whose image is garnered up in his heart.

Thus, the only word Douglas spoke of Georgie, even to the mother whom he loved so tenderly, was to say, just at parting:

“Mother, you will try and be some comfort to Miss Hammond in all this trouble, I know?”

And his mother, her loving face raised to his for a farewell kiss, said:

“I will, Douglas.”

Then he set off on his journey, and argued with himself on the way as to whether he had done wisely in not having named to Georgie—be sure he never thought of her as Miss Hammond—the fact of her father having spoken of “anxious letters,” and seeming to be borne down by some burden of dread. “It may have been all the fancy of a sick man’s

brain,” he thought to himself as the train crawled out of the Collingford station; so he made himself comfortable in the carriage, lit a cigar, and thought to lay the ghosts that were haunting him; but the whole of the past month came before him like a long-continued picture, and the sound of the train whirling along took to keeping time to the rhythm of the “Beautiful Blue Danube.”

This brought him to the conclusion that he had been hard and selfish that morning to Georgie in her trouble, and had not made sufficient allowance for her sorrow and her love for the father she held so dear.

And now, as I think he was right, and deserved to feel some little self-reproach, we will leave him to his meditations and return to Sheeling.

As one day followed another, Georgie devoted herself more and more closely, if that were possible, to the cares of the sick-room.

She watched, and feared, and hoped, and prayed, as women have done before, and will ever do, by the side of those they love; she read aloud to her father from his favourite books, and from the best Book of all; she carried some of his dried flowers up from the study, and, as he dictated to her, wrote long Latin names opposite each.

Every morning she looked into Dr. Babbiecomb’s face, determined to drag the truth from him, and from her questioning eyes he had sometimes to turn away.

Yet he could say with a candid truth that Captain Hammond had rallied wonderfully, and was gaining strength; and would have gained more if it had not been for that terrible restlessness that it seemed impossible to overcome.

Impossible! Let Georgie do what she would, the invalid could never settle down quietly. First one thing and then another held his attention for a time, but not a ring came at the door, not a voice was heard below, that the same expression of dread and expectation did not come upon the worn pallid face.

“The brain is in a state of great nervous excitement,” said the doctor, “and we must keep him perfectly quiet.”

And Georgie did her best; no visitors were admitted to the sick-room save Mr. Featherdew, who, coming to the house of sorrow and the presence of suffering, seemed to have lost all diffidence and self-consciousness.

“He looked just as bold as brass, and as perky as the turkey-cock in our back-

yard!" said Mrs. Robinson, who had encountered him leaving Beach House as she was being refused admittance.

"My dear," said the long-suffering banker, "a clergyman, you know——"

"A fiddlestick!" cried his indignant spouse; and he dared not contradict her.

Each day the twins were allowed to come in and see papa, and, being duly cautioned by Nurse Hughes, sat cross-legged, like two little heathen gods, on the floor by his sofa, and were so quiet that they hardly seemed like the "love-birds" at all!

All this time Georgie was jealous for her father over her own thoughts; she held it a wrong to him to let any one rival him in her heart, even for a moment. She would not recognise the truth that she was conscious of some subtle sweetness being gone from her daily life; and if she had dared so much as to ask her own heart—

What is it makes thee beat so low?

she would not have ventured to listen to the answer:

Something it is which thou has lost!

Still less would she have acknowledged to herself that the clasp of a hand and the sound of a voice would have been the truest comfort in these dark days of anxiety and dread. Hitherto her father had been all in all, and Georgie's life had seemed perfect; and now, just as it seemed a terrible possibility that she might lose him, could she bear to place any other creature on a par with him?

So she tried not to think of Douglas Ainsleigh; she fought against the shy joy that came over her as her father spoke of his kindness and care that day upon the shore; she tried to think her heart did not echo the words: "I wish he had not been obliged to leave us!"

And Mrs. Ainsleigh never came.

Georgie hardly knew how much she had counted on seeing her until day after day passed, and no Fern Leigh carriage stopped at the green door in the wall.

She could not know that the very day after Douglas left Sheeling his mother was summoned to the death-bed of a relative—we never do know the simple explanation of the conduct of our friends when it would be of most advantage to us to do so; and Georgie could not tell that Fern Leigh was now delivered over to the housekeeper and her staff of servants, and that that potentate had instituted a searching and implacable house-cleaning, in order to make a good use of the mistress's absence; neither

could she tell that a kindly little note, left by Mrs. Ainsleigh to be sent to Beach House, had been despatched by an under-groom, and lost by that functionary on the way—an insignificant fact, which he thought it best to keep to himself.

So Georgie seemed to be "deserted by her grand friends," as Mrs. Robinson pleasantly put it.

"My darling," said Captain Hammond, one morning about a fortnight after his invalid life had begun, "how pale and wan you look! I feel so much better to-day—quite like my own old self, and I really must have you go for a turn on the shore. I can't have you lose all your roses in this way!" And he stroked the girl's cheek fondly.

"But we were going to read about that wonderful night-blowing cereus, you know, papa, this morning," she said, unwilling to leave him.

"She grows quite a botanist, I declare!" he said, smiling. "We shall have you wanting to be a Fellow of the Linnean next! No, no, I won't allow any reading now. Go out, my dearie, and come back with some roses in your cheeks."

She knelt down beside him, and laid her soft cheek against his.

"If you could only come with me, dear!" she said fondly.

"Well, well," he answered her, "have patience, and perhaps it won't be long. If it weren't for those stairs I feel as if I could get out into the garden to-day. Wrap yourself up well," he added, as she left the room. "The days grow cold now."

Georgie went to her own room; and as she stood before the glass, and tied on her gipsy hat with its drooping feather, she heard a bell ring below, and then Nurse Hughes come up to the master's room, stay there an instant, and go on to the nursery. One moment more, and there was the sound of a heavy fall.

How Georgie reached her father she never knew; it seemed to her but an instant, and she was kneeling by him, and had laid his head upon her lap. She never realised how long she sat thus, tearless, wordless, motionless, her eyes fixed on the distorted features, the livid lips that opened only to utter inarticulate moanings; it seemed to her that all things round her were but the phantoms of a dream, and the first thing that broke the strange spell that was over her was the voice of Dr. Babbiecomb, whom someone had fetched in hot haste, and who bade

her, kindly but firmly, get up, and let them lay her father on his bed. When they raised the poor drooping head off her lap, then Georgie threw off the stupor of grief that had held her, and she saw that in one hand the stricken man clenched an open letter, and that the other hung helpless and dead by his side. Dr. Babbiecomb took the letter and gave it to her, and she glanced at the signature—"Bedingfield Harper." She saw the word "shares" repeated several times, but no sense of the purport of the letter made its way to her understanding. She did not know that what she held in her hand was the announcement of ruin—utter, irretrievable ruin—for her father, herself, and the poor little love-birds. If anyone had told her what the letter meant, it would have seemed as nothing to her with that still figure lying on the bed—that moaning cry in her ears.

As time went on, and no change took place—as the day grew to evening, the evening to night, the night to morning, and there was no change—still that awful death in life—Georgie's mind became filled with one unutterable dread—the fear that her father would die without recognising her.

"Will he never speak to me again?" she said to the doctor, when the third day had come and gone.

She spoke calmly enough; she shed no tears. After the first terrible shock she had never faltered—hardly left the bedside of the dying man.

Yes, dying—there was no doubt about that; the only uncertainty was, would the lamp give one last flicker ere it went out?

"He may rally a little, just before the end," said the doctor, trying to keep his voice steady, and failing considerably. "There has been some severe mental shock, coming upon an already enfeebled condition, and the brain is now in a state of—ahem!—inertia."

Then he went home to his wife, and told her of the brave girl, striving so hard to show a good courage in the hour of trial; and plenteous tears bedewed the countenance of the latest-arrived Babbiecomb baby as the doctor spoke.

"Shall I put on my things and go to her?" said the tender-hearted little woman, looking all limp with sympathy and pity.

But the doctor was wise in his generation, and knew that Georgie was better left alone to fight the battle with death.

The time when pity and tearful sympathy might bring comfort was not yet.

Ever since Captain Hammond's last seizure, the love-birds had been kept close prisoners in their cage, the nursery. They were strictly forbidden at any time to quit the precincts of that comfortable apartment, and no doubt fully intended to be most admirably conducted and obedient, had not opportunity, that terrible hand-maid of temptation, been too much for them.

It was late in the afternoon. Sister, tired out with weary nights and days, had gone to snatch an hour's rest, and Nurse Hughes had descended to the lower region on some domestic cares intent, after giving a look into the sick-room and assuring herself that her master was lying quite still and seemingly asleep.

As in Eden of old, so now, the idea of mischief originated in the feminine mind.

"I tink we's go and see poor papa," said Tricky; and two minutes afterward the top of a golden head made itself visible by the sick man's bedside, and a tiny hand felt about till it touched his face.

Then, for the first time since the last blow had fallen on Captain Hammond, and frozen into lifelessness the senses of his mind and the powers of his body, he spoke.

"Is that you, my birdies?"

But oh, how dreadful to the children was the sound of that changed voice!

"Iss, we's here," said Tricky.

Fear kept Jack silent; but he valiantly hoisted his sister up on to the bed, and then clambered up himself.

The poor little ones tried hard not to be frightened at the change in poor papa's face; but Jack lunged to hide his own face in the curtains, and only a feeling that it would be cowardly to leave Tricky in the lurch kept him from doing so.

"We's come," said Tricky, drawing a long breath, in the struggle to keep from crying, "to bring 'oo out to see Dandy yunning."

But some subtle recognition of the true state of matters came over Tricky; her mouth quivered, and she put her little hand upon the poor drawn face on the pillow, and cooed softly, like a dove: "Oh poor papa! oh dear papa!" while Jack sat huddled up in a bunch, his head resting on his knees, and two great frightened eyes fixed on his father's face.

"Why, what's this? what's this?" cried Dr. Babbiecomb, hurrying in for one of

his oft-repeated visits, and Sister's troubled face appeared behind him, and looked reproachfully at the two disobedient ones.

Jack's courage rose to the occasion.

"We wanted to see poor papa; we was tired of not seeing poor papa."

But Jack might have spared himself the trouble of excuses; Georgie heard not. She had met her father's eyes; she saw that he recognised her—that, if but for a moment, the veil of unconsciousness was raised. She flung herself upon her knees beside him; she kissed his face, his hands, that lay there too feeble to enfold his darling to his breast. She looked up to the doctor's face with eyes that seemed resolved to tear from him some faint assurance of hope. But, alas! to Captain Hammond, with knowledge, came the recollection of the blow that struck him down.

He saw his precious ones, his helpless children, about him, and returning memory cried out to him that they were ruined in his ruin—homeless, penniless in the world that he was so soon to leave. He was like the frost-bitten traveller in the Canadian forest, who feels nothing and knows nothing of what has befallen him while the icy frost holds him in his clutches; but with the return to life and warmth comes the agony that none can realise, save those who have seen the strong man faint, and cry, and quiver in its intensity of pain.

"Doctor," said the sick man, raising the one hand that yet retained some power and life, and speaking in that strange laboured voice so pitiful to hear, "can you do nothing for me? Not for myself, but for these—for these!" And he strove to draw Tricky nearer to him.

The doctor found no voice in which to answer this appeal. He turned away his face, and the silence and the gesture told all.

Then the room was filled with that dreadful sound which, when once we have heard, we pray that we may never hear again—the piteous weeping to which the sufferers from paralysis are so prone, and which is worse to the ear of those that love them than the sharpest cry of pain.

While Georgie tenderly bent over the agitated sufferer, and soothed him by loving words and fond caresses, Dr. Babbiecomb hurried the frightened children from the room.

As Nurse Hughes undressed the little ones that night, the wind howled and moaned and whistled round the house, and the hanging branches of the ivy tapped against the windows, as though they wanted to get in and shelter from the storm.

As the tide rose, the noise of the sea could be heard, like the distant murmur of some vast city.

"I can't abide to hear the wind blowing and keening like that," said Nurse Hughes to herself, as she left the nursery, when the children were safe and warm in their little beds. She stopped by the door of the sick-room, which was partly open, and listened to hear if all was quiet.

Silent enough; silent with the silence and awe that come upon us all when the Angel of Death hovers near. Nurse Hughes heard Mr. Featherdew's voice say: "Into thy hands, oh loving Saviour! we commend his spirit;" and then there came a low pitiful cry: "Papa! oh dear papa!"

"It weren't for nothing the wind keened so to-night," said Nurse Hughes, as she went quickly into the room where Captain Hammond lay dead, and the doctor held Georgie in his arms, looking almost as lifeless as the mortal who had but just "put on immortality."

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LXI. THE NEWS COMES HOME.

DURING those last days of the glory of the baroness, when she was driving about London under the auspices of Philogunac Cœlebs in her private brougham, and talking to everyone of the certainty of her coming success, Lord George Germain was not in London either to hear or to see what was going on. He had gone again to Naples, having received a letter from the British consul there, telling him that his brother was certainly dying. The reader will understand that he must have been most unwilling to take this journey. He at first refused to do so, alleging that his brother's conduct to him had severed all ties between them; but at last he allowed himself to be persuaded by the joint efforts of Mr. Knox, Mr. Stokes, and Lady Sarah, who actually came up to London herself for the purpose of inducing him to take the journey. "He is not only your brother," said Lady Sarah, "but the head of your family—as well. It is not for the honour of the family that he should pass away without having someone belonging to him at the last moment." When Lord George argued that he would in all probability be too late, Lady Sarah explained that the last moments of a Marquis of Brotherton could not have come as long as his body was above ground.

So urged, the poor man started again, and found his brother still alive, but senseless. This was towards the end of March, and it is hoped that the reader

will remember the event which was to take place in April. The coincidence of the two things added, of course, very greatly to his annoyance. Telegrams might come to him twice a-day, but no telegram could bring him back in a flash when the moment of peril should arrive, or enable him to enjoy the rapture of standing at his wife's bedside when the peril should be over. He felt as he went away from his brother's villa to the nearest hotel—for he would not sleep nor eat in the villa—that he was a man marked out for misfortune. When he returned to the villa on the next morning, the Marquis of Brotherton was no more. His lordship had died in the forty-fourth year of his age, on the 30th of March, 187—.

The Marquis of Brotherton was dead, and Lord George Germain was Marquis of Brotherton, and would be so called by all the world as soon as his brother was decently hidden under the ground. It concerns our story now to say that Mary Lovelace was Marchioness of Brotherton, and that the Dean of Brotherton was the father-in-law of a marquis, and would, in all probability, be the progenitor of a long line of marquises. Lord George, as soon as the event was known, caused telegrams to be sent to Mr. Knox, to Lady Sarah, and to the dean. He had hesitated about the last, but his better nature at last prevailed. He was well aware that no one was so anxious as the dean, and though he disliked and condemned the dean's anxiety, he remembered that the dean had at any rate been a loving father to his wife, and a very liberal father-in-law.

Mr. Knox, when he received the news, went at once to Mr. Stokes, and the two gentlemen were not long in agreeing that

a very troublesome and useless person had been removed out of the world. "Oh yes; there's a will," said Mr. Stokes, in answer to an enquiry from Mr. Knox, "made while he was in London the other day, just before he started—as bad a will as a man could make; but he couldn't do very much harm. Every acre was entailed."

"How about the house in town?" asked Mr. Knox.

"Entailed on the baby about to be born, if he happens to be a boy."

"He didn't spend his income?" suggested Mr. Knox.

"He muddled a lot of money away; but since the coal came up he couldn't spend it all, I should say."

"Who gets it?" asked Mr. Knox, laughing.

"We shall see that when the will is read," said the attorney with a smile.

The news was brought out to Lady Sarah, as quickly as the very wretched pony which served for the Brotherton telegraph express could bring it. The hour which was lost in getting the pony ready, perhaps, did not signify much. Lady Sarah, at the moment, was busy with her needle, and her sisters were with her. "What is it?" said Lady Susanna, jumping up. Lady Sarah, with cruel delay, kept the telegram for a moment in her hand. "Do open it," said Lady Amelia; "is it from George? Pray open it; pray do!" Lady Sarah, feeling certain of the contents of the envelope, and knowing the importance of the news, slowly opened the cover. "It is all over," she said; "Poor Brotherton!" Lady Amelia burst into tears. "He was never so very unkind to me," said Lady Susanna, with her handkerchief up to her eyes. "I cannot say that he was good to me," said Lady Sarah, "but it may be that I was hard to him. May God Almighty forgive him all that he did amiss!"

Then there was a consultation held, and it was decided that Mary and the marchioness must both be told at once. "Mamma will be dreadfully cut up," said Lady Susanna. Then Lady Amelia suggested that their mother's attention should be at once drawn off to Mary's condition, for the marchioness at this time was much worried in her feelings about Mary.

The telegram had arrived in the afternoon, at the hour in which Mary was accustomed to sit in the easy-chair with the marchioness. The penalty had now been reduced to an hour a day, and this, as it happened, was the hour. The mar-

chioness had been wandering a good deal in her mind. From time to time she expressed her opinion that Brotherton would get well and would come back; and she would then tell Mary how she ought to urge her husband to behave well to his elder brother, always asserting that George had been stiff-necked and perverse. But in the midst of all this she would refer every minute to Mary's coming baby as the coming Popenjoy—not a possible Popenjoy at some future time, but the immediate Popenjoy of the hour—to be born a Popenjoy! Poor Mary, in answer to all this, would agree with everything. She never contradicted the old lady, but sat longing that the hour might come to an end.

Lady Sarah entered the room, followed by her two sisters. "Is there any news?" asked Mary.

"Has Brotherton come back?" demanded the marchioness.

"Dear mamma!" said Lady Sarah; and she went up and knelt down before her mother and took her hand.

"Where is he?" asked the marchioness.

"Dear mamma! He has gone away—beyond all trouble."

"Who has gone away?"

"Brotherton is—dead, mamma. This is a telegram from George." The old woman looked bewildered, as though she did not as yet quite comprehend what had been said to her. "You know," continued Lady Sarah, "that he was so ill that we all expected this."

"Expected what?"

"That my brother could not live."

"Where is George? What has George done? If George had gone to him—Oh me! Dead! He is not dead! And what has become of the child?"

"You should think of Mary, mamma."

"My dear, of course I think of you. I am thinking of nothing else. Sarah—you don't mean to say that Brotherton is—dead?" Lady Sarah merely pressed her mother's hand, and looked into the old lady's face. "Why did not they let me go to him? And is Popenjoy dead also?"

"Dear mamma, don't you remember?" said Lady Susanna.

"Yes; I remember. George was determined it should be so. Ah me! ah me! Why should I have lived to hear this!" After that it was in vain that they told her of Mary, and of the baby that was about to be born. She wept herself into hysterics, was taken away and

put to bed; and then soon wept herself asleep.

Mary during all this had said not a word. She had felt that the moment of her exaltation—the moment in which she had become the mistress of the house and of everything around it—was not a time in which she could dare even speak to the bereaved mother. But when the two younger sisters had gone away with the marchioness, she asked after her husband. Then Lady Sarah showed her the telegram, in which Lord George, after communicating the death of his brother, had simply said that he should himself return home as quickly as possible. "It has come very quick," said Lady Sarah.

"What has come?"

"Your position, Mary. I hope—I hope you will bear it well."

"I hope so," said Mary, almost sulkily. But she was awestruck, and not sullen.

"It will all be yours now—the rank, the wealth, the position, the power of spending money, and tribes of friends anxious to share your prosperity. Hitherto you have only seen the gloom of this place, which to you has of course been dull. Now it will be lighted up, and you can make it gay enough."

"This is not a time to think of gaiety," said Mary.

"Poor Brotherton was nothing to you. I do not think you ever saw him."

"Never."

"He was nothing to you. You cannot mourn."

"I do mourn. I wish he had lived. I wish the boy had lived. If you have thought that I wanted all this, you have done me wrong. I have wanted nothing but to have George to live with me. If anybody thinks that I married him because all this might come—oh, they do not know me."

"I know you, Mary."

"Then you will not believe that."

"I do not believe it. I have never believed it. I know that you are good, and disinterested, and true of heart. I have loved you dearly and more dearly as I have seen you every day. But Mary, you are fond of what the world calls—pleasure."

"Yes," said Mary, after a pause, "I am fond of pleasure. Why not? I hope I am not fond of doing harm to anyone."

"If you will only remember how great are your duties. You may have children to whom you may do harm. You have a

husband, who will now have many cares, and to whom much harm may be done. Among women you will be the head of a noble family, and may grace or disgrace them all by your conduct."

"I will never disgrace them," she said proudly.

"Not openly, not manifestly, I am sure. Do you think that there are no temptations in your way?"

"Everybody has temptations."

"Who will have more than you? Have you thought that every tenant, every labourer on the estate will have a claim on you?"

"How can I have thought of anything yet?"

"Don't be angry with me, dear, if I bid you think of it. I think of it—more, I know, than I ought to do. I have been so placed that I could do but little good and little harm to others than myself. The females of a family such as ours, unless they marry, are very insignificant in the world. You, who but a few years ago were a little school-girl in Brotherton, have now been put over all our heads."

"I didn't want to be put over anybody's head."

"Fortune has done it for you, and your own attractions. But I was going to say that, little as has been my power, and low as is my condition, I have loved the family, and striven to maintain its respectability. There is not, I think, a face on the estate I do not know. I shall have to go now, and see them no more."

"Why should you go?"

"It will probably be proper. No married man likes to have his unmarried sisters in his house."

"I shall like you. You shall never go."

"Of course I shall go with mamma and the others. But I would have you sometimes think of me and those I have cared for, and I would have you bear in mind that the Marchioness of Brotherton should have more to do than to amuse herself."

Whatever assurances Mary might have made, or have declined to make, in answer to this, were stopped by the entrance of a servant, who came to inform Lady George that her father was below. The dean, too, had received his telegram, and had at once ridden over to greet the new Marchioness of Brotherton.

Of all those who first heard the news, the dean's feelings were by far the strongest. It cannot be said of any of the Germaines that there was sincere and abiding grief

at the death of the late marquis. The poor mother was in such a state, was mentally so weak, that she was in truth no longer capable of strong grief or strong joy. And the man had been, not only so bad, but so injurious also, to all connected with him—had contrived of late to make his whole family so uncomfortable—that he had worn out even that enduring love which comes of custom. He had been a blister to them—assuring them constantly that he would ever be a blister; and they could not weep in their hearts because the blister was removed. But neither did they rejoice. Mary, when, in her simple language, she had said that she did not want it, had spoken the plain truth. Munster Court, with her husband's love, and the power to go to Mrs. Jones's parties, sufficed for her ambition. That her husband should be gentle with her, should caress her as well as love her, was all the world to her. She feared rather than coveted the title of marchioness, and dreaded that gloomy house in the square with all her heart. But to the dean the triumph was a triumph indeed, and the joy was a joy! He had set his heart upon it from the first moment in which Lord George had been spoken of as a suitor for his daughter's hand—looking forward to it with the assured hope of a very sanguine man. The late marquis had been much younger than he, but he calculated that his own life had been wholesome, while that of the marquis was the reverse. Then had come the tidings of the marquis's marriage. That had been bad—but he had again told himself how probable it was that the marquis should have no son. And then the lord had brought home a son. All suddenly there had come to him the tidings that a brat called Popenjoy—a brat who in life would crush all his hopes—was already in the house at Manor Cross! He would not for a moment believe in the brat. He would prove that the boy was not Popenjoy, though he should have to spend his last shilling in doing so. He had set his heart upon the prize, and he would allow nothing to stand in his way.

And now the prize had come before his daughter had been two years married, before the grandchild was born on whose head was to be accumulated all these honours! There was no longer any doubt. The marquis was gone, and that false Popenjoy was gone; and his daughter was the wife of the reigning lord, and the child—his grandchild—was about to be

born. He was sure that the child would be a boy! But even were a girl the eldest, there would be time enough for boys after that. There surely would be a real Popenjoy before long.

And what was he to gain—he himself? He often asked himself the question, but could always answer it satisfactorily. He had risen above his father's station, by his own intellect and industry, so high as to be able to exalt his daughter among the highest in the land. He could hardly have become a marquis himself. That career could not have been open to him; but a sufficiency of the sweets of the peerage would be his own if he could see his daughter a marchioness. And now that was her rank. Fate could not take it away from her. Though Lord George were to die to-morrow, she would still be a marchioness, and the coming boy, his grandson, would be the marquis. He himself was young for his age. He might yet live to hear his grandson make a speech in the House of Commons as Lord Popenjoy.

He had been out about the city, and received the telegram at three o'clock. He felt at the moment intensely grateful to Lord George for having sent it—as he would have been full of wrath had none been sent to him. There was no reference to "Poor Brotherton!" on his tongue; no reference to "Poor Brotherton!" in his heart. The man had grossly maligned his daughter to his own ears, had insulted him with bitter malignity, and had been his enemy. He did not pretend to himself that he felt either sorrow or pity. The man had been a wretch and his enemy, and was now dead; and he was thoroughly glad that the wretch was out of his way. "Marchioness of Brotherton!" he said to himself, as he rested for a few minutes alone in his study. He stood with his hands in his pockets, looking up at the ceiling, and realising it all. Yes; all that was quite true which had been said to himself more than once. He had begun his life as a stable-boy. He could remember the time when his father touched his hat to everybody that came into the yard. Nevertheless he was Dean of Brotherton, and so much a dean as to have got the better of all enemies in the Close. And his daughter was Marchioness of Brotherton. She would be Mary to him, and would administer to his little comforts, when men descended from the comrades of William the Conqueror would treat her

with semi-regal respect. He told himself that he was sure of his daughter.

Then he ordered his horse, and started off to ride to Manor Cross. He did not doubt but that she knew it already, but still it was necessary that she should hear it from his lips and he from hers. As he rode proudly beneath the Manor Cross oaks, he told himself again and again that they would all belong to his grandson.

When the dean was announced, Mary almost feared to see him, or rather feared that expression of triumph which would certainly be made both by his words and manner. All that Lady Sarah had said had entered into her mind. There were duties incumbent on her which would be very heavy, for which she felt that she could hardly be fit—and the first of these duties was to abstain from pride as to her own station in life. But her father she knew would be very proud, and would almost demand pride from her. She hurried down to him nevertheless. Were she ten times a marchioness, next to her husband her care would be due to him. What daughter had ever been beloved more tenderly than she? Administer to him! Oh yes, she would do that as she had always done. She rushed into his arms in the little parlour and then burst into tears.

"My girl," he said, "I congratulate you."

"No, no, no."

"Yes, yes, yes. Is it not better in all ways that it should be so? I do congratulate you. Hold up your head, dear, and bear it well."

"Oh papa, I shall never bear it well."

"No woman that was ever born has, I believe, borne it better than you will. No woman was ever more fit to grace a high position. My own girl!"

"Yes, papa, your own girl. But I wish—I wish——"

"All that I have wished has come about." She shuddered as she heard these words, remembering that two deaths had been necessary for this fruition of his desires. But he repeated his words. "All that I have wished has come about. And, Mary, let me tell you this—you should in no wise be afraid of it, nor should you allow yourself to think of it as though there were anything to be regretted. Which do you believe would make the better peer; your husband or that man who has died?"

"Of course George is ten times the best."

"Otherwise he would be very bad. But no degree of comparison would express the difference. Your husband will add an honour to his rank." She took his hand and kissed it as he said this—which certainly would not have been said had not that telegram come direct to the Deanery. "And, looking to the future, which would probably make the better peer in coming years—the child born of that man and woman, and bred by them as they would have bred it, or your child—yours and your husband's? And here, in the country—from which lord would the tenants receive the stricter justice, and the people the more enduring kindness? Don't you know that he disgraced his order, and that the woman was unfit to bear the name which rightly or wrongly she had assumed? You will be fit."

"No, papa."

"Excuse me, dear. I am praising myself rather than you when I say Yes. But though I praise myself, it is a matter as to which I have no shadow of doubt. There can be nothing to regret—no cause for sorrow. With the inmates of this house, custom demands the decency of outward mourning; but there can be no grief of heart. The man was a wild beast, destroying everybody and everything that came near him. Only think how he treated your husband."

"He is dead, papa!"

"I thank God that he has gone. I cannot bring myself to lie about it. I hate such lying. To me it is unmanly. Grief or joy, regrets or satisfaction, when expressed, should always be true. It is a grand thing to rise in the world. The ambition to do so is the very salt of the earth. It is the parent of all enterprise, and the cause of all improvement. They who know no such ambition are savages and remain savage. As far as I can see, among us Englishmen such ambition is, healthily and happily, almost universal, and on that account we stand high among the citizens of the world. But, owing to false teaching, men are afraid to own aloud a truth which is known to their own hearts. I am not afraid to do so, and I would not have you afraid. I am proud that, by one step after another, I have been able so to place you and so to form you, that you should have been found worthy of rank much higher than my own. And I would have you proud also and equally ambitious for your child. Let him be the Duke of Brotherton. Let him be brought

up to be one of England's statesmen, if God shall give him intellect for the work. Let him be seen with the George and Garter, and be known throughout Europe as one of England's worthiest worthies. Though not born as yet, his career should already be a care to you. And that he may be great, you should rejoice that you yourself are great already."

After that he went away, leaving messages for Lord George and the family. He bade her tell Lady Sarah that he would not intrude on the present occasion, but that he hoped to be allowed to see the ladies of the family very shortly after the funeral.

Poor Mary could not but be bewildered by the difference of the two lessons she had received, on this the first day of her assured honours. And she was the more perplexed, because both her instructors had appeared to her to be right in their teaching. The pagan exaltation of her father at the death of his enemy she could put on one side, excusing it by the remembrance of the terrible insult which she knew that he had received. But the upshot of his philosophy she did receive as true, and she declared to herself that she would harbour in her heart of hearts the lessons which he had given her as to her own child—lessons which must be noble, as they tended to the well-being of the world at large. To make her child able to do good to others, to assist in making him able and anxious to do so—to train him from the first in that way—what wish could be more worthy of a mother than this? But yet the humility and homely carefulness inculcated by Lady Sarah—was not that lesson also true? Assuredly yes! And yet how should she combine the two?

She was unaware that within herself there was a power, a certain intellectual alembic of which she was quite unconscious, by which she could distil the good of each, and quietly leave the residuum behind her as being of no moment.

LAL.

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

We colonists are apt to say that there is no twilight in New Zealand, when waxing sentimental over memories of the land of our birth, and recalling many a pleasant half-hour "between the lights."

But although we have no lingering dusk, sunset with us seems to have a

peculiar beauty, and a tender power to steal into one's heart. Many a time have I, rough colonial as I am, stood, on my way home, to watch the fantastic clouds and colours of the sky as night drew on.

Such a sunset-glory lit up the whole sky, and the scarcely heaving sea beneath, one autumn evening many years ago, as I was riding home on a tired horse, after a hard day's pounding after the outlying sheep.

At that time I was about thirty years old, and had a snug billet as manager on one of Lulworth and Clint's great runs near Nelson. Five hundred a year, with unlimited grub, and a sufficiently weather-tight house on the station, was no bad thing for a penniless man with no interest; and I often plumed myself on my own good luck when I came across other fellows, with twice my brains, and a little money, who could hardly pay for their bread and cheese.

"A beautiful sky, Sprightly," I said, patting my old chestnut as he carefully picked his way down the face of a steep hill covered with manuka scrub and yellowing ferns; "but wind to-morrow, and rain before to-morrow night."

Sprightly shook his head till the bridle rang, and stepped out at my voice. Winding down we went, till the interminable hill ended abruptly in a reach of level sand, along which we could canter for a couple of miles.

The sunset colours were fading from the high peaks we had left, but enough light lingered on the flat to give brilliant hues to the rocks, which towered over our heads, or lay like fallen giants in our path; while far out to sea, beyond the shadow of the shore, stretched a long streak of amber.

I rode that way twice a week, as a rule, sometimes oftener; but never do I remember to have met a living creature to exchange good-night with till this particular evening, when, no sooner had Sprightly started at a weary canter over the flat, than I pulled him up short, in sheer amazement, for there in front was a fellow dressed like a picture, riding at a foot pace just in the direction we were going in too.

"Who the dence can it be?" was my first mental observation. "Ten to one it's some new chum come to spy out the land; though I'll answer that chap don't know a sheep when he sees it."

As I neared my unconscious friend, I

took in the fact that he rode his horse like a gentleman; that his saddle, bridle, and saddlebags were new and glossy; that, in fact, from his jaunty wideawake to his English-made boots, he was a new chum. Riding up alongside, I observed a white collar and a pair of dogskin gloves, which removed any lingering doubts as to the fact.

"Good evening, mate," I called out, when I got quite up to the stranger; "going far to-night?"

"Not much farther, I hope," he answered, turning a face of almost girlish beauty upon me, and slightly raising his hat. "But that is a question I should be glad to ask you; that is, if you know this part of the country well."

"Lived here these six years, and know every corner a sheep can hide in," I answered, rather grimly, contrasting his high-bred accents with my own colonialisms.

"Ah! then you can tell me, where is this Wyke Station?"

"This Wyke Station," I replied, in my crustiest manner, "is where I hope to be eating my supper in half an hour's time. And pray, sir, what may be your business there?"

The newcomer turned to look more closely at me.

"Why you must be—of course you must be—Mr. Ralph Westcott; the very man I am going to see."

"I am Ralph Westcott," I rejoined, seeing he paused, as if expecting me to say something.

"I thought so. Well, I am Fairfax Clint. How d'ye do? I am awfully glad to meet you on this dreary and interminable mud-flat." So saying, he extended his hand with such a cordial gesture, that I felt ashamed of my bearish manners, and gave him a hearty grip.

"Didn't the governor write and tell you I was coming out?" he asked, as we resumed our journey.

"Several mails back, he wrote that you might possibly be sent out, but I never heard anything certain."

"Oh, well, you see, Westcott, the governor is getting old, and closer and more suspicious every day. Lately he won't even allow a fellow an opinion of his own. So one fine morning I got marching, or rather sailing orders, and here I am."

All this was said in the same quiet, rather bored manner which had set my back up before; still, I could not help

softening to the boy, when I looked at his face, and thought how unfit he would prove for Station life.

"And what do you mean to do, Mr. Clint, now you are here?" I asked, after a pause.

"Do? Oh, nothing that I know of. I suppose I shall stay with you till I get orders to start again. I'll go about with you, unless you don't want my company; and I suppose I must write a 'report,' for the governor's benefit, every month, in which I hope you'll help me."

He laughed as if there was a joke somewhere, but for my part I felt rather put out. Here was a great baby sent out for me to take in tow, and yet all the time he was my "Boss," and had to report on my management. I was a bit of an autocrat on my station, and resented this.

Fairfax Clint seemed to guess what I was thinking. "Look here, Westcott," he said, touching my horse's neck with his whip, and speaking in a more manly and earnest tone, which I liked better; "my father's all wrong in this business. What's the use of his sending me out to overlook his runs, when I know less than a child about such things; but that's no business of mine, and still less of yours. Let us be friends while we are together. Forget that my name is Clint at all! Call me Fairfax, and fancy me a new hand you've just picked up to clean your boots and saddle your horse. I can do both, I assure you."

All the while he had been speaking we had slowly climbed a steep hill, clothed with white-flowering manuka and fern. As he ceased we reached the summit, and began to descend on the other side, so my only answer was to point out the stock-yard in the valley at our feet, flanked by a single-storied wooden house.

"There's Wyke Station. I've lived here for six years, and am glad to welcome a son of the firm to it."

"That's kindly said," he answered gravely, falling back in the narrow path. "I'll follow you, and only trust this brute is surefooted."

We reached the stock-yard, and tied up our horses, the dogs rushing out to welcome us, and Tom, the cook, opening the house-door and showing a warm glow of firelight.

"Come in, Mr. Clint," I said, "and be prepared to rough it. This is the kitchen; here's the parlour, which is drawing-room, smoking-room, and feeding-room in one;

you see there's no lack of dry wood here, so we have good fires; here's my bedroom, and yonder room shall be got ready for you by the time supper's over. Meantime, make yourself at home, and use mine," and having, as I thought, done the honours handsomely, I kicked the smouldering logs into a crackling blaze, and left him in possession of my sanctum. When I came in from seeing to our horses, I found Clint in the kitchen, already at home, chatting to Tom, as that old rascal fried mutton-chops and potatoes.

"By Jove, I never thought of my horse," he exclaimed in consternation, as he caught sight of me coming in from the yard with his and my saddle; "why on earth didn't you tell me, Westcott?"

"Did you think we kept a groom here?" I retorted. "Never mind, young 'un; you shall do both horses to-morrow, I promise you. Show a light, Tom, while I wash my hands, and then for supper, for I'm starving."

CHAPTER II.

BEFORE a week was over, Fairfax Clint was familiar with every corner of the run, and had made himself popular with all hands.

Never did I know a human being with such a gift of fascination, or such an inexhaustible flow of spirits and quaint humour.

Yet he was never noisy, very seldom laughed, and about his face and voice sometimes seemed to hang a melancholy shadow. I thought, afterwards, a fore-shadow of what was coming.

But, as I say, never was there a man so popular; even our rugged old Scotch shepherd found a smile for Clint's cheerful, "Well, old Thistles;" while as for Tom, our cook and man of all work, I verily believe the happiest moments of his life were when Fairfax took into his head to assist in the kitchen, making Tom fetch the ingredients, and wait on him, while he elaborated uneatable messes for our evening spread.

Though at first I had hated the idea of anyone always following me about, and had perhaps found Clint's ignorance rather boring, after the first amusement wore off, still I got quite to miss the lad whenever he went off to Nelson for a day or two, and to feel lonely, and off my feed, when I sat down without his face at the other end of our table.

Among other of his fancies when first

he came, was one for a garden. "Waste of time," I growled; "the weeds will outrun the flowers." But he laughed at me, and set to work all the same, and really he worked well; for though digging blistered his hands, and the sun scorched his face brick-colour, he persevered until he had a plot of ground fenced in and planted to his mind.

"Flowers are great humanisers," he would say; "only look at these children, my dear Ralph."

"These children" were a dirty, ragged, barefooted quartet from our second shepherd's hut, who hovered about wherever Clint was, and worshipped him as a wonderful being from a world afar.

Poor little wretches! At one time I had made some efforts to improve them; and, thinking it best to strike at the root of the matter, began by urging their miserable, reprobate mother to introduce something like order and neatness into their hut. But I never made the attempt twice, being met by a torrent of half-tipsy abuse, and threatened with the loss of her husband—an invaluable station-hand, and one I should really have been unwilling to lose.

The only step I could take to mitigate the nuisance was to remove the whole family to an old hut a mile farther from the station, where Mrs. Mahaffy's peculiarities were less obtrusive. It would have seemed a wretched place, perhaps, to many an English cottager, perched on a hillside, roughly built of planks half an inch apart, and thatched with towi-grass. But, such as it was, I've known people live happily there, and make it look neat and pleasant too. Pretty it could not fail to be in such a situation; and it always seemed to me a sin to poison such a view with cabbage-stalks, and potato-parings, and heaps of stinking mussel-shells.

Did the miserable, shock-headed imps, who sprawled among the fern, hatless and shoeless, never see the yellow sands below their hillside, and the restless, ever-changing sea? Did they never look up and learn anything from the peaks overhead, which, clothed with dark shrubs and leafage, towered above till they set a sharp gleam of snow against the blue of the sky?

These are some of the questions I used to ask myself when I first went to Wyke; but you see I had other things to think about, and like most reformers, after I had removed the blot a little farther from my

own door, I forgot all about the needs, material and spiritual, of the young Mahaffys.

In fact, I felt half amused at the concern and disgust Clint expressed, the first time his wanderings brought him in contact with this interesting family.

"Ah my boy, at first I felt just as you do; but I found it waste of time, as you will."

However, whether Clint was more persevering, or whether he found out a better way to go to work, I can't say; but, to my amazement, one Sunday afternoon, when the Reverend Walter Hooper, a right good parson, rode over as usual to preach to us, and the station-hands were mustering in our verandah, up came a little procession, with very clean and shy faces and new pinafores, which for the life of me I couldn't identify. The truth only dawned on me when I saw Clint, with that indescribable grace of his, rise from his rug in the corner, and take Lal, the eldest girl, by the hand to show her a seat.

Through all the service Lal kept her eyes fixed with humble adoration on Clint's face, rising or kneeling as he did: and, after that, every Sunday, whatever the lapses in the week might be, she never failed to appear, scrubbed and tidy, at the service hour.

"How on earth have you done it, Fairfax?" I asked the same night, while we were having our last smoke before turning in. He laughed. "My dear fellow, don't ask me. I never felt more astonished in my life, or more humbled, if you can understand. I did give Lal a talking to about a week ago, and a few shillings to rig out the kids afresh, but I had no notion that what I had said would have produced such a stupendous effect. And to tell you the truth, Ralph, I felt ashamed to think how little one really tries to do, when I saw that poor girl coming up so bravely just for a few words of mine! If you won't laugh, old fellow, I am going to have Lal and her brothers up twice a week till they know how to read."

"Laugh! I honour you for it, only won't you find it an awful grind?"

"Why, yes, I'm afraid I shall," answered Fairfax, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and staring at the fire; "and yet I can't look at a poor wretch like Lal without feeling uncomfortable. I suppose it's what parsons call conscience; and my conscience won't let me rest till I've

taught these young savages, at any rate, what little I know myself."

So Clint's evening school began—began at the kitchen-table after supper was over; the pupils being Alice Mahaffy, popularly known as "Lal," and her brothers, Bill and Ted; and the schoolmaster being that ineffable swell, Mr. Fairfax Clint.

Ted and Bill, having grown up like young goats on the open hillside, were sharp enough to all outdoor signs and sounds, but hopelessly dense when it came to the alphabet. But Lal proved a wonder to herself, and a source of pride to her teacher. Never was a girl so determined to learn what at first seemed perfectly incomprehensible and bewildering. Many a time have I gone to the kitchen to look on, and have seen Lal, with knit brows and flushed face, bending over her book, and muttering fiercely between her teeth: "I'll see it sometime, Muster Clint; try me again! but I'm such a fool to-night."

One night, long after the little class had been dismissed, I found Lal crouching against the outer door in a wild fit of weeping.

"Hallo, Lal, what's up?" I asked, pulling her into the moonlight; "has that precious mother been hammering you again?" But no answer could I extract except a not very polite request to leave her alone, and wrenching herself out of my grasp, she ran away and hid herself among the manuka.

This little incident would not have remained probably in my mind, but for the chance remark of our parson one Sunday shortly afterwards. I had been riding part-way home with him after service, and as we went up the hill by the Mahaffys' hut, we came on Lal, lying asleep full-length under a wild cherry-tree, with her hands behind her head for a pillow, and an open spelling-book beside her. She seemed to have cried herself to sleep, for the long lashes resting on her cheek were wet, and matted into little points, and she sobbed as we passed by.

"That poor child! I am afraid her mother ill-treats her," said Parson Hooper; "and what a pretty girl she is growing!"

Pretty! I was too struck with this new view of Lal to dispute it, and my companion passed on to other subjects; but as soon as I parted from him, I rode back quickly to the spot where we passed the sleeping girl. But she was gone, and I had to ride home without deciding the question whether Parson's eyes or mine

had been mistaken. At the verandah door, however, I saw Lal with her milk-can waiting till Tom chose to find time to fill it for her, leaning cross-legged against the door-post, and looking moodily out at the sea.

I walked up, and took a critical survey. A long-limbed girl, with a very short, and rather ragged, stuff frock; bare feet, brown as berries; arms and hands to match; a good deal of brown hair, which lately she had taken to brushing and tying back with a scrap of faded ribbon; a thin face, with a flush of bright colour in the cheeks; and a pair of brown eyes, which were always watchful and suspicious to me, but soft and wistful to Clint. My eyes, sharpened by Parson's careless remark, took note of all these points, and I summoned Lal sharply to me.

"Well, Mr. Westcott," she said, coming unwillingly, and scowling at me with her straight black brows.

"How old are you, Lal?"

"I've turned fifteen last summer; but it ain't no business o' yourn, is it, Mr. Westcott?"

"Not much, perhaps; but you are growing a big girl, and ought to go to service somewhere. Wouldn't you like to go away from this dull place?"

"Go away from the station!" echoed Lal, all the colour fading out of her face as she raised her startled eyes to mine; "I couldn't do it! Besides, who'd like to have me for a servant?" she added, with a scornful little laugh.

"But if you'd like to try it, Lal, I could try for you," I went on, but she interrupted me fiercely:

"Look here, Mr. Westcott; I know I ain't a good girl, but I don't know as ever I did you any harm, that you should try and drive me away; and I can't go, I can't, I can't! I should die if I couldn't never see his face, nor hear him speak."

In the frenzy of passion and excitement which possessed her, Lal had fallen on her knees, and clutched my coat with both her hands, looking up with an agony of supplication, as if I could decide her fate. Here was a pretty situation for Ralph Westcott, manager, to stand in!

"Lal, my dear; don't be a fool," I uttered disjointedly. "What nonsense is this? you shan't go away unless you like, but for Heaven's sake get up and behave yourself! There, that's better," I said, as she dragged herself up on to her feet, and stretched out her hand mechanically

for her milk-can, which had rolled off the verandah; "now, Lal, be a good girl, and go home, and make up your mind never to talk such nonsense again. You know Mr. Clint is a gentleman, and will be a very rich one when his father dies, and how could you for one moment suppose——"

Lal put up her hand with a pathetic gesture to stop me.

"Lord," she cried, with her bitter little laugh, which always made me angry; "it's you as is talking nonsense now! Don't you think I know he's set above us like the stars; and as if he could ever look at the likes of I! But that don't make no difference to me that I know of," she added, dropping all at once into a low tone of indescribable despair, and turning away. At this moment we both saw Clint returning with the dogs from a bathe in the river. He stopped a moment to pick a peach as he passed through old Reuben the Maori's garden, but we heard his clear voice singing: "Then tell me how to woo thee, Love, then tell me how to woo thee," as if in unconscious mockery of Lal's misery and pain. For once I felt really out of patience with Clint's beaming good-humour.

"Go home, child," I cried, sharply, and Lal vanished without another word. I walked over to the fence to meet Fairfax.

"Ralph, my boy, you look very glum! How delicious these peaches are," he added, fastening on another.

Should I tell him Lal's secret, and beg him to show the wretched girl less kindness for the future?

Whether wisely or not, I spoke.

"Fairfax, I have been talking to that poor girl Lal. She is nearly grown-up now, and I want her to go out to service."

"Whew! my prize-pupil?" cried Clint, making a long face. "Well, my dear patriarch, and what did Miss Mahaffy say to your kind proposal?"

"Well, really, Clint, it's too absurd. And yet it's a pity for the poor little soul, too. The fact is, she has such a profound adoration for you, that nothing will induce her to consent to it."

Clint looked amazed, and then annoyed. "Alas! alack! is this to be the end of my philanthropic efforts!" he cried at last. "You don't really mean, Ralph, that she won't go because—because— Upon my word, it's too preposterous. Well, Ralph," he went on pettishly, after a pause, during which I lit my pipe, and tried to look more comfortable than I

felt, "what's a fellow to do now? Poor Lal! she has tried so awfully hard to learn and get on. Perhaps you misunderstood her?"

I shook my head.

"I don't pretend to understand these things, Clint, but it's a very real thing with her. How would it be for you to go on that visit to the Vernons you are always intending to pay? Stay away a week or two, and I'll undertake to talk to Lal, and make her take a place at Donald's farm at Tere-weni. I know they want a dairy hand."

So Clint agreed; and as the boat was going across next day for stores, we had no time to discuss and unsettle the matter. Lal, of course, saw the boat start, for she and her brothers were always moving before anyone else on the run; and Clint waved his hand to her, and called out in his cheery way, "Good-bye, young 'uns! Stick to your books, and I'll bring over some jolly new ones when I come back." Ted halloed out, "Good-bye!" and no one but I noticed that Lal said nothing, but gazed with straining eyes after the boat, till it had disappeared round the point, and the level rays of sunrise turned the grey sea to gold.

For my own part, I turned in to breakfast with a weight off my mind, for Lal certainly was a pretty girl; and though I believed Clint to be an honest young fellow enough, still there is something flattering and pleasant in being worshipped by the only girl about the station. So, altogether, I was glad to get Fairfax safely off on a visit to a neighbouring station, where I knew the dashing Miss Vernons would soon give his thoughts a fresh direction.

CHAPTER III.

SOME weeks went by, very busy weeks, and I had begun to get used to being alone again, when I received a message from Clint that the next time the whale-boat went over to Nelson he would return by her, as a letter from his father had recalled him to England sooner than he had expected.

All the time of his absence I had seen little of Lal. She had given up coming to the station, always sending Ted instead; and I had really almost forgotten our scene in the verandah.

The day after I got Clint's message, however, I chanced to meet her as I rode home over the mud-flat. It had been a dull, foggy day, but as evening closed in

the wind began to rise fitfully, make a little sudden stir and moan, and then die away into an ominous silence. As I hurried Sprightly along I overtook Lal, walking home slowly under a load of pipis she had been collecting for supper off the rocks. At first she seemed inclined to let me pass without recognition, but when I drew up, meaning to warn her of the coming storm, she ran to my side, and laid her hand on my bridle.

"Isn't he never coming here no more, Mr. Westcott?" she asked, in such a despairing tone I could not find it in my heart to scold her.

"Why, Lal," I cried, "how ill you look. What have you done to your cheeks and eyes?"

She shook her head impatiently, and repeated her question: "Is he never coming home?"

"Well—yea, child. He's coming to-morrow; but only to say good-bye. He will be off to England, and to all his friends there, soon."

She scarcely seemed to hear the end of my speech.

"To-morrow!" she said, crouching down in a heap upon the seaweed-strewed sands, and rocking herself to and fro. "Shall I see him to-morrow?"

"Lal!" I cried impatiently. She sprang to her feet.

"Oh Mr. Westcott, don't scold me. Look here," and she pulled up her ragged sleeve to show me her arm, wasted and shrunken. "I'm dying, I think," she went on hoarsely. "I can't eat, nor sleep, nor do a half of the work I used to. I'm starving for a sight of his face; and what harm can it do him for me to be happy just one day?"

Poor Lal! I was not a particularly soft-hearted chap, but the sight of her distress gave me a queer feeling in the throat, and I rode on without speaking.

The night set in as I expected, with sharp storms of wind and rain, and by the time I had got home and done supper, there was a high sea running.

"The boat 'll never start to-morrow, Tom," I remarked, as, for company's sake, I turned into the kitchen for a smoke.

Tom looked doubtful. "I'd feel more sure o' that, sir, if old Peter had gone in her. He's a safe hand, and a most over careful; but young Peter is rash, and won't wait for weather."

"Don't croak, Tom," I retorted; "be-

sides, the weather may mend before midnight, when they'd be starting, and then Mr. Clint will be there, and he's sure to wait if there's any danger." But as Tom still shook his head, and persisted in calling to mind all the shipwrecks he had ever been in, I gave up the argument, and went to bed, telling him to call me at six o'clock, if I wasn't stirring before.

It seemed to me that I had only just dropped asleep, when his voice at my side awoke me next morning. "Mr. Westcott, sir, it's six o'clock; and an awful nasty sea on. And I've been down twice to the beach, and can't see nothing of the boat."

"Get out, you old fool!" I roared. "You don't for one moment suppose they are anywhere but safe in Nelson Harbour?"

Tom vanished, but I got up thoroughly uncomfortable all the same, and hurried down to the beach without waiting for breakfast.

The sea looked nasty, truly. A line of white breakers thundered over the rocks, and threw their spray high into the air; a thick fog hung over Nelson, and hid the outlines of the coast, but here and there a white swirl of waters showed a dangerous spot to beware of. After a look round I was returning, when I spied a little figure sitting perched half-way up the face of the cliff in a little shelter formed by a projecting ledge.

"Lal, you silly girl, come down! There's not footing for a bird there; and what good can you do? They've never started, I'm sure. Come and have some breakfast with Tom." But I might as well have shouted at the sea-gulls, for she never moved.

When I came down again she was still there, deaf to everything except the thunder and roar of the sea. The storm seemed to increase as the morning wore away, and even Tom had come round to my opinion that young Peter never could have put out in such a sea, when we were startled by a message from Lal. She had sent Ted to say she saw something—drift-wood, it might be—still it was something.

Never, as long as I live, shall I forget the horror which clutched at our hearts, and blanched our faces, as for a moment Tom and I stared at one another while Ted breathlessly delivered the message.

Of course, we followed him at once, and

stood again peering out into the fog and spray.

"I see nothing, Lal," I shouted. "Whereabouts is it now?"

Lal for answer thrust out her long bony arm. "There 'tis!" she cried; "and 'tis—Lord have mercy!—'tis our boat!"

Not one word more did anyone say. Some half-dozen men, we stood there, helpless, watching the little spot grow and grow till we could make it out, as Lal did, to be our boat. Now she's down in the trough of the wave, now she rides on top, now she's near enough for us to make out the six dark figures in her! They are all there, thank God for that! Now we lose sight of her again, and I shout hoarsely to Lal. "All right," she pants; "they are safe past Split Rock, and they are going to beach the boat."

I clamber up on a fallen mass of rock, and can see Lal is right. They are coming in on the breakers, and will let the boat drive ashore. She will go to pieces, but it is their only chance.

We watch breathless, and no one speaks, although old Peter stands beside me, and he has two sons in peril. One tremendous wave dashes them almost within our reach—not quite—they are swept back, and the boat goes under. A moment later, and she reappears bottom-upwards among the boiling waters, and with a wild shriek Lal springs from her watching-place into the water beneath.

"Mad fool!" I cry, breaking into womanish sobs, and rushing forward with an idea of doing something—anything. But old Peter lays a shaking hand on my shoulder. "Don't 'ee throw away your life, sir. She've got him by the hair, and if anyone can live in such a sea, I'll back Lal." "But your boys, Peter?" I gasp, completely knocked out of all self-command.

"I be watching," said the old man, giving me a little shake in his suppressed excitement. "Nobody han't come up yet but Master Clint, and Lal have got he tight."

There isn't much more to tell. Out of all the six, only Fairfax was saved; though the bodies were washed ashore next day.

Lal, whose love gave her superhuman strength, had kept Clint's head away from the rock which crushed the life out of the other poor lads, and almost the next wave rolled both to our feet.

It took us a long time to unclasp Lal's hands, and I don't believe she ever knew that she really had saved the man she died for.

She was buried, when Parson Hooper came over the next Sunday, in Clint's little garden, with Peter's two sons and the other poor fellows; but it was many months before Clint could crawl out so far, or hear how his life had been saved.

THE OLD FRENCH STAGE.

LA CHAMPMESLÉ.

THE first tragic actress of any celebrity in the annals of the Théâtre Français was Madame Beauchâteau, whose dramatic career extended from 1633 to 1674; according to the testimony of her contemporaries she was remarkably handsome, and trod the stage with ease, dignity, and grace. Tallemant des Réaux alludes to her as "une sûre comédienne," but Molière in his *Impromptu de Versailles* ridicules her sing-song declamation, and more especially her want of animation and appropriate play of feature in impassioned and pathetic parts. Her immediate successor, Madame Duparc, an artist of an altogether superior stamp, after accompanying Molière during his provincial tour, returned with him to Paris, and besides creating *Dorimène* in *Le Mariage Forcé* and *Climène* in *La Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes*, played *Axiane* in *Alexandre* so excellently as to excite the admiration of Racine, by whose persuasion she was induced to abandon the Palais Royal for the Hôtel de Bourgogne, where, on the production of *Andromaque* in 1667, she was selected by the poet as the personator of Hector's widow. Molière never forgave Racine for depriving him of one of his most valued colleagues, nor did the Hôtel de Bourgogne profit long by its new acquisition, Madame Duparc dying at the close of 1668.

With these two exceptions, tragedy, as far as its female representatives were concerned, appears to have been at a low ebb until the latter part of the seventeenth century; whereas comedy, supported by such efficient interpreters as Madame Molière, Madame Beauval and Mademoiselle De Brie, continued to flourish without intermission up to the death of Molière in 1673. Six years later, however, a reaction took place, and the masterpieces of Corneille and Racine, hitherto comparatively unattractive, found at length a fitting exponent in the eminent

actress whose name heads the present article.

Marie Desmares was born at Rouen in 1641. Her father, son of a president of the parliament of Normandy, having been disinherited in consequence of his marrying contrary to the paternal will, his two children, Nicolas and our heroine, being left at his decease entirely without the means of subsistence, agreed to adopt the stage as a profession; the former proceeding with his young wife to Copenhagen, where he had been offered an engagement at the French theatre of the King of Denmark, and the latter commencing her dramatic apprenticeship in a provincial company. During her peregrinations, chance led her back to Rouen, her native place, where she shortly after married Charles Chevillet de Champmeslé, then, like herself, undergoing the ordeal of country practice preparatory to risking an appearance before a Parisian audience; and in 1669 we find the youthful couple enrolled among the actors of the Théâtre du Marais, their admission being mainly owing to the reputation already acquired by Champmeslé in the line of parts technically called "les rois." His wife, partly from natural timidity, and partly from a lack of stage experience, produced a less favourable impression, and it was generally supposed that she would never rise above mediocrity; Laroque, however, one of the actors of the theatre, thought otherwise, and affirmed that she only needed a more intimate acquaintance with the principles of her art, to equal if not excel the most celebrated of her contemporaries. In order to prove his assertion, he devoted himself assiduously to her instruction, and so well did she profit by his lessons that, before six months had elapsed, her performance of leading tragic characters had entirely converted the public to Laroque's opinion, and procured for her, together with her husband, an engagement at the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

She appeared there about Easter, 1670, as *Hermione* in *Andromaque* with the most brilliant success; and among the many compliments paid her at the conclusion of the piece, none were more flattering than the involuntary tribute of a rival actress, *Mlle. des Céillettes*, who, although in the last stage of an illness which subsequently proved fatal, had expressed a wish to be present on the occasion; and recognising at once the incontestable superiority of the *débutante*,

exclaimed with a sigh on leaving the theatre: "Il n'y a plus de Des Ceillets!"

In 1679, Champmeslé and his wife quitted the Hôtel de Bourgogne for the Rue Guénégaud, but this separation from their old colleagues lasted only until the following year, when the union of the two companies on a new basis took place. From this period until the close of her career, Madame Champmeslé's popularity, which had augmented with every successive addition to her répertoire, remained unshaken, and she was universally regarded as the sole representative of tragedy capable of adequately realising the conceptions of Racine. Her name, indeed, is inseparably connected with that of the great writer to whom she was indebted for her most signal triumphs: *Bérénice*, *Atalide*, *Monime*, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and *Phèdre*, originally played by her, had little in common with such rhapsodies as *Falvie* in Pradon's *Régulus* or the *Judith* of the Abbé Boyer; and if she succeeded in obtaining for these a patient hearing, what enthusiasm must she not have excited by the twofold attraction of her own genius and the melodious versification of the poet! One simple phrase in the part of *Monime*, "Seigneur, vous changez de visage!" is said to have been uttered by her with a peculiar significance of expression that no other actress has ever equalled; and the effect produced on the spectators by her performance of *Iphigénie* has been thus described by Boileau:

Jamais Iphigénie en Aulide immolée
Ne eût tant de pleurs à la Grèce assemblée,
Que dans l'heureux spectacle à nos yeux étalé,
En a fait sous son nom verser la Champmeslé.

The first interview between Racine and his fascinating interpreter is said to have dated from the evening of her appearance as *Hermione*—an experiment he was naturally curious to witness. During the earlier scenes of the play, he is recorded to have more than once expressed his dissatisfaction, but the impassioned energy displayed by her in the two last acts so powerfully affected him, that at the close of the tragedy he hurried to her dressing-room, and overwhelmed her with compliments and thanks. We may fairly conclude that this unexpected discovery of a highly gifted artist, on whose intelligent co-operation he could safely rely, encouraged him to new efforts, and that many of his noblest productions were partially, if not wholly, inspired by her; for at a period when the highest tragic requisites

were supposed to consist in a measured and monotonous declamation, who but Champmeslé could have successfully embodied the creations of his fancy, and rendered with equal perfection the touching pathos of *Iphigénie*, or the despairing majesty of *Phèdre*!

It is not surprising that Racine's admiration of the fair *Hermione*, so openly expressed on their first meeting, and subsequently heightened by frequent intercourse, should have gradually ripened into a tenderer sentiment; nor can we wonder if on her side she felt flattered by the attentions of one who, in addition to his literary celebrity, enjoyed the reputation of being counted among the handsomest men in France. Their attachment, indeed, seems by all accounts to have been mutual, at least for a time, until the lady's natural inclination to coquetry, and the marked preference evinced by her for the Comte de Clermont-Tonnerre,* abruptly terminated an intimacy which, according to the testimony of Boileau and Madame de Sévigné, had become the talk of the town. "Racine," says the latter, "writes pieces for Champmeslé, more with a view to please her than for the sake of posterity; when he is older and no longer in love, it will be quite another thing." Later still, her son, Charles de Sévigné, having in his turn been subjugated by the charms of the siren, the lively marquise complaisantly alludes to the latter as her "daughter-in-law." That she thought highly of her talent, the following extracts from her letters will show. "Talking of the theatre, I send you Bajazet; if at the same time I could send you Champmeslé, you would find the piece excellent; without her it loses half its value." "We have seen Bajazet; my daughter-in-law seems to me to be the most marvellous actress I ever saw." "Champmeslé is something so extraordinary, that in your whole life you have seen nothing like her; people go to the theatre for her, not for what she plays. I went to see *Ariane* solely on her account; the piece is insipid and the actors are detestable, but when she appears there is a murmur of delight, everyone is enchanted, and the whole house weeps at her despair!"

Another of her constant admirers was La Fontaine, who dedicated to her his poetic tale of *Belphegor*, probably the most

* This episode in the actress's life gave rise to the not over witty saying that "le tonnerre l'avait déracinée."

flattering homage she ever received. He says :

Nous noms unis perceront l'onde noire ;
 Vous régnerez longtemps dans la mémoire,
 Après avoir régné jusques ici
 Dans les esprits et dans les cœurs aussi.
 Qui ne connaît l'inimitable actrice
 Représentant ou Phèdre, ou Bérénice,
 Chimène en pleurs, ou Camille en fureur ?
 Est-il quelqu'un que votre voix n'enchanté,
 S'en trouve-t-il une autre aussi touchante,
 Une autre enfin allant si droit au cœur ?
 N'attendez pas que je fasse l'éloge
 De ce qu'en vous on trouve de parfait ;
 Comme il n'est point de grâce qui n'y loge,
 Ce serait trop ; je n'aurais jamais fait.

When absent from Paris, he corresponded frequently with her, but only one of his letters has been preserved, dated from the Château Thierry in 1678. "The heat," he writes, "and the loss of your society makes us all feel insupportably dull. As far as you are concerned, I need not ask you how you are amusing yourself ; I can see it from here. You are the centre of attraction from morning to night, and are perpetually ravaging the hearts of fresh victims. Everything, in short, belongs either to the King of France or to Madame Champmeslé."

It does not appear that, apart from her artistic qualities, the intellectual capacity of this celebrated actress was in any way remarkable ; her education had been almost entirely neglected, and if we may judge from an anecdote current at the time, she must have been more than ordinarily naïve. She is reported to have asked Racine from what source he had taken the subject of *Athalie*, and on his replying from the Old Testament ; "The Old Testament !" she exclaimed in a tone of surprise, "I thought somebody had written a new one !" She had, however, acquired a certain familiarity with the usages of society which, combined with a graceful piquancy and a peculiar charm of manner, rendered her as attractive in private life as she was on the stage. Without being strictly beautiful, for she had small eyes and a sallow complexion, the expression of her countenance was extremely pleasing ; in stature she was tall and well-proportioned, and admirably fitted to represent the heroines of the classic drama. But the real secret of her influence over the spectators consisted in a voice of extraordinary compass and touching sweetness, which she managed with such infinite skill as to vary its inflections according to the impulse of the moment, now drawing tears from every eye by its melodious tenderness, now bursting into a whirlwind

of passion so marvellously sonorous, that its accents were audible in the adjoining Café Procope. For, it must be remembered that, at the period alluded to, the fashion of declaiming verse like the recitative of an opera was still in vogue, and continued to obtain until the early part of the following century, when a more natural way of speaking was first adopted by Adrienne Lecouvreur. As the author of *Les Entretien des Galants*, published in 1682, justly remarks : "Tragedy, as recited by our actors, is merely a species of singing, and you will own that Champmeslé would scarcely please you as much as she does, if her voice were less agreeable. She modulates it, however, so exquisitely, and so eloquent are its intonations, that whatever passion she desires to simulate appears to come direct from her heart." It must have been no easy task to express in this sort of sing-song the ravings of Oreste and the anguish of Camille, and the famous monologue of *Théramène* in *Phèdre* must have sorely tried the patience of the listeners ; but this apparent incongruity presented no difficulty to Madame Champmeslé, for we are assured that, so genuine was her emotion, and so irresistible the effect of her pathetic declamation, not even the most stoical could avoid being moved by it. On the other hand, she was deplorably weak in comedy, and indeed hardly ever attempted it, one or two unsuccessful essays in the ancient répertoire having been sufficient to discourage her ; nor during the whole of her career have we been able to discover a single comic part originally created by her.

Towards the end of 1684 her brother Nicolas, tired of his protracted sojourn at Copenhagen and anxious to return to Paris, solicited her to obtain for him from Louis the Fourteenth the necessary permission to appear at the Théâtre Français ; and, his reception without preparatory début having been accorded by special favour, joined the company early in the following year. He proved a great acquisition to the theatre in the very elastic line of parts called "les paysans," and many of Dancourt's comedies were written expressly for him ; his daughter, Charlotte Desmares, became afterwards (from 1699 to 1721) one of the most accomplished *soubrettes* of the Comédie Française.

It is generally asserted that no authentic portrait exists of Madame Champmeslé. There is extant an engraving by Lefèvre, after a miniature formerly belonging to

M. de la Mésengère, bearing her name, but in no respect answering the description given of her by contemporary writers; nor, as far as our recollection serves us, is she included in the curious pictorial gallery adorning the private foyer of the Théâtre Français. M. Arsène Houssaye, however, in his *Princesses de Comédie et Déeses d'Opéra*, distinctly mentions a likeness of her in his possession, representing "une figure noble, fière et fine;" and it seems moreover improbable that at a time when Mignard and Rigaud flourished, neither of them should have handed down to posterity the features of so remarkable a model.

In December, 1697, after a few performances of *Iphigénie* in the *Oreste* et *Pylade* of Lagrange Chancel—the notorious author of the libels against the regent—she was compelled by the failing state of her health to retire, temporarily, as she thought, from the stage, and endeavour to recruit her strength at a country house belonging to her at Auteuil. There the unfavourable symptoms gradually increased, and before many weeks had elapsed, all hopes of her ultimate recovery were at an end. Racine, in his letters to his son, affirms that, though greatly terrified by the approach of death, she was even more alarmed at the idea of formally renouncing her profession, declaring her wish to die as she had lived—an actress. The *Curé* of Saint Sulpice, however, anxious to secure so important a convert, prevailed upon her to submit; and having been reconciled to the church, she expired May 15th, 1698, in her fifty-seventh year. Racine adds that in her last moments, while expressing sincere repentance for her past life, she owned that, above all, she was "sorry to die."

Her husband, with whom, notwithstanding her frequent infidelities, she appears to have lived on excellent terms, survived her three years, and the following singular anecdote referring to his death is related by the commentator of Boileau's works. In the night of August 20th, 1701, he dreamt that he saw his mother and his wife together, and that the latter beckoned to him with her finger. Strongly impressed with the conviction that the visit was intended as a warning, he went next morning to the church of the Cordeliers, and gave a thirty-sous piece to the sacristan, requesting him to have a mass said for his mother, and another for his wife. On the sacristan's offering to return him the

remaining ten sous, he refused to receive them, saying that the third mass should be for himself, and that he would stay and hear it. When it was over, he repaired to the theatre, and some of the actors not having arrived, seated himself on a bench in front of a cabaret, called *L'Alliance*, and conversed with his comrades as they came up, reminding one of them, Sallé, that he had promised to dine with him that day. Suddenly he put his hand to his head, and without uttering another word fell forward on his face; when Desmares and others lifted him from the ground, he was dead!

GEORGIE'S WOOER.

A STORY IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS.
CHAPTER VII.

BEDINGFIELD HARPER was one of those social quicksands that present a smooth and tempting surface to the eye, and lure the unwary to certain destruction. Like the quicksand, after engulfing others in ruin, he looked still unchanged, still unruffled, and never seemed to be the worse himself for the social eclipse of those he led into paths that were anything but "paths of peace."

If a new commercial bubble was started, and by some quiet arrangement Bedingfield Harper received a snug premium on every thousand invested by those who were guided by his candid advice to these investments—who was the wiser?

In our great centres of commerce this sort of charlatany goes on daily, and is known by business men to exist, though in nine cases out of ten it would be difficult to bring such transactions home to any particular individual.

Harper called himself a London stock-broker, and was essentially a City man; a City man who made many acquaintances among the outer fringe of the aristocracy, and dined occasionally in Belgravia. He had a fair, open countenance, bold blue eyes, and bushy whiskers, and a sort of you-may-trust-me manner that was very taking. There was not a single landmark either in look or manner to warn the unwary individual who, not much of a business man himself, had a few thousands to invest, and was thankful to Providence for putting in his way such a genial, straightforward fellow as the good-looking stockbroker. If his general costume, and his various articles of jewellery, was a thought too loud to be

"good form" in Pall Mall or St. James's Street, why, of course, these little peculiarities are to be expected in "City men;" and then, "Harper was such a good fellow!"

There is no reputation in the world so advantageous to a man as that of being "a good fellow;" no cloak under which he may be such a thoroughly bad fellow. When you come to try and boil down this reputation, and see what ingredients it is composed of, the result is unsatisfactory to a degree; and you find that the structure rests upon a remarkably flimsy foundation. But, in spite of this, the man is considered a "good fellow," and he trades upon it.

Thus the victims of Bedingfield Harper were so unwilling to distrust him, that even when blank despair stared in their pale faces and claimed them for its own, they had been known to make every conceivable excuse for the ignis fatuus that had led them into the quagmire, and express their firm conviction that "Harper had done his best," and felt the painfulness of their position "as much as they did themselves."

He had a habit of addressing a man whom he was leading into slippery places as "My dear fellow;" and, Pecksniff-like, had a weak place in his heart for any dear orphan or defenceless widow with a small property to invest.

A loyal-hearted, simple, honest sailor like Captain Hammond was just the man to fall into the toils of a spider so skilled in weaving webs for unwary flies; and very shortly after an unhappy chance had brought him across the stockbroker's path, the whole management of his affairs was in that individual's hands. If the newly-started company that was to have doubled and trebled the few thousand pounds, which, added to his half-pay, made Captain Hammond a comparatively rich man, did not do so, but, on the contrary, swallowed them up as easily and completely as the boa-constrictor at the Zoological Gardens bolts an innocent, mild-faced rabbit, who so inconsolable at the unfortunate turn of affairs as Bedingfield Harper?

A week after Captain Hammond's funeral, he appeared at Beach House, having been quite unable, so he assured Miss Hammond, to refrain from taking the long journey from London, to express to her in person his sympathy and sorrow in the sad bereavement she had sustained.

Georgie had been at the seaside with

the love-birds at the time of her father's acquaintance with Mr. Harper, and was surprised to hear that gentleman speak in such familiar and warm terms of his "poor friend;" and there was an open admiration of herself in his manner which hurt her pride, as the touch of a hand makes the graceful acacia shrink.

Truth to tell, Mr. Harper was contrasting in his own mind the slight yet rounded figure, the sad, sweet eyes, and delicate lips before him, with the too substantial charms of his liege lady, a woman many years his senior, and married for the sake of certain moneys invested in the Funds, his own funds having been in a very low condition at the time. "It is to me a painful duty," he said, rubbing his large white hands slowly together, and speaking in a mysterious and sympathetic voice—"indeed, I may say one of the most painful duties I have ever been called upon to perform—to tell you, Miss Hammond—ahem!—that your father's affairs are in a very, a very unsatisfactory state."

"She's a plucky one!" he thought to himself, as he saw a quiver pass across her face, and her hand grasp the table by which she sat.

"I knew," she said, after a moment's silence, "that you had the management of papa's business matters, and I fear—I sadly fear—that the anxiety of knowing that things were going wrong—"

"Pardon me, Miss Hammond," said her visitor, rising, and assuming an air of righteous candour. "You say I had the management of my lamented friend's affairs. Now, above all things, I like to be accurate: the late Captain Hammond"—oh, how his hearer quivered at these words!—"came to me, advised to do so by a friend, and consulted me as to the investment of certain sums left to him, as I understood, by an uncle who had lived to a great age; and, being something of a miser, hoarded, without judiciously investing his money. Permit me to say, your father was not as cautious as I could have wished. I said to him: 'This scheme is a newly-started affair; I know little or nothing of it. The interest is good, I may say tempting; but—'"

"Mr. Harper," said Georgie, interrupting him, while a rich flood of crimson dyed her hitherto pale cheek, "I will never hear from any human being one breath against my dearest father. Whatever he did was done for—for our sakes." Here the poor child had hard work to keep back a

sob—for oh, the bitterness of the thought that he was here no longer to love and watch over his children!

"When I said just now," she continued, recovering herself, "that you had the management of papa's affairs, I only quoted his own words to me some time ago. That he said so is enough to make it for me a certain fact—and one which no explaining away could in the smallest degree alter. I do not wish to seem ungrateful for your kindness in coming so far to explain my position to me."

"Oh Miss Hammond, there is no gratitude needed," said the would-be charming stockbroker; "a journey which has procured me the pleasure——"

Georgie did not speak, only looked at him; but that look stopped his fluent flow of words as surely as though someone had clapped a handkerchief over his mouth.

"Explain to me, if you please, Mr. Harper, the exact position in which our affairs now stand—plainly and straightforwardly, if you please—so that I may learn what steps it will be right for me to take."

He was like a whipped hound before the girl's maidenly dignity. He hastened to lay aside his complimentary manner—the manner that others less fastidious than Georgie Hammond had pronounced "so charming"—and became at once simply a business man, engaged in a business interview.

Poor Georgie! she needed all her courage before that interview was over; and when Bedingfield Harper had hurried away to catch the last train from Collingford, and the twins came downstairs clamouring for a story to be told by the firelight, she held Tricksy very close in her arms, and made Jack nestle against her knee, and was silent for a long while, till Tricksy, feeling something hot fall upon her face, put up her hand, and said: "Oh Jack, sissy's c'ying—c'ying ever so!"

"My darlings! my darlings!" said poor sister, and kissed them through her tears, "I cannot tell you a story to-night!"

Georgie was realising the bitterness of her sorrow—realising the one great, cruel truth that she stood alone in the world, and that where hitherto a loving hand had guided her, a loving arm been ever ready to shield her from the wind of heaven lest it might "visit her cheek too roughly," that fond protection was gone, and the

world, with all the possibilities of suffering it contained, had to be faced—alone!

"Mrs. Hainsleigh!" said the housemaid, flinging open the door, and so impressed with the dignity and importance of the mistress of Fern Leigh that she put an extra amount of aspiration on the superfluous "h."

Then the firelight glinted on the costly velvet Mrs. Ainsleigh wore, and showed Georgie a gentle, sympathetic face, and two hands outstretched in a warm, almost tender, greeting.

Which of us has not, at one time or other of our lives, lived through days, or weeks, or months, with an undercurrent, silent yet powerful, unconsciously perhaps to ourselves, underlying every word and act—something that must be set aside, put out of our immediate sight by the force of external circumstances around us—and yet that in our moments of inaction and rest makes itself felt as one of the threads in the cord of life that fate is spinning for us?

It had been so with Georgie. When Douglas Ainsleigh left Sheeling so abruptly—left her in her day of sorrow and pain—she hid deep down in her heart the thoughts and the hopes that had been timid only because they dared not be tender, the sweet, shy joy that had been a new experience in her life, that had held fond greetings, and partings that were a "pleasing pain." The agony of dread, and then the loss of the one who had been such a close companion and loving protector, who had been not only father, but friend, came between her heart and the dawn of love, as a heavy storm-cloud hides the morning sun from the world, and overshadows the glory of his rising.

But now—now that Mrs. Ainsleigh stood beside her, and held her hands so tenderly, with a graceful refinement expressing sympathy more by looks than words—the buried thoughts of the past arose, the thought of Douglas Ainsleigh, the man who had taught her to listen for the sound of his footstep, and her heart to flutter when at last she heard it, with a gladness that was half fear. She thought of the hasty parting, and the grey eyes, generally so keen, softened into anxious, loving pity as they lingered on her face; and, perhaps unconsciously to herself, that strange likeness of voice and manner which we may almost always notice among members of the same family, even when no

personal resemblance can be traced, helped to render more vivid to Georgie the thought of Mrs. Ainsleigh's son.

"I fear it is very late for me to have ventured to call upon you," said the visitor, as she took a seat by the fire; "but I only reached Fern Leigh a couple of hours ago."

"I did not know you were away," replied Georgie, with a little sigh of relief at finding she had not been so much forgotten as she thought.

Then came explanations as to the note which had never reached its destination; and Tricky and Jack were kissed and talked to before they departed under the wing of Nurse Hughes.

By thus avoiding all allusion at first to the bitter loss Georgie had sustained since they last met, Mrs. Ainsleigh gave her time to overcome the nervousness we all feel at meeting those who see us newly in our day of sorrow; but when the children were gone, and they two sat together by the cheery firelight, then, with infinite gentleness, she touched upon the events of the past month—so gently, indeed, that for the first time since Captain Hammond's death something like comfort gathered about Georgie's heart.

"You must let me come and see you very often; and come to Fern Leigh, and bring those little ones with you. It is not good for you, my dear, to stay too much alone; and until you have formed some plans for the future, you must let me tyrannise over you, and fancy that I am quite an old friend."

"You are very good," returned Georgie, drawing a deep breath, as we do when we are about to plunge into something we know will hurt very much, and which there is no way out of; "but my plans are already made. It is hard for me to have to speak of all this, Mrs. Ainsleigh, but I must try and explain it all to you. My dearest father was very, very unfortunate just before he died, and, all through trying to do his best for us whom he loved, he lost everything he had. I don't mean just a few hundred pounds, but all—everything. And the worst of it is, that I am afraid—oh no, not afraid only, but I know—his fears for us—broke his heart . . ."

Here the girl had to stop a moment; and her companion was silent too.

"Mr. Harper, the man who managed papa's affairs for him, has been to see me, and he tells me there is nothing left; and,

worse than this, there are some liabilities still that papa would have had to pay, and that of course must be paid as quickly as I can manage it. We bought the furniture of this house when we came at a valuation, and I should think there can be no difficulty in selling it for the same again?"

Georgie looked enquiringly at her visitor as she said this, and Mrs. Ainsleigh felt a thrill of pity for the slight, girlish creature so bravely trying to stand up and face the difficulties of her position. Other thoughts, too, passed through her mind, and pained her still more deeply—thoughts against which her better nature rebelled, and yet which, in spite of herself, chilled her manner towards Georgie as an easterly breeze chills a warm summer's day.

"Have you no one who can take these matters in hand, and act for you?" she said, flicking the fur of her mantle with one dainty glove, and developing altogether a strange restlessness of manner alien to her usual sauvy of demeanour.

"No," replied Georgie, sensitively conscious of some change of atmosphere, yet at a loss to understand in what it consisted. "My mother was an only child, and so was papa; so we have fewer relatives than most people. I think it was kind of Mr. Harper to come such a long distance to see me and explain it all. He had written just before—just before my great sorrow, and, receiving no answer, thought it best to come. He had not chanced to see, so he said, the—the reason of this silence."

Another pause here, for the brave girl was determined not to break down.

"If I can pay off these liabilities of which Mr. Harper spoke, then I can set myself to work for us all; and that is what I should like to ask your help in, Mrs. Ainsleigh."

The grey glove still passed over and over the soft fur, the firelight shone on the braids of snow-white hair, but the dark eyes were not as calm and sweet as they were wont to be.

"Surely there can be no need for you to work," she said unasily. "After serving his country for so many years, it is hardly likely your father's children can be left without some provision, some pension or other?"

And Mrs. Ainsleigh was right in saying that such a thing seems almost beyond belief, that a man gives the best years of his life, risks that life if need be in the service of his country, and then, when he has borne "the burden and heat

of the day," and death claims him, his grateful country makes no provision for the helpless children he may leave behind him. But such is the state of matters; and in this the navy is worse off than the army—which, by-the-way, is saying a good deal, when we think of the miserable pittance an officer's widow and children receive, even when climate and hard work have helped to make them desolate and perhaps homeless in the world.

When a naval officer dies on half-pay, his children may receive some small amount of assistance, provided due representation be made that the case is a really urgent one. In fact, not only must pride be brought low, but it must actually be made to bite the dust—to tear aside the covering that delicacy prompts us all to wrap round our poverty, and, like the beggars in the streets, of a continental town, expose our sores and our suffering, in order that a galling charity may be doled out with niggard hand.

All this poor Georgie knew, from the case of a friend in which her father had, in days past, interested himself; and all this she explained to Mrs. Ainsleigh, her colour coming and going, her eyes sparkling with the light of a pride vehement enough to dry up for a time the passionate tears of a sorrow whose depths she alone could fathom.

"Of course," she said, "if it comes to that, that there should be a need for help to my darlings, I must write to some of papa's old friends in the navy and see what can be done; but not till I have tried—not till I have tried very hard indeed. I think my strength lies in my fingers," she went on, with a sad smile, holding out her soft white hands to the fire, "and that is how you can help me if you will, Mrs. Ainsleigh. Papa was so proud of my playing, you know, and always gave me the best instruction and masters, that I think I ought to be able to get on as a music-mistress in a town

like Collingford, and my idea is to go into cheap lodgings there and try to get pupils——"

Georgie stopped short, for something in Mrs. Ainsleigh's face made her fear that she had been mistaken in asking for help in this wonderfully wise plan of hers.

"You see, I thought you must know people there, and that a word from you would——" she stammered.

Mrs. Ainsleigh rose, seemingly more agitated than the occasion could well account for.

"I am very sorry for all this. I know many people in the neighbourhood of Collingford. I will do all I can."

Then she hesitated a moment, and said, without looking at the girl who stood before her, very pale, and troubled-looking:

"My son was most anxious about your poor father when he left Fern Leigh; he feels deeply for your loss, Miss Hammond."

But to this Georgie made no reply.

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DR. CARRICK.

BY M. E. BRADDON.

CHAPTER I. THE DOCTOR.

DR. CARRICK was a man of genius whose life had been a failure. On his five-and-fortieth birthday he looked back, with a gloomy gaze, upon a career that had not been brightened by one solitary success. Most men have their intervals of good luck, but in the desert of this man's life there had been no green spot. People spoke well of him, lauded him for his high principles and rugged honesty, but they began to call him poor Carrick. That was bitter.

He had practised as a physician in many places. First in a quiet country town, where he kept his gig, and pinched himself in order to feed his horse, and where he simulated success by the respectability of his appearance and surroundings. But the cost of his house and servants, his horse and gig, sleek broad-cloth and fine linen, crushed him. He succumbed under the severe proprieties of provincial life, and went to London, thinking to find there a wider field for his abilities.

He found the field wide enough, so wide indeed that nobody seemed aware of his existence. If he had been a clever quack who made bread pills, he might have advertised his way to fortune; but he was only a man who had adopted a difficult profession from sheer love of science, and

who asked for nothing better than to be able to live by his talent, and to go on extending his experience and adding to his knowledge.

Dr. Carrick tried London, from the western suburbs to the heights of Pentonville, from Bloomsbury to Blackfriars, from Lambeth to Bow, and he left it, after fifteen weary years, as poor a man as when he entered that stony wilderness, save for a legacy of three hundred and forty pounds from an octogenarian great-aunt, whose very existence he had forgotten till this godsend dropped into his lap.

His professional labours in the metropolis had given him just a bare livelihood. He was a man of exceptional temperance and self-denial, and could live upon a pittance which, for a less Spartan mind, would have meant starvation. He left London without a debt, and with a decent coat on his back; and perhaps the monster city, beneath whose feet many a pearl is flung to be trampled into the mire, has seldom cast out of its bosom, unknown and unvalued, a cleverer man than Theodore Carrick.

That legacy—the first boon which fortune had ever bestowed upon him—was a turning-point in Dr. Carrick's life. It can hardly be said to have made him richer, for, with the three hundred and forty pounds, his great-aunt had left him something else—a distant cousin of two-and-twenty, a gentle, patient, willing girl, with a pale placid face, dark hazel eyes, and dark brown hair, that had a tinge of

ruddy gold in the sunshine. This fourth or fifth cousin of the doctor's was one of those waifs, which the sea of life is always throwing up on the bleak shores of adversity. No shipwrecked princess in sweet Shakespearian story, was ever more helpless and alone than Hester Rushton at the beginning of life. Old Mrs. Hedger, hearing of the untimely end of the girl's parents, had taken her at the age of twelve, as companion, protégée, drudge, and victim. As a child, Hester had endured the old lady's tempers with unvarying patience; as a girl she had waited upon her, and nursed her with unfailing care. But she never learned to flatter or to fawn, so Mrs. Hedger left her old servant Betty a thousand pounds, and Hester only a hundred.

When Dr. Carrick went down to the little Hertfordshire village to attend his aunt's funeral, in the character of a grateful legatee, he found Hester Rushton among the other goods and chattels in the house of death, and with very little more idea as to her future destiny than the chairs and tables, which were to be sold by the auctioneer on the following Monday.

"And what are you going to do, Miss Rushton?" asked Dr. Carrick, when the funeral was over.

"I don't know," said Hester simply.

And then the tears came into her eyes at the thought of her loneliness. The old lady had never been particularly kind to her, but she had given her lodging, and food, and raiment; and life, though joyless, had been sheltered from the bleak winds of misfortune.

"I suppose I shall go and live—some-where," said Hester vaguely. "I can get a room in the village for four shillings a week, and perhaps I might get some children to teach—very little children, who would not want to learn much."

"I think you had much better come and live with me," said Dr. Carrick. "I am going to buy a country practice, some-where in the West of England, where living is cheap; you can come and keep house for me."

Hester accepted the offer as frankly as it was made.

"Do you really think I could be useful to you?" she asked. "I used to look after the house, and indeed do a good deal of the house-work for aunt Hedger, but, I shouldn't like to be a burden to you," concluded Hester, very seriously. She

was a conscientious little thing, and had never had a selfish thought in her life.

The idea that it might not be strictly correct, or in accordance with the laws of society, that a young lady of two-and-twenty should keep house for a gentleman of five-and-forty, never entered her mind. Her only anxiety was not to impose upon her cousin Carrick's goodness.

"You will not be a burden to me," answered Dr. Carrick. "Poor as I am, I have always been cheated by my servants. Yes, even when I have been so low in the world as to have nobody but a charwoman, that charwoman has stolen my coals, and taken toll of my tea and sugar. You will save me more than you will cost me."

So it came to pass that Dr. Carrick gave a hundred and fifty pounds for a practice in a Cornish village, within half-a-dozen miles of Penzance, and set up house-keeping in a roomy old house, on a hill above the broad Atlantic; a house whose windows looked down upon a wild rock-bound shore, where the wide-winged cormorants perched upon the craggy pinnacles of serpentine, and where the sea in sunny weather wore the changeful colours of a dolphin's back.

CHAPTER II. HIS PATIENT.

FOR the first three years, Dr. Carrick's life at the village of St. Hildred was, like all that had gone before it, a hard struggle for the bare necessities of existence. Provisions were cheap at St. Hildred, and it was the fashion to live simply, or else in those first years the doctor could hardly have lived at all. He soon won for himself a reputation for skill in his profession, and people believed in that grave earnest manner of his, the dark deep-set eyes, pale passionless face, and high bald brow. He was more respected than liked by the lower orders, while he was too grave and wise for the fox-hunting squires and their homely wives; but, happily, all agreed in believing him clever, so that by the end of those probationary years, he had acquired a practice which just enabled him to maintain his small household decently, keep his horse, and indulge himself with a new suit of clothes once a year.

This was not much to have gained at the end of eight-and-twenty years of toil and study, and anyone who looked in the doctor's face, could see there the stamp of a disappointed life. His spirits had sunk into a settled melancholy, from which he rarely took the trouble to rouse himself.

In his professional work his manner was quick, decisive, trenchant; at home he gave himself up to thought and study.

Hester—or Hettie as she was more familiarly called—had proved a domestic treasure. She kept the big, rambling old house as neat as a new pin, with only the aid of a ruddy-cheeked buxom Cornish girl, whose wages were five pounds a year. She had brightened up the old furniture—left by the doctor's predecessor, and bought cheap by the doctor—in such a marvellous way, that the clumsy old chairs and tables looked almost handsome. The bedrooms, with their low ceilings, wide fireplaces, huge four-post bedsteads, and dark damask draperies, had a gloom which even her art could not dispel; and there were abiding shadows on the darksome old staircase, and in the long narrow corridors, that suggested ghostly visitors. Indeed, it was because the house had long enjoyed the reputation of being haunted, that the doctor had taken it. The Cornish mind was averse from ghosts, so the rent of St. Hildred House was almost ridiculously small.

One bleak March evening, Dr. Carrick was summoned to a patient at a distance. The night was wild and rough for a long ride upon a lonely road, and the doctor was tired after his day's work; but the words Tregonnell Manor, pronounced by the rosy-faced maid-of-all-work, acted like a charm. He started up from his comfortable armchair, flung his book aside, and went out into the dimly-lighted hall. The door was open, and a man on horseback was waiting in front of it.

"Has Mr. Tregonnell come back to the manor?" asked the doctor.

"Yes, sir. Master came home this morning. He's not been well for some time—a nasty low fever hanging about him—but he kept out with his yacht as long as he could, coasting about Spain and the south of France. Yesterday we put in at Plymouth, and came home early this morning by the night coach. He's looking right-down bad, and he sent me to ask you to ride over."

"I'll come directly. Is there a medicine-chest at Tregonnell?"

"There be a chest, I know; but I can't say as there's anything in it."

"I'd better bring what I'm likely to want. I'll go and saddle my horse."

Throughout his residence at St. Hildred, the doctor had groomed his horse. There

was no horse better groomed or better fed in the neighbourhood.

Tregonnell Manor was the most important place between the Land's End and the Lizard; a good old house of the Elizabethan period, with a fine estate attached to it. The Tregonnells, once a large family, had dwindled down to a single descendant, a bachelor of three-and-thirty, who was rumoured to have lived a wild life in London and other great cities, to have made shipwreck of a fine constitution, and to be not altogether right in his mind. His appearances at Tregonnell Manor were fitful and unexpected. He never stayed there long, and he never seemed to know what to do with his life when he was there. He avoided all society, and his only pleasure appeared to be in yachting. He was an excellent sailor, commanded his own yacht, and went everywhere, from the Start Point to the Black Sea.

Dr. Carrick had heard a great deal about this Squire Tregonnell—the last of the good old-Tregonnell race—men who had worn sword and gown, and had played their part in every great struggle, from the Wars of the Roses to the Battle of the Boyne. He knew that Eustace Tregonnell was one of the richest men in this part of the country. A valuable patient for a struggling physician, assuredly.

The stable clock at Tregonnell Manor was striking ten, as the doctor and the groom rode in at the open gate between tall stone pillars crowned with the Tregonnell escutcheon. By the half light of a waning moon, drifting in a sea of clouds, the grounds of the manor-house looked gloomy and unbeautiful, the house itself sombre and uninviting. Within, all had the same air of abiding gloom. The dark oak walls and old pictures, the rusty armour, the low ceilings, and deep-set doors were unbrightened by any of the signs of occupation or family life. Tregonnell Manor looked what it was, the house of a man who had never found, or hoped to find, happiness in his home. An old servant opened a door and ushered the doctor into a large room, lined with books. Mr. Tregonnell sat by the wide hearth, where the neglected logs were dropping into gray ash, a small table with a reading-lamp by his side. This lamp was the only light in the room. It illuminated the table and a narrow circle round it, and left all else in deep shadow.

"Good evening, doctor," said Mr. Tre-

gonnell, pleasantly enough, shutting his book, and motioning the doctor to a chair on the opposite side of the hearth.

The face which he turned to Dr. Carrick was a remarkable and an interesting one. Ruins are always interesting; and this face was the ruin of one of the handsomest faces Dr. Carrick had ever seen. A face pale as marble, eyes of that dark gray which looks black, a broad brow, whose whiteness was made more striking by the blackness of the thick short hair that framed it, features well and firmly carved, and about all an expression of intense melancholy—that utter weariness of life, which is more difficult to cure than any other form of depression. Premature lines marked the broad brow, the cheeks were hollow, the eyes wan and haggard. If this man were indeed the last and sole representative of the Tregonnell race, that race seemed in sore danger of extinction.

Dr. Carrick felt his new patient's pulse, and looked at him thoughtfully for a minute or so, in the vivid light of the reading-lamp.

He made none of the stereotyped enquiries.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked bluntly. "You know much better than I can tell you."

"A restlessness that impels me to be continually shifting the scene of my life; an indescribable disgust at everything, and a hatred of all places; a feeling that I have lived too long, and yet that I don't quite want to die."

"You have made a mistake common to young men who have fine constitutions and fine fortunes. You have fancied both inexhaustible."

"I have been extravagant, but I have hardly spent my income," answered Mr. Tregonnell frankly; "but I daresay I have used my constitution rather badly. I had a disappointment early in life—I daresay you have heard the story. I wanted to marry a woman whom my father was pleased to call my inferior, though she was as much my superior then as a woman, as she is now as a sinless soul in paradise. He gave me a yacht, for which I had been longing, and sent me abroad to cure myself of my fancy. I was happy enough in the bustle and variety of my life, thinking that things would work round in time, and that I should come home and find my darling true to me, and my father more indulgent. I wrote to her from every port, and in every letter told her the same

story. We had only to be true to each other, and to wait for happier days. I should wait, if need were, till my hair grew gray. I was away a year, and my life during all that time was such a wandering one, that it was no surprise to me to find my letters unanswered. When I came back, I found a grave, and discovered later, that my sweet girl had been sent to drudge as an articulated pupil in a school at Exeter. Not one of my letters had been given to her. They would only have unsettled her, her wicked old hag of a grandmother told me. I knew afterwards, that my father had bought her people over to his interests. She had no mother. Her father was a weak-minded sot; her grandmother a greedy time-serving old harridan. Between them they killed her, and broke my heart. That was the beginning of my wild career, Dr. Carrick. Not a very cheerful one, was it?"

"A common story, I fear."

"Yes; wrecked and ruined lives are common enough, I daresay. They fill the Haymarket, and keep gambling-houses going, and swell the excise. I went to London after my father's death, and from London to Paris, and from Paris to Vienna. There is very little wildness or wickedness in those three cities, that I could not enlighten you about. A man cannot touch pitch without defilement. I didn't steep myself to the lips in pitch, or wallow in it, and enjoy it as some men do; but I touched it, and the taint cleaves to me. There is nothing in this world that men call pleasure, which has the faintest charm for me. My nights are restless, and troubled with feverish dreams. And sometimes—sometimes—I start up with a sudden thrill of horror going through me like an arrow, and feel as if the hair of my head were lifted up, like Job's, at a vision of hideous fear."

"What is it you fear?"

"Madness," answered Eustace Tregonnell, in a half-whisper. "It has appeared more than once in my family. My grandfather died mad. Sometimes I fancy that I can feel it coming. It has seemed near at hand, even. I have looked in the glass, started at my haggard face, hardly recognising myself, and have cried out involuntarily: 'That is the face of a madman!'"

"A not unnatural result of sleepless and troubled nights," answered the doctor quietly. "Do you know that a week's insomnia—one little week absolutely without sleep—has been known to result in

temporary lunacy? That was an extreme case, of course; but the man who can't sleep comfortably is always in a bad way. You must have refreshing sleep, Mr. Tregonnell, or your fears may be realised."

"Where are the drugs that will give it me? I have tried them all. The sole effect of opiates is to send me into a fever, and to make me twice as wakeful as I am without them."

"I should not recommend opiates in your case."

"What would you recommend then?"

"Mesmerism."

Mr. Tregonnell smiled, a smile at once contemptuous and impatient.

"I sent for a physician, whose sagacity I have heard highly lauded. I did not expect to meet——"

"A quack," said Dr. Carrick. "Yes, I know that mesmerism ranks with table-turning and other juggleries. A striking proof of the ignorance of the popular mind upon all scientific questions outside the narrow range of old-established orthodoxy."

And then Dr. Carrick went on to discourse eloquently upon mesmerism as a curative agent. He told Mr. Tregonnell about Dr. Esdaile's experiments in the native hospital in Calcutta; he argued warmly in favour of an influence which was evidently with him a favourite subject of study.

"Have you tried this wonderful agent upon any of your Cornish patients?" asked Mr. Tregonnell.

"I am not such a fool. A century ago they would have punished mesmerism under the head of witchcraft, to-day they would scout it as quackery. I talk freely to you, because I take you for a reasonable and enlightened being."

"Do you think I am a subject for mesmerism?"

"I know you are, and an excellent one."

"Mesmerise me, then," said Mr. Tregonnell quietly, throwing himself back in his chair, and fixing his dark haggard eyes upon the doctor.

"In this house? Impossible! I should throw you into a sleep which would last for hours; a sleep of deepest unconsciousness, from which the loudest noises would not awaken you; a sleep in which you would be even insensible to pain. Your servants would take alarm. My coming and going might seem strange; and, in short, if I am to cure you by means of mesmerism, as I know I can—yes, tame that wild fever of your blood, reduce that

unhealthy restlessness to placid repose, banish fears which are not wholly groundless; in a word, give you that which ancient philosophy counted as the highest good, a sane mind in a sound body—if I am to do all this, Mr. Tregonnell, I must have the case in my own hands. I must have you under my care by day and night. My house is large and commodious. You must come and live with me."

"Humph!" muttered Mr. Tregonnell. "Is not that rather like going into a private lunatic asylum?"

"My house is not registered as an asylum, and I never had a lunatic in my care. No, Mr. Tregonnell; you will be farther from lunacy under my roof than you are here, eating your heart out by this dismal fireside."

"Yes, it is dismal; the sort of house that ought to be occupied by a large family. Well, I am half inclined to come to you. I shall be a free agent in your house, I conclude; able to roam about as I like by day, provided I keep decent hours at night. You will put no restraint upon my movements?"

"None."

"Can you find room for my horse and for my servant?"

"For both."

"Then I will come. Mind, I do not promise to stay with you for any given time. I must be free as the wind. If you can give me sound and peaceful sleep with your mesmeric passes, I shall be grateful to you—and mesmerism. But can you not give me a taste of your quality at once, here?"

"No; I am expected home. If I mesmerised you to-night, I should want to stay with you to see the result of my experiment. Come to me for a week. If by the end of that time your spirits are not tranquillised, and your general health is not improved, call me a charlatan, and have done with me."

"I am very much inclined to believe in you," said Mr. Tregonnell, gazing steadily at the doctor. "You look as if you were in earnest."

"I have been in earnest all my life," answered Dr. Carrick. And then inwardly he added: "But I never had an object worth being in earnest about until to-night."

CHAPTER III. HESTER FINDS A FRIEND.

THE best rooms in St. Hildred House were swept and garnished for Squire Tregonnell. Hester Rushton, who had

a natural womanly love of household duties, was in her element while she bustled about, polishing, dusting, and arranging things for the reception of an honoured inmate. She caught herself singing at her work that busy morning, with a sense of pleasant expectation that was new and sweet. It was a relief to think of a stranger coming to live in that big empty house. Dr. Carrick was of so reserved a temper, that Hester seemed no more intimate with him now, after three years' domestic companionship, than on the day of her aunt's funeral. She could complain of no unkindness. He never spoke harshly to her, even when most troubled in mind. He thanked her courteously for all her attentions; praised her economies and clever management of his house; but he gave her none of his confidence. She felt that she knew no more of his heart and mind than if he had been a man of stone.

About his new patient, Dr. Carrick had told his cousin only that he was a man of wealth and position; that he was to have the best rooms in the house; and that his valet was to be made comfortable in the servants' offices. Hester was more frightened at the idea of the valet than at the grandeur of the master.

Happily, Mr. Tregonnell's body-servant was not a pampered cockney, corrupted by the luxurious idleness of chambers in the Albany, but a clever handy fellow, used to roughing it on board his master's yacht, and with a genius for every art that can make the wheels of daily life work smoothly. He was a first-rate cook, and an accomplished butler; and took upon himself all those delicate labours which were beyond the power of Dr. Carrick's maid-of-all-work.

Mr. Tregonnell stayed out the week, and looked considerably better and brighter at the end of it. He spent his mornings in roaming about the cliffs, or riding in the Cornish lanes; his afternoons in reading; his evenings in the society of Dr. Carrick and Miss Rushton. He was a man who had seen men and cities, and read much. His conversation, therefore, was full of interest; and Hester, to whom all intellectual conversation was new, listened with unvarying delight. It was to be observed, however, that he never talked of himself.

The week ended, and Mr. Tregonnell had no wish to return to the manor. He now firmly believed in the power of animal magnetism. Nightly, in the silence of

his bedchamber, the doctor exercised his potent, but seeming simple art. A steady pressure of his hands upon the shoulders of the patient, a series of mystic passes before the dreamy eyes, and the charm worked. First a new sense of warmth, comfort, and lightness stole through the frame; then the heavy eyelids drooped involuntarily, the will lost its waking power; then came deep, prolonged, and restful sleep, bringing healing and regeneration to mind and body.

This treatment was known to none save the patient and the physician. David Skelter, the valet, had never been in very close attendance upon his master, who was a man of independent habits. His bedroom was on an upper floor, remote from Mr. Tregonnell's apartment, and the valet saw nothing of his master after he had arranged his room for the night.

Hester Rushton's ideas as to the treatment of the patient were of the vaguest. Dr. Carrick had told her only that Mr. Tregonnell required rest and retirement.

So the days went on, and Hester's life took a new colour from the presence of a man of intellect and refinement, who treated her as a being of equal intelligence, and opened his mind to her freely on all subjects that were not personal. Of his opinions she knew much, of himself very little.

Spring advanced. The blustering March winds softened into the gentle breezes of April. St. Hildred House had a good old-fashioned garden—a garden where departed generations had planted homely flowers, which blossomed year after year, unaided by the gardener's art. Everything about the place had been sorely neglected till Hester came, but this garden was her chief delight. Her household duties occupied her all the morning, but she spent every fine afternoon in the garden—her bright young head bared to the spring breeze, her clever little hands encased in thick gardening-gloves—digging, transplanting, weeding, clipping, pruning, with skill that would have done credit to a professed gardener. Labour was cheap at St. Hildred, and for sixpence a day she could get a boy to mow the grass and roll the gravel-walks once a week or so; an extravagance which the doctor hardly approved.

Mr. Tregonnell's sitting-room looked into the garden. One warm afternoon, towards the close of May, he threw aside his book, and went downstairs to join

Hester, who was budding a rose on the lawn.

"How fond you seem to be of this garden of yours, Miss Rushton," he said at her elbow.

His footfall had been noiseless on the thick soft grass, and his speech startled her. The cheek—turned a little from him, but not so far but that he could see its change of colour—flushed crimson, and the scissors shook in her hand.

"How you startled me!" she exclaimed. "You don't know what a critical business budding is."

"It looks rather like a surgical operation. Did Dr. Carrick teach you?"

"Dr. Carrick!" laughed Hester. "I don't think he knows a rose from a dandelion, except when he uses them in medicine. No; it was a dear, deaf old gardener in Hertfordshire who taught me, years and years ago."

"Years and years ago," echoed Mr. Tregonnell. "What an eternity of time you seem to express by that phrase. Pray how many centuries old may you be, Miss Rushton?"

"In actual years I believe I am twenty-five," answered Hester, smiling; "but I feel dreadfully old. I suppose it is because I have known a great deal of sorrow. I don't mean to complain. Indeed, I should be very wicked if I did; for my aunt Hedger and my cousin Carrick have both been very good to me; but it is hard to lose those one fondly loves in the morning of life."

"It is," assented Mr. Tregonnell earnestly. "I have known that loss, Miss Rushton, and it has made me what you see—a man without aim or purpose in life—a mere waif to drift about in a yacht, buffeted by the winds and waves, and caring very little what port I put into, or whether I go down some stormy night in mid-ocean, unlamented and unknown. And you, too, have drawn a mournful lot out of the urn, have you, little one?"

"I lost my father and mother when I was fourteen. They both died in the same week. Dear, dear papa was a curate in a Bedfordshire village. A fever broke out, and he took it, and then mamma. It was all like a dreadful dream. In a week they were gone, and I was alone with two coffins. Then aunt Hedger sent for me, and I lived with her. She was old and ailing when I went to her. Her life seemed like one long illness, and then the

end came, and I was alone again. I haven't the least idea what would have become of me if cousin Carrick had not asked me to come and take care of his house."

"You are very much attached to Dr. Carrick, I suppose," said Mr. Tregonnell, looking at her searchingly.

He was wondering whether any hidden evil lurked beneath this outward simplicity; whether the relations between the doctor and his cousin were pure and free from guile.

"He has been very good to me," answered Hester innocently.

"And you like him very much, no doubt."

"I like him as much as he will let me. He is my benefactor. I should be base and ungrateful if I did not honour him. I do, for his kindness to me, and for his patience and fortitude, and skill in his profession. I see how much good he does. But he is as much a stranger to me now as when first I crossed the threshold of his house. It is his nature to live alone."

This speech made Mr. Tregonnell thoughtful. He remembered a line of Schiller's:

Fear all things in which there is an unknown depth.

Yet what had he to fear from Dr. Carrick?

All the doctor could possibly desire from him was liberal payment for service rendered, and to have his praises sounded in the neighbourhood by a grateful patient. Mr. Tregonnell had already pressed a cheque for a hundred pounds upon the doctor's acceptance, and had found it difficult to persuade him to receive so large a fee. There was to all appearance no desire to take advantage of his natural recklessness.

Henceforward it became quite a usual thing for Mr. Tregonnell to loiter in the garden, while Hester worked with her pruning-scissors or trowel. He even volunteered his assistance, but Hester laughed at his offer, and declined such clumsy help. They became very confidential during those sunny afternoons; Hester telling the doctor's patient all about her happy childhood, and sad girlhood, freely confessing her want of education, and her ardent desire to learn. Mr. Tregonnell rode over to the manor one morning to select a heap of volumes for her instruction, and ordered them to be sent to St. Hildred House the same day. He took as much pains to choose books that would at once arouse her interest, as if he

had been a father catering for a favourite child.

Sometimes, when the fair May afternoons were especially tempting, he insisted upon Hester's going down to the beach with him; and they idled together upon the rugged strand, picking up masses of many-coloured seaweed, watching the black cormorants perching on the rocky pinnacles, and listening to the great strong voice of the sea. It was altogether a new life for simple Hester Rushton, but the firm fresh young mind was in no wise injured by the association. The clever little housekeeper performed her daily tasks just as diligently as of old. The eager young student, to whom all the world of intellect was new, only applied herself to her books when her domestic duties were done.

CHAPTER IV. MR. TREGONNELL MAKES HIS WILL.

WHILE the acquaintance between Mr. Tregonnell and Hester Rushton thus ripened gradually into a very close friendship, Dr. Carrick was too busily occupied by his daily round of professional work to be aware of the change. He was away from home all day. When he saw his cousin and his patient in the evening, he perceived no more than that they got on very well together. This was as it should be. He wished his patient to be comfortable in his house. Mr. Tregonnell had now been with him three months, and had pressed a second cheque for a hundred pounds upon his acceptance. This was very well, and Dr. Carrick felt that if it could go on for ever his fortune would be made. But how could he hope that the thing would last? Eustace Tregonnell's fitful temper was proverbial. Some morning he would feel the old longing for the wide salt sea, and be off and away in his yacht, leaving the doctor as desolate as Dido. Dr. Carrick's only wonder was that his patient had stayed so long. It never entered into his mind that Hester Rushton's hazel eyes and gentle child-like ways could have any influence upon Mr. Tregonnell. Even the valet noticed the change which his new mode of life had wrought in his master. He talked of it in the village, and lauded Dr. Carrick's skill.

"He's the first doctor that ever did Mr. Tregonnell any good," he said, leaning over the counter of the chief shopkeeper in St. Hildred—grocer, chemist, stationer, and postmaster—for a com-

fortable gossip. "I never saw anybody so tamed down and quieted as master. He used to be all fits and starts, and as restless as if life was a burden to him. Now he seems to find pleasure in the simplest things."

"Ah," said the shopkeeper, "he's been a wild one, I reckon. The Tregonnells always were wild. It's in the blood. But he hasn't been taking any more chloroform, I hope. That's a dangerous habit."

"What do you mean?" asked David.

"Why, he's been in the habit of taking chloroform for pains in his head. You must know that, surely. Dr. Carrick warned me not to sell him any, if he should come here for it."

"I don't know anything about his taking chloroform," said David. "I know he's taken all sorts of things on board his yacht, to make him sleep; but I never heard of his taking chloroform in particular. He's got a little bottle in his medicine-chest, but I don't believe he's ever taken the stopper out."

"Ah," said the village trader, "that's all you know about it. Dr. Carrick warned me against letting him have chloroform, and there was that in the doctor's manner which made me think it was a serious matter."

David Skelter ruminated upon this disclosure of the shopman's. His sturdy English self-respect was offended at the idea of Dr. Carrick's interference with his master's liberty. That any man should go behind Mr. Tregonnell's back, and warn a shopkeeper against treating him as a reasonable being, roused the faithful David's indignation. It was treating the master of Tregonnell Manor like a lunatic.

That evening, after he had arranged his master's room for the night, David looked at the medicine-chest, which had been brought from the manor with Mr. Tregonnell's effects, and stood on the dressing-table, unlocked.

There was the little bottle of chloroform, three-parts full. David remembered his master sending him to get it at a chemist's in Genoa, three years ago, when he was suffering from spasmodic pains in the head. The bottle was carefully stoppered.

"I don't believe master has ever opened it since we left Genoa," David said to himself.

A few days after this Mr. Tregonnell began to talk of his yacht, ominously for Dr. Carrick. It was just the weather for a cruise, neither too cold nor too hot.

"I shan't go far afield," said Mr. Tregonnell; "but I feel that a breath of the sea would do me good. I shall go and cruise about the Scilly Isles, for a week or so, or perhaps sail as far as Madeira, and then come back and settle down again."

David, who was of a roving temper, was delighted at the idea of getting to sea again. His master sent him to Falmouth next day, to buy certain things that were wanted on board the *Water Fay*.

Mr. Tregonnell went to his room a little earlier than usual upon the evening after David's departure. He had ridden a long way that day, and his horse had been restive and troublesome. He had come home late in the afternoon, much fatigued.

"Oh, by-the-way, Hester," said Dr. Carrick, after his cousin had wished him good-night, "I must ask you not to go to bed just yet, and you can tell Betsy to wait up for an hour or so. I shall want you both in Mr. Tregonnell's room for a minute or two, to witness a deed he is going to execute."

Hester looked puzzled.

"Mr. Tregonnell did not say anything —," she began.

"No; he forgot that the deed would require to be witnessed. He is not very business-like in his habits. The fact is, Hester—it would be a foolish delicacy to withhold the truth from you—Mr. Tregonnell has taken a very noble view of the professional services I have rendered him. He is going to make his will before he goes to sea, and he intends to put me in for a handsome legacy. Of course, taking into consideration the difference in our ages, it is to the last degree improbable that I shall live to profit by his generous intention, but I am not the less grateful."

"It is very good of him," said Hester thoughtfully; "but I wonder that he, who is so careless about all business matters, and so indifferent to money, should think of making his will."

"It is a thing that every man ought to do, and which a man must be an idiot if he neglects to do. Especially a man in Mr. Tregonnell's position, whose property would go to some remote heir-at-law, or possibly to the Crown. Remember he is the last of his race!"

"How sad that seems!" sighed Hester.

She, too, had every reason to believe herself the last frail sprig upon a withered tree. She knew of no kinsman living, save this distant cousin, who had sheltered her.

An hour later, Dr. Carrick summoned

Hester and the servant Betsy to Mr. Tregonnell's sitting-room. Eustace Tregonnell was seated in front of the table at which he usually read and wrote. The shaded reading-lamp threw its light on the papers lying on the table, and left all things else in shadow.

Dr. Carrick stood beside his patient.

"Now sign," he said, with his fingers laid lightly on Mr. Tregonnell's wrist.

Mr. Tregonnell signed the paper before him.

"This is Mr. Tregonnell's will," said Dr. Carrick to the two girls, "written entirely in his own hand, upon a single sheet of paper. You, Hester Rushton, and you, Betsy Thomas, are now to sign as witnesses."

He showed them where they were to put their names, still standing by his patient's chair. Hester had not seen Mr. Tregonnell's face since she entered the room.

She signed her name as the doctor directed, and Betsy signed after her.

"You acknowledge this as your will," said the doctor to Mr. Tregonnell.

"I acknowledge this as my will," repeated the patient.

"That is all. Good-night, Hester; good-night, Betsy. Remember you are neither of you to mention this business of to-night to anybody. Mr. Tregonnell doesn't want it talked about."

CHAPTER V. MYSTERY.

THAT night-scene in Mr. Tregonnell's room made a curious impression upon Hester. She was angry with herself for dwelling upon it so continually, angry at the weakness of mind which made her look back upon the occurrence with a kind of superstitious horror. What was more natural than that a man should make his will? What more praiseworthy than that a grateful patient should reward his physician with a legacy? Could she blame Dr. Carrick for accepting such a boon? Assuredly not. Yet the memory of her kinsman's conduct that night troubled her. It seemed to her as if Mr. Tregonnell, though to all appearance a free agent, had been acting under the influence of the doctor.

She felt that to doubt Dr. Carrick's honour was to be guilty of base ingratitude, and hated herself for her formless suspicions.

"What would have become of me without his help?" she asked herself. "I might have starved."

Eustace Tregonnell said not a word about the will, and this puzzled her; for, as their friendship ripened, he had fallen into the habit of confiding all his thoughts to her attentive ear. He had told her much about himself of late. She had listened tearfully to his story of that early blight which had ruined his life—his first and only love.

"There was a time when I thought that I could never love again," he said to her one day; "but God is good, Hester, and now I begin to hope that even for me there may be some deep unspeakable joy waiting in the future. I would not hasten, or anticipate the hour of its coming. I would not rush impetuously to meet my fate. I would rather let my happiness come gently, by degrees, like the morning light. And those are the brightest days, you know, on which the dawn creeps over the hill-tops gradually, with no sudden burst of treacherous sunshine."

One afternoon the conversation turned unawares upon Dr. Carrick.

"I don't think I can ever be half grateful enough to him," exclaimed Mr. Tregonnell; "he has made a new man of me."

"There are few patients so grateful as you," said Hester.

"How do you mean?"

"Do you forget the will you made the other night?"

"What will? I make a will? Why, Hester, I never did such a thing in my life—I never even thought of such a thing, though I ought to think of it. If I were to die unmarried, my estate would go to some remote next-of-kin; some Mr. Snooks, perhaps, who would call himself Snooks Tregonnell, and come and lord it over my Cornish tenantry. The idea is hateful. I'll go up to Plymouth next week, see my lawyer, and make a will that shall, at any rate, shut out all possible Snookses."

Hester turned her face towards the rose-bush she was clipping, to hide her sudden pallor. All her doubts, all her fears, all her vague horror of that forgotten scene in Mr. Tregonnell's room, came back upon her with new force. In this quiet nature of hers there were latent powers which had never been exercised. This gentle creature was a woman of strong will. She determined to question Dr. Carrick, and get to the bottom of this mysterious business, at any risk of offending her benefactor.

Next morning, when she was pouring out

the tea at Dr. Carrick's early breakfast, she attacked the subject boldly.

"Do you know that Mr. Tregonnell denies that he ever made a will?" she said. "I happened to speak to him about it yesterday, by accident."

"You had no right to speak to him about it," exclaimed the doctor, white with anger—Hester had never seen such a look in his face before. "I told you that the subject was not to be mentioned."

"Not to other people, but my speaking of it to him could not matter."

"It does matter a great deal. Men are sensitive about such things. He chose to make his will, but he may not choose to be reminded of it."

"He most distinctly denied having made a will."

"He chose to deny it."

"What, he chose to tell a deliberate lie? No, Dr. Carrick; I would never believe that of Eustace Tregonnell."

"You would not believe, indeed; and pray what do you know of Eustace Tregonnell, or of psychology? What do you know of the eccentricities of the human intellect? Mr. Tregonnell is extremely eccentric. There are people who call him mad."

Hester was pale as death. Mad! That awful word froze her young blood. Might not that be indeed the clue to the mystery? She had heard Eustace Tregonnell acknowledge that will with the same lips which afterwards denied having made it. There could be no cheat, no juggle there. His own voice had declared the fact.

"If he is mad, the will is useless," she said.

"You are a clever lawyer, no doubt, young lady. I suppose you have never heard of testamentary capacity, which may exist in a patient subject to intervals of mania. A holograph will, executed by a madder man than Eustace Tregonnell, would stand against stronger opposition than is likely to be offered to any will of his."

"He is not mad," protested Hester. "His brain is as clear as mine."

"Very likely. He merely reproves your impertinence in speaking of a forbidden subject, by denying that he ever made a will."

Hester was more unhappy, after that conversation with Dr. Carrick, than she had been before. She had formed a high estimate of Mr. Tregonnell's character. The idea that he could tell a deliberate

falsehood was horrible to her. Yet it was almost worse to think of him as a madman. And who but a madman would have looked her calmly in the face, and denied a fact which she had seen with her eyes, and attested with her signature?

"If he is mad," she said to herself, "my poor woman's wit must keep watch for him."

And then, for the first time, a secret that had lain hidden in her heart for many days past came boldly forth into the light, and looked Hester Rushton in the face. She loved him—she, the obscure orphan, the dependant on a poor man's charity, blest with neither beauty nor accomplishments, a humble household drudge—she loved Eustace Tregonnell, the proudest and richest landowner in that part of the country. She blushed rosy-red, and hid her face from the bold glad sunlight, abashed and stricken by the discovery. How could she dare to lift her eyes to that perfect face, to think of Eustace Tregonnell as a being on the same level with her insignificant self?

"But I don't think of him as my equal," she said to herself; "not for worlds would I have him come down to my level. He is my bright particular star. I only want to look up to him, and worship him all the days of my life."

The idea of some evil mystery in that scene of the will haunted her perpetually. She began to have a horror of the house that sheltered her—that strange old house, with its long narrow passages, winding stairs, queer little closets, many doors, and ghostly reputation. She began to have a horror of her benefactor, Dr. Carrick. Dear as Eustace Tregonnell's society was to her, she longed for him to depart upon his yachting expedition.

June began with stormy winds and driving rains, and the yachting expedition was put off. Indeed, Mr. Tregonnell seemed in no hurry to leave St. Hildred House. He appeared perfectly happy, idling in the garden while Hester weeded her flower-beds, or reading to her while she worked in her favourite seat by a window that looked seaward.

One evening, however, he announced his intention of running up to Plymouth at the end of that week.

"I want to see my lawyer. Can you guess what I am going to do, Dr. Carrick?"

"I haven't the least idea," answered the doctor, sipping his tea.

Hester and the doctor were seated at

the lamplit tea-table. Mr. Tregonnell was standing with his back to the empty fireplace, looking down at them.

"I am going to make my will. It's a disagreeable operation, and reminds one unpleasantly of one's mortality. But I suppose every man ought to go through it. I shan't forget you, doctor; nor you, Hester. Let me see: a mourning ring, I suppose, will be an appropriate mark of my gratitude to you, doctor; and a silver thimble will form a pleasing memento of my friendship for you, Miss Rushton."

Dr. Carrick joined in Mr. Tregonnell's cheery laughter, but he cast a furtive glance at Hester, who sat looking downward, very pale in the lamplight.

CHAPTER VI. FOR LOVE AND LIFE.

St. HILDRED HOUSE was said to be haunted. There was hardly an inhabitant of the village who would not have vouched for the fact. Noises had been heard; ghosts had been seen, at intervals, and by divers persons, ever since the oldest inhabitant's childhood. The exact form of the apparition, or the precise nature of the noises, was not easy to determine, since everyone gave a different description, and almost everyone's knowledge was derived from hearsay. Till very lately, Hester Rushton had laughed at these rumours, and had never known what it was to feel a thrill of fear in the musty old passages, or to shudder as the gathering twilight peopled the corners of the pannelled rooms with shadows. Now all was changed, she was nervous and apprehensive. She started at a shadow, and fancied she heard a human voice mixed with the night winds that sobbed in the wide old chimneys. One night she was disturbed by sounds that seemed distinctly human: heavy breathing, footsteps moving close to the head of her bed.

She started up, and lighted her candle, convinced that there was someone in the room. Yet she had bolted her door before going to bed.

The room was empty, but again she heard footsteps moving stealthily close at hand.

"The cupboard," she thought. "There is someone in that cupboard."

It was a long narrow cupboard, a kind of enclosed passage between her room and Mr. Tregonnell's. There was a third door in this cupboard, opening on to a corkscrew staircase, that led down to the servants' offices. But this staircase was rarely used,

the door leading into Mr. Tregonnell's room was never opened, and the cupboard was only a receptacle for disused and forgotten lumber.

Hester unlocked the cupboard, and looked in. A man was in the act of escaping by the door that opened on the staircase. She pursued him, candle in hand, her heart beating violently.

Something told her that this was Dr. Carrick, who had been paying a stealthy visit to his patient's room; but, to her surprise, on the first step of the stairs David Skelter turned and faced her, with his finger on his lip, and a look that implored her forbearance.

"Oh, please, miss, don't say anything. I'm not doing any harm."

"But why are you here—hiding in this cupboard—in the middle of the night?"

"It isn't the middle of the night, miss. I was uneasy about master."

"Why?"

"Well, miss, to be candid, I don't like the doctor's goings on. I've had my suspicions of him for a long time. It's too much like witchcraft, the power he's got over my master. It isn't natural you know, miss, and I happened to find out that he'd been putting it into people's heads that my master wasn't to be treated like a rational being, and that turned me against him, and made me think that there was something wrong going on."

"But what wrong can Dr. Carrick do your master, David?" asked Hester, with her earnest eyes searching the young man's face.

"Oh miss, can I trust you? Are you a friend or a foe?"

"I am a friend to Mr. Tregonnell, David; a sincere one."

"Yes, I believe it, miss; I've seen that, and I know something more. I know that he's a friend to you—more than a friend, nearer and dearer. He's been happier and better since he's known you. But I can't make the doctor out. He's too dark for me. Do you see that cupboard-door?" pointing to the door opening into Mr. Tregonnell's room. "The other morning, when I was putting away my master's things, it struck me that we might as well have the use of this cupboard. I tried the door, and found it locked inside. I could see the nozzle of the key in it. Then it struck me that this cupboard-door must communicate with some other room or passage, and then I remembered the door at the head of these stairs, which I'd

never seen open. I came round by the stairs, and examined the cupboard, and I found a little shutter or flap opening in that door—it had been made for ventilation, I suppose—through which I could look into my master's room. And that very night, feeling uneasy about him in my mind, after I'd gone up to bed, I crept down again, and looked through the little shutter to see if he was all right. And there I saw——"

"What, David? It was very wrong to play the spy upon your master."

"I saw the doctor conjuring him—hocussing him, miss."

"What do you mean?"

"So, miss—like this."

And David made solemn passes with his hands before Hester's face.

"He did that, miss, and sent master to sleep as quiet as a lamb. Now, I don't like to think that any man should have the power of sending my master to sleep."

Hester heard him in silence, deadly pale, breathless. She had the clue to the mystery now. It was mesmeric influence that composed the patient's restless mind to sleep; it was under mesmeric influence that Eustace Tregonnell had written and signed the will, of which in his waking state he knew nothing. Among the books which Mr. Tregonnell had brought her, and one which she had read with deepest interest, was Lord Lytton's "Strange Story." She had read also that thrilling story, by the same author, "The House and the Brain," and the doctrines of magnetic influence were not unknown to her. Dr. Carrick was just the kind of man—studious, passionless, self-contained—to exert such influence; to be familiar with that unholy art. He had used his power to get a will executed—a will which doubtless bestowed more upon him than the legacy he had spoken of to Hester. But that will would give him nothing so long as Eustace Tregonnell lived, and Eustace Tregonnell was at least eighteen years his junior. How remote must be the benefit which Dr. Carrick could hope for from that will. Again, it would be cancelled, mere waste-paper, the moment Mr. Tregonnell made another will, and he talked of doing so at the end of the week. All through the night Hester lay broad awake, thinking of Dr. Carrick, and trying to fathom his motive for a deed, which was, to her mind, as dark a crime as the worst forgery that had ever been perpetrated.

"The will is made, and he will be eager

to profit by it," she thought, with an icy thrill of horror creeping through her veins. "He is no longer interested in prolonging his patient's life. He must wish for his death, for he would not have committed this crime if he were not greedy of money. He will want to prevent Mr. Tregonnell's making a second will, and how is he to do that?"

How, save by the worst and last of crimes—secret murder?

A wild terror seized upon Hester, as she saw herself face to face with this hideous thought. The idea, having once taken hold of her, was not to be thrust out of her mind. How else, but by Eustace Tregonnell's speedy death, could the doctor profit by his crime? His profession gave him a fatal power. He had the keys of life and death in his hand, and Eustace trusted him with blind unquestioning faith.

"I will not leave him in a secret enemy's hand," she thought; "I will tell him everything to-morrow. I owed gratitude and affection to my cousin, while I believed him a good and honourable man. I owe nothing to a traitor."

She rose at her usual early hour, with a torturing headache, and hands burning with fever. She was startled when she saw her altered face in the glass.

"I hope I am not going to be ill," she said to herself, "just when I want the utmost strength and clearness of mind."

It was an effort to dress, an effort to crawl downstairs, and take her place at the breakfast-table. She was obliged to omit those small duties which had been her daily task—the finishing touches to the dusting and polishing of the furniture, the arrangement of a bowl of freshly-cut flowers for the table.

The day was hopelessly wet, a dull gray sky, a straight downpour, that shut out everything except the sullen waste of leaden sea, crested with long lines of livid whiteness. There was no chance of Mr. Tregonnell going to Plymouth on such a day as this.

Dr. Carrick looked curiously at his cousin's pale face, but said not a word. Mr. Tregonnell, who rarely appeared so early, joined them before the doctor had finished his first cup of tea.

He was not slow to perceive that something was wrong with Hester.

"Good heavens, Miss Rushton, how ill you are looking!" he exclaimed.

"I do not feel very well. I had a wakeful night."

"Why, what should keep you awake?" asked Dr. Carrick, looking sharply up at her.

"I hardly know. My mind was full of queer fancies. That awful story haunted me, the story you read to me a few days ago, Mr. Tregonnell."

"Well, it is rather uncanny," answered Eustace; "I am so sorry I read it to you. I ought to have considered that your nerves would be more sensitive than mine. I read it to you merely as a work of art, a masterpiece of graphic style."

"I was very foolish to think of it as a reality," said Hester.

Dr. Carrick laid his fingers on her wrist.

"You had better go to bed, and stay there, if you don't want to be seriously ill," he said; "you are in a high fever, as it is."

"Impossible," answered Hester, "I have all sorts of things to do."

"Of course. A woman always fancies the earth will stop, if she takes her hand off the machinery that makes it go round. I am sure you can have nothing to do to-day, that can't be as well done to-morrow. If it's a question of dinner, that clever fellow, Skelter, will cook for you. If it's any fiddle-faddle about the house, a muslin curtain to be ironed, or a chintz chair-cover to be mended, let it stand over till you are well. I shall be at home all day, if I'm wanted. I've no urgent cases, and it would be too cruel to take a horse out of his stable unnecessarily on such a day as this."

Hester remembered many such days on which Dr. Carrick had spared neither himself nor his horse. She was obliged to submit to his orders, and go back to bed, for she was really too ill to resist him. She laid herself down dressed upon the outside of the counterpane, with her thick winter shawl wrapped round her; for although her head and hands were burning, a feeling of deathlike cold crept over her at intervals.

It seemed the longest day she had ever lived through. The ceaseless drip of the rain upon the leaves of the sycamore, whose spreading branches obscured half her window, the unchanging gray of the sky, the sullen murmur of the sea—all added to her gloom of mind. She would have given worlds to have seen Eustace Tregonnell alone, to have told him all she had discovered, all she feared; but she felt powerless to rise from her bed, and, even if she could muster strength and

courage to go downstairs in quest of Mr. Tregonnell, she knew that Dr. Carrick was on guard below, and would do his uttermost to prevent her being alone with his patient. There was nothing for her to do but to lie there with aching head and anxious mind, waiting for night.

The good-natured maid-of-all-work came to her several times in the course of the day, bringing her broth which she could not touch, and divers cups of tea, which were welcome to her parched lips. She eat nothing all day, but drank deep draughts of cold water. Night came at last. She heard the doors shutting below, and footsteps ascending the stairs. How well she knew each footfall! The doctor's soft deliberate step; David Skelter's tread, quick yet heavy; Mr. Tregonnell's firm light step; the maid-of-all-work's slipshod ascent. And then all was quiet. The church clock struck ten. The rain was still falling. There was not a star in the sky.

Hester lifted her head with an effort from the pillow where it had lain so heavily all day long. She crawled to her door, and noiselessly set it ajar, so slightly, that any one passing would hardly notice that it was not shut. Then she opened the door of the closet. The light in Mr. Tregonnell's room shone brightly through the crevices in the sliding shutter. Then she crept back to the room-door and listened with all her might.

After about ten minutes she heard the doctor's step coming along the passage from his own room. He knocked softly at Mr. Tregonnell's door, was told to enter, and entered. Before the door closed, Hester heard the patient say:

"Upon my word, doctor, I don't believe I need your ministrations to-night. I feel honestly sleepy."

Here the door was firmly shut, and on this side Hester could hear no more.

She went quietly back to the closet, and drew near the sliding shutter. At the same moment the door leading to the servant's staircase was cautiously opened, and David Skelter crept in.

All was dark in the closet. It was by intuition only that Hester knew the intruder. One rash exclamation from him and she was betrayed. She put one hand over his mouth, grasping his wrist firmly with the other, and whispered in his ear:

"Not a word! not a movement! I am going to watch with you to-night." And then, with infinite caution, she slid back

the shutter for about an inch, and looked into the room.

Eustace Tregonnell was lying outside the bed, wrapped in his long velvet dressing gown, in an attitude of supreme repose. Dr. Carrick was seated beside the bed, his hands moving slowly in mesmeric passes before the patient's dreamy eyes. In less than a quarter of an hour Mr. Tregonnell had sunk into a mesmeric sleep, profound, peaceful, deathlike.

So far there was no wrong done. The patient was consentient; mesmerism had exerted a healing influence over mind and body; mesmerism had been Dr. Carrick's only treatment.

"That's all, miss," whispered David. "He'll go away now, and leave master to sleep it out. It's against nature that one man should be able to send another to sleep, and I don't like it."

"There is no harm in it, David," replied Hester.

But the doctor did not leave his patient. He withdrew from the bed, and stood, with his back to the mantelpiece, intently watchful of the sleeper. This lasted for more than five minutes; Hester still watching from the shutter, David close at her side.

And now Dr. Carrick crept stealthily across the room to the dressing-table, opened the medicine-chest, and took out a bottle.

"It's the chloroform, miss," whispered David. "I know the bottle."

This word chloroform awakened a vague fear in Hester's mind. She felt as if she were on the threshold of some hideous discovery.

"David," she whispered, close in the valet's ear, "run down softly, as fast as you can go, open the street-door, and ring the bell. Quick, quick!"

The man obeyed without understanding her. His shoeless feet ran swiftly down the stairs.

Dr. Carrick went back to the bed, took the stopper out of the bottle, and deliberately poured the whole of the contents on Eustace Tregonnell's pillow. The patient lay on his side with his face towards the fireplace. The doctor sprinkled the chloroform exactly under his nostrils. Then with a delicate hand, as carefully as if he had been covering the face of a sick child, for whom sleep was the sole chance of cure, he drew the light coverlet over Eustace Tregonnell's head, and stood looking down at the shrouded figure with an evil smile on his face.

In the next instant the street-door bell was ringing violently.

"Great Heaven! who can it be at such a time?" cried the doctor, hurrying from the room, with a backward uneasy glance at the bed.

Hester unlocked the closet-door, and rushed into Mr. Tregonnell's room as the doctor disappeared. She threw back the coverlet from the sleeper's face, snatched the pillow from under his head, dashed cold water over head and face, flung open the window to the cool, moist, night air, all without loss of an instant. She, who all day had been powerless to lift her head from the pillow, seemed in those terrible moments endowed with unnatural strength.

Eustace stirred, faintly at first; then, as Hester dashed more water into his face, his eyes slowly opened, he gave a struggling sigh, and at last raised his head and looked at her, with eyes that expressed only vague wonder.

"What are you doing?" he asked. "What is the matter?"

"I think I have saved your life," she said quietly; and then, her brain suddenly reeling, she fell in a heap on the floor beside his bed, not unconscious, only giddy and helpless.

Dr. Carrick came back, saw his intended victim sitting up with his eyes open, and his cousin on the ground by the bed. A glance told him that the game was lost. He did not understand how it had happened—how Hester came there—but he knew that his scheme was a failure.

"What the devil have you been doing to me, Dr. Carrick?" asked Eustace, not in the most amiable mood after awakening from deepest unconsciousness to find himself in a pool of water. "Have you been experimenting in hydropathy? And, good Heavens! what an odour of chloroform! My shirt must have been drenched with it."

"You were restless, and I sprinkled a few drops on your pillow. In the name of decency, Hester, what are you doing here?"

The girl rose to her feet, steadied herself with a great effort, and looked her kinsman full in the face. David Skelter had followed the doctor upstairs, and stood on the threshold, ready to rush to his master's aid the moment he was wanted.

"I know all that has happened to-night," said Hester, with those steady eyes on the doctor's face. "I saw all—David and I—we were both watching you through the little shutter in that closet-door. You

forgot that shutter, did you not? I saw you empty the bottle of chloroform on the pillow, and draw the coverlet over your patient's head. You were trying to suffocate him. I suppose suffocation of that kind leaves no trace. You have got your patient's will—the will that leaves you everything, no doubt; and all you wanted was to get rid of your patient. You have failed this time. David, take care of your master—neither his property nor his life are safe in this house."

"Devil!" cried the doctor, beside himself. "Liar! Dirt that I picked up out of the gutter—a pauper who must have begged or starved but for my help! A pretty story to hatch against me, forsooth! Mr. Tregonnell, David, I call you both to witness that this woman is either a lunatic or the most outrageous liar that ever drew the breath of life."

"This woman is my future wife," said Eustace Tregonnell, rising from the bed, and supporting Hester's tottering figure with his arm. "Yes, Hester, you will let it be so, will you not? I offer you the life you have saved. It is no new thought, love; it has been my pleasant day-dream for a month past. David, you scoundrel, pack my portmanteau this instant. Dr. Carrick, I shall have the felicity of leaving your hospitable abode early to-morrow, but I shall take Miss Rushton with me, and find a more desirable residence for her with our good old vicar and his family, until the church can make her mistress of Tregonnell Manor. Now, Hester, my dear, go back to your room, and lock your door. I don't think Dr. Carrick will try his chloroform treatment on you; he knows that David and I understand him."

The baffled villain stood, pale, silent, scarcely breathing—an image of humanity frozen into marble. Then he roused himself slowly, gave a profound sigh, and walked to the door.

On the threshold he turned, and looked steadily at his patient.

"The night I first saw you I was inclined to think you a madman, Mr. Tregonnell," he said deliberately; "now I know that you are one. I shall be heartily glad to get rid of such a dangerous inmate. My house is not certified for the reception of lunatics; and if your habits were known, I should get into trouble. Take care of your master, David. He'll want a strait-waistcoat before you have been much longer in his service."

"That's a lie, and you know it," David retorted bluntly.

Mr. Tregonnell took Hester to the vicarage early next morning. He told the vicar everything, and confided the young lady to his friendly care, pending her marriage. The vicar had a comfortable wife, and grown-up daughters; and Hester spent a month among these new friends—a month that was like one long dream of delight, for did not Eustace Tregonnell dedicate all his days to her society?

St. Hildred House was left empty within a few hours of Mr. Tregonnell's departure. The maid-of-all-work was paid and dismissed without warning. Dr. Carrick told her that he had a letter from London which obliged him to leave St. Hildred without an hour's delay. A rich relative was dying, a relative likely to leave Dr. Carrick a handsome fortune.

This fiction decently covered the doctor's retreat. He was soon lost in the labyrinth he knew so well. Despair had fastened its grip upon his soul. He had tried honesty; he had tried fraud and crime. Both had failed.

"I am one of those unlucky mortals born to fail," he told himself. "Neither God nor the devil will help me."

Dr. Carrick made another appeal to the devil. He started in a disreputable neighbourhood as a practitioner of the lowest order—a practitioner who stuck at nothing. For a time things went well with him, and he made money. Then came a scandal, imprisonment, disgrace; and Dr. Carrick went down to the very bottom of the social gulf, never to rise again.

For Hester and her lover life holds nothing but happiness. They spend six months of every year cruising in the brightest waters, anchoring by the fairest shores, and the rest of their days at Tregonnell Manor, where, being wealthy and generous, they are universally beloved.

OUR SENSATION AT UNTER-BÄDELI.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER I.

WE were a very select society. At least, that was what we called ourselves—"select;" though I don't know by what rule we were selected, nor who selected us. But never mind! We were recognised as being a very select society, and we were justly proud of the distinction.

We were rather too few for some people's taste. Mrs. Ruddiman, for instance, the stout widow, was heard to declare that the dreary stretch of white cloth and empty chairs at our table-d'hôte, with a handful of guests huddled together at one end, made her so low-spirited, that she used to go to her own room every day after dinner, and cry over a photograph of the late Mr. Ruddiman, which she wore in a brooch. I don't know whether it was true; but one thing is certain, Mrs. Ruddiman removed herself very shortly to the Hôtel du Rütli, up the street, where we could see the lights flaring until quite late at night—to a quarter past ten o'clock very often!—and could hear such a gabble of voices, and the jingling old piano, and sometimes a fiddle—for they danced at the Rütli in a promiscuous unceremonious kind of way. We thought the Rütli very low, to tell the truth; and many of us wondered how Mrs. Ruddiman could bear to leave the select society of the Hôtel et Pension des Alpes for that. But Miss Hawk said that Mr. Ruddiman had been a meat-salesman, and what could you expect?

Miss Hawk came of a very good family—she frequently said so herself—and her manners were very commanding. So was her figure. She measured five feet eight inches in her stockings; that was the phrase she always used. I think I never saw so upright a figure as Miss Hawk's. It was not a plump figure. You could not conscientiously call it so. At the same time we thought it coarse in Mrs. Ruddiman to express herself as she did about it: "A back-board stuck flat against a broomstick." But of course if it was true that Mr. Ruddiman had been a meat-salesman, why—!

I think that on the whole we considered Miss Hawk to be the leader of our society. And I am almost sure that she considered herself to be so. It was not only amongst us English that Miss Hawk was looked up to. There were several Swiss in the Hôtel des Alpes, who paid her great attention. They were ladies and gentlemen—at least a gentleman—from Lausanne, and the neighbourhood of the Lake of Geneva; and they were naturally attracted to Miss Hawk by her proficiency in the French language, which she spoke with remarkable fluency. I did notice occasionally that they did not appear to understand what she said, all at once. And certainly her French sounded very

different from theirs. But she often observed that the Swiss never speak with a really pure accent, although they may know the language well enough in theory. And I suppose Miss Hawk's accent was a little too pure for them sometimes.

Possibly you have never been at Unter-Bädéli, Lower Littlebath, as we used jocosely to call it amongst ourselves? It is not very much frequented by foreigners, but its waters are excellent. Every one of the doctors living in the place agrees with his colleagues about that. And as one hears it said, "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" I suppose one ought to be quite convinced they are right when they do agree. Nevertheless, Unter-Bädéli is not much frequented by foreigners. The guests are chiefly Swiss. There are a few Germans, fewer French, and just a small number of English who reside in Switzerland, and know all the "ins and outs" of life there, as Miss Hawk used to say. Miss Hawk herself lived during the greater part of the year in a pension in Geneva. Her means were rather limited. The means of most of us were rather limited. Rich people, somehow, scarcely ever come to Unter-Bädéli. There were, I believe, plenty of well-to-do farmers and shop-keepers at the Rütli—people who spent enormous sums on their eating and drinking, and drove fat horses in rough country chaises. But with these persons we, at the Hôtel des Alpes, had nothing to do. Our house was the genteelst—indeed the only genteel—in the place. Mrs. Ruddiman used to complain of the cooking, and say she was starved. But surely, as Miss Hawk put it in her lofty way, it was better to partake of a temperate meal in a proper *salle-à-manger*, served by a waiter in a tail-coat, although it might be a little rusty, than to revel in coarse profusion at the Rütli, where you were waited on by young women in peasant costume, and where the dining-room was little better than a big kitchen with a sanded floor!

One afternoon we ladies were sitting in the salon after dinner—we dined at one o'clock—when one of the gentlemen of our society came into the room, telling us that there was news. When I say "one of the gentlemen," I mean *the* gentleman; for at that time there was but one staying at the Alpes, an elderly gentleman named Puits-de-fond. I believe he would have been a count, if Switzerland hadn't happened to be a republic. He suffered from rheumatic gout, and was slightly

humpbacked, but extremely polished. Well, Monsieur Puits-de-fond came into the salon and announced that he had some news. Of course we were all much interested; for, to say the truth, there was rather a lack of excitement at Unter-Bädéli, and the time hung a little heavy when once you had had your bath, and your douche, and your dinner. The news was the arrival of two new inmates at the hôtel. They were a young married couple from Bâle. The husband was in business there, and the wife was a German from Nuremberg.

"In business?" said Miss Hawk doubtfully. "Do you mean that he keeps a shop, Monsieur Puits-de-fond?" But Monsieur Puits-de-fond said that the newcomer did not keep a shop, but was a manufacturer of silk ribbon on a large scale, and was very rich. We all agreed that to be a manufacturer of silk ribbon on a large scale was a very different matter from selling it on a small one; and we intimated, or at least, Miss Hawk intimated for us, that we saw no reason to refuse our countenance to these Bâle people. Monsieur Puits-de-fond knew a great many more particulars about them—as, for instance, that they had only been married last year; that they had a very smart villa and gardens just outside Bâle; that they kept three horses; that Madame Krafft—that was their name—had not had a penny when she married, and was very pretty, and a little extravagant in her dress. It was astonishing how Monsieur Puits-de-fond picked up all the gossip he knew about everybody! I said something of the kind to Miss Hawk afterwards; but she objected to the word "gossip" as applied to him. Monsieur Puits-de-fond, she remarked, had a great fund of light and amusing conversation, and knew how to speak trifles with a well-bred air. It was a gift which had distinguished many Frenchmen of rank in the good old times. And only persons of good blood could do it really well. Monsieur Puits-de-fond's blood must have been very good indeed; but unfortunately that special manifestation of it was not always appreciated. Mrs. Ruddiman once called him—I really don't like to write down the words—a wry-necked, malicious old magpie! We were terribly shocked. But we reflected—at least Miss Hawk reflected for us—on the poor woman's unfortunate antecedents, and overlooked the expression.

Herr Krafft and his wife walked into the salon whilst we were in the very middle of a discussion about them, and we all bent over our work—Monsieur Puits-de-fond seized a newspaper upside down—in a great hurry. Herr Krafft was a big, broad-shouldered, light-haired Swiss, of some eight-and-twenty or thirty years old. There was nothing remarkable about him in any way; unless, perhaps, an air of remarkable good-humour. Madame Krafft was certainly very pretty. She had dark wavy hair, and sparkling brown eyes, and cheeks like a rose-leaf, and red lips and white teeth, and a love of a travelling costume!

"Paris made!" whispered Mrs. Devaux, behind her hand, to Miss Hawk; and Miss Hawk nodded. Mrs. Devaux was an authority on subjects of dress. She was a great traveller; had been in the East, and spoke all modern languages. That sounds like an exaggeration, I am aware. And perhaps she may have forgotten one or two when she said she knew them "all." But if she knew them nearly all, I think that's quite wonderful enough.

Herr Krafft seemed a little shy, and talked to his wife in an undertone, and looked out of the window a great deal, although there was really nothing to see there. But madame was not a bit shy. She had very pretty, coaxing, little manners, and went over to Miss Hawk and admired her wool-work, and altogether behaved so becomingly, that we were enchanted with her. She spoke French pretty well; but her husband, we found, spoke it very well indeed, and English also. And when he did begin to talk, we found him a pleasant well-informed young man. I believe every one of us felt somehow freshened up and exhilarated by the arrival of these two young people.

Herr Krafft went away from Unter-Bädéli the next morning. He could not afford to be absent from his business long at a time, he said. But his pretty wife remained. She had come to Unter-Bädéli for the waters; though I'm sure she might have sat for a picture of the goddess of health. Monsieur Puits-de-fond seemed to think that she had nothing the matter with her at all, and that she had only come to the baths to get a little change and liberty, and to escape from the troubles of housekeeping for awhile. But Miss Hawk almost quarrelled with him about it. I remember we all sat in breathless

silence, when they began to speak sharply to one another. "What did Monsieur Puits-de-fond mean?" she asked severely. Madame Krafft was sweetness and ingenuousness itself, and quite incapable of pretending anything. If she said she needed the waters, of course she did need them. And as to her wanting liberty—it was quite evident that Herr Krafft idolised his wife, and indulged her in every possible way, so that was nonsense! Monsieur Puits-de-fond took a long and loud pinch of snuff, and devoted himself to Mrs. Devaux for the rest of the day. But it blew over, and he and Miss Hawk were perfectly civil to each other. Only I don't think they ever regained their old "entente cordiale," as Mrs. Devaux called it. Mrs. Devaux insinuated that Monsieur Puits-de-fond was jealous of the attention bestowed on little Madame Krafft. He used to be the principal object of attention in our circle, after Miss Hawk; being the only gentleman, you see, he may have been a little spoiled among us. But now the newcomer eclipsed him. As to Miss Hawk, she was quite bewitched by Madame Krafft. Three days had not elapsed before she called her by her christian-name, Melanie—a mark of familiarity she had never bestowed on any of us! When I hinted as much to her, she replied: "My dear, you are all women of about my own age"—we were not; at all events, I was several years Miss Hawk's junior; not that it matters, but I like to be accurate—"whereas, Melanie is a mere girl, young enough to be my—niece."

By the end of a week, Madame Krafft had worked quite a revolution in our society. She was very fond of gaiety, and somehow or other she contrived to find some even in Unter-Bädéli. For instance, there was a concert of Tyrolese singers one evening at the Rütli, and what did she do but persuade us all to go to it! She had an answer to every objection. Miss Hawk shook her head about the "mixed company" at the Rütli; but Madame Krafft answered that we could keep to our own little coterie, and be even more distinguished in that way from the vulgar than if we stayed away altogether. Then Mrs. Devaux observed that smoking was permitted in the *salle-à-manger* of the Rütli; and Madame Melanie immediately replied, with her coaxing little smile: "Oh, surely, dear Madame Devaux, you are too much of a cosmopolite to mind that! A woman of the world, as you are; one who

has travelled so far! In short, one way or another, she brought us all round, and we went to the concert.

Mrs. Ruddiman stared as if she had seen a procession of ghosts, when we all marched into the big dining-room at the Rütli. But presently she jumped up, and came and shook hands with everyone of us, laughing and talking in her loud voice, until every head in the room was turned towards us. "Lord, I'm glad you've plucked up a bit of spirit, and come to hear the music," said she. "I'm sure it's deadly dull for you over yonder, poor things!" jerking her head in the direction of the *Hôtel et Pension des Alpes*. She meant well, I'm sure. And indeed, to say the truth, she had a hearty way with her, which I couldn't help liking.

Well, the Tyrolese music was very pretty. It went up and down a good deal—I believe they call it jodeling—in a way that reminded me of a very high swing we had at home when I was a girl; but it was very pretty. And the costumes were pretty, and made a nice change to look at. And really all the people at the Rütli were very civil. I couldn't help thinking that, after all, good-nature and kindness go a long way towards making polite manners. As to Miss Hawk, will you believe it, when the fat smiling landlady, in her black velvet bodice and silver chains, as they wear them at Lucerne, came round to take the guests' orders, Miss Hawk actually ordered a glass of Bavarian beer; and, what is more, she actually drank it! Madame Krafft laughed like a child—she was very childlike in some things—when they set down a good-sized glass of beer before her. But she said: "Oh, I must drink it all, if I die for it, to do honour to my country, you know!" And she did drink it all. And so far from dying, I couldn't see that it had any disagreeable effect on her whatever. In short, we all enjoyed our evening—"our little escapade," Mrs. Devaux called it—and became quite jolly. That is to say, we all enjoyed it, except Monsieur Puits-de-fond, who couldn't quite get over the vulgarity of the company. He kept making biting remarks about everything and everybody. However, nobody minded him a bit. And as to Madame Krafft, she only laughed at him, in her frank playful way, until the tears came into her eyes. But—and now I am coming to the beginning of an adventure, which made a great noise at the time in Unter-Bädeli—the next morning at

breakfast, Monsieur Puits-de-fond began talking in a different strain. He pursed up his mouth, and looked very serious, and dropped his voice mysteriously, when he asked Miss Hawk if she had observed a certain person sitting at a corner table in the big room at the Rütli. And when she said yes, she had noticed a man in the place mentioned, and had thought him a hulking ill-looking fellow, Monsieur Puits-de-fond further enquired whether she had noticed the looks and manner of that individual towards—and here he dropped his voice still lower, and wrinkled up his nose quite viciously—towards a certain member of our party.

I immediately thought of Madame Krafft, and I believe everyone of us did so too. She was not present; for she said getting up early did not agree with her health, and she usually had her breakfast in bed. There was a short silence, and then Mrs. Devaux said that the man had certainly stared persistently at Madame Krafft; but that as Madame Krafft didn't seem to mind it, she thought no one else need do so either.

"Madame Krafft is pretty well used to his stares by this time," said Monsieur Puits-de-fond; "for to my certain knowledge he has followed her about, and haunted every walk and every place she has frequented, during the last five days."

Then everybody seemed to speak together. There was a great noise and confusion. Never had I witnessed such excitement in the salon of the *Hôtel des Alpes*! Miss Hawk indignantly repudiated any insinuations against her "sweet Melanie." Mrs. Devaux was anxious to declare that she had known all, and observed all, and understood all, from the very beginning. One or two of the other lady-boarders were shocked, and almost frightened. In short, we had a "scene." If we had formerly pined for a little excitement at the *Hôtel des Alpes*, we now had rather more than was pleasant. At length Miss Hawk majestically demanded silence, as she wished to make a statement. Everyone was quiet directly; perhaps from curiosity, perhaps awed by Miss Hawk's commanding manners. It would take a great deal of time and pen and ink and paper to give Miss Hawk's statement in her own words, for she made quite a long speech. And indeed I cannot pretend to remember it accurately. But the gist of it was this: that Madame Krafft had confided to her

that she was followed and persecuted by the attentions of the person in question, whose very name was unknown to her; that for her own part she—Melanie—could treat such conduct with calm contempt, and not trouble her head about it. ("Well, she didn't seem to mind," put in Mrs. Devaux, very sweetly.) But that, unfortunately, Karl—that was her husband's name—with a thousand excellent qualities possessed one defect, namely, a tendency to jealousy. Now, this being the case, she was of course most anxious to remove any shadow of uneasiness from his mind, by shunning, even to a ridiculous extent, the slightest appearance of coquetry or vanity in her own behaviour. ("Oh, she hasn't made herself at all ridiculous in that direction!" put in Mrs. Devaux again.) And, finally, she besought Miss Hawk to remain with her in her walks and drives, at the concerts of the band, and during the morning when the company sipped the waters in the Kurhaus, and to give her the inestimable benefit of her countenance and advice. "And I have done so," said Miss Hawk, in conclusion. "I should not have revealed Melanie's confidence under any other circumstances. But when misconception—to use no harsher word—spreads its baleful influence around, I deem it my duty to dispel the cloud at once and forever, by declaring the truth upon my own personal responsibility."

Miss Hawk's revelation created a great sensation. We were all impressed by it, and interested—immensely interested. It was like a bit out of a play or a story; and I am sure we all watched Madame Krafft afterwards, in the sort of admiring sympathising way in which one regards the heroine of a novel. Only, I am sorry to say, that Mrs. Devaux did not come out quite nicely on this occasion. She had for some time past shown symptoms of wavering in her allegiance to Miss Hawk. And now she and Monsieur Puits-de-fond made common cause, and turned into almost open enemies of the rest of us. They sneered at Madame Krafft, and even spied upon her in a downright mean way. I was sorry to see it; for Mrs. Devaux was a very accomplished woman, and, besides knowing so many languages, she could amuse us by the hour with anecdotes of the great people she had known in her travels, and was altogether an acquisition to our society.

Well, matters went on much in the

same way for three or four days more. Madame Krafft had a short visit from her husband, who came over from Bâle for a few hours just to see her. He was obliged to return the same evening because a large order was in course of execution at his factory, and he superintended everything himself. It was a most agreeable sight to see him and his pretty wife walking arm-in-arm up and down the long avenue of lime-trees in front of the Kurhaus. They looked so healthy and happy, and so fond of each other! And really, after the number of sickly, wrinkled, not too-good-humoured faces which we beheld daily, the sight of this young couple was, as I said, refreshing. As for the "person," the persecutor, as we called him, he slunk into the background altogether, and during those few hours of Herr Krafft's visit I believe we none of us set eyes on him. We despised and detested him, and observed to each other that his whole bearing and appearance were low—I am not sure that some of us did not go so far as to say ruffianly. Miss Hawk acted as the most faithful of guardians, and Melanie was the most interesting and engaging of youthful matrons; an innocent frisky lamb, frolicking confidently under the very eyes of the wolf.

CHAPTER II.

ONE day—the second or third, I think, after Herr Krafft's visit—a surprising item of news began to circulate in Unter-Bâdéli. We had no lack of news and excitement now, certainly. Mrs. Devaux declared we were becoming sensational enough to come out in penny numbers. I don't like that style of expression; but such were her words, and there really was some truth in them. It turned out that the persecutor was a prince in disguise! No; I really am not joking. I know it sounds incredible, but he was a prince, a real prince, and staying at Unter-Bâdéli under a false name! Monsieur Puits-de-fond knew all about him. The persecutor called himself Herr Tiefenthal; but his true style and title was Prince August of—— I will not write the real name; let us say X. He had a brother an ambassador, and an uncle a cardinal, and was connected with serene highnesses more than I could tell you, unless I had an Almanach de Gotha at hand. But he was a black sheep—a regular mauvais sujet, said Monsieur Puits-de-fond. He had

made a mésalliance with an opera-dancer, and his family had forgiven him. He had made huge debts, and his family had paid them. He had been accused of foul play at a gambling-table, and his family had got him out of even that scrape. But after that they exiled him; sent him into a genteel sort of banishment, and made him an allowance, on condition of his causing no further scandal to their name. He was a terrible person, was Prince August of X. But, nevertheless, prince he was, born and bred, and nothing could un-prince him.

Well to be sure, here was an incident to happen in our small quiet Lower Little-bath! What was peculiarly awkward was, that we had declared the man to be indelibly stamped with the marks of low breeding and coarse vulgarity. Even Miss Hawk's penetration had been deceived—she who was wont to declare that she could recognise good blood at once, by virtue of its affinity with her own. It was very awkward; and I know we all felt it to be so, by our so pertinaciously holding our tongues on the subject of the man's vulgarity. As to not talking about him at all, that was impossible.

Miss Hawk called me up to her own room that first morning that we heard the news. She was very kind to me, and I think she liked me the better for showing no jealousy at her preference of Melanie, as Monsieur Puits-de-fond and Mrs. Devaux had done. Any way, she now called me into her room, and began to consult me confidentially as to what she had best do under these new circumstances.

"Do?" said I. "I don't quite understand. What can be done? And why should you be expected to do anything?"

"Why, my dear, I mean as to Melanie. I must break it to her, you know. She will be terribly startled. With all her gaiety and high spirits, she is very timid."

As Miss Hawk paused and looked at me, I felt obliged to say something, so I observed that it was a comfort we were not now in the Middle Ages; and that even princes had to pay some respect to the police nowadays.

"Oh yes," replied Miss Hawk; "I don't suppose the man would attempt to carry her off, if you mean that. But, the truth is, I think the best thing she could do would be to take her railway-ticket for Bâle and go back to Herr Krafft. A pretty young creature like that ought to have her husband's companionship and protection.

You see, as long as this—this individual was a mere nobody, the matter was trivial. And, out of our own set, I daresay not three people in the place noticed his persecution of Melanie. But now that it is known who he really is, he will be the mark for inquisitive eyes. And Madame Krafft might—might become the subject of disagreeable remarks and observation. Would you mind staying, whilst I tell Melanie, and helping me to persuade her to go home?"

I did rather mind; but I wished to please Miss Hawk, so I stayed; I was rather surprised to find her need any sort of support from me. But she was fluttered and upset, and a little mortified withal. I suppose it was natural that a person of her commanding manners should be more cast down at making a mistake than an ordinary woman would be.

Well, Madame Melanie was called into the stuffy little bedroom, and the great news was broken to her. She was very much surprised; very much so, indeed. Mrs. Devaux and Monsieur Puits-de-fond tried to make out that she had known it all along; but I am very sure, from my own observation, that it was not so. Besides, from what happened afterwards, anyone might see that she had had no idea at first who Herr Tiefenthal really was. But I had better go straight on with my story. Yes, Madame Melanie was very much surprised at our news. If you ask me on my word of honour, I cannot say that I think she was as much startled as Miss Hawk expected; nor that Miss Hawk's account of the "individual's" iniquitous career appeared to shock her to any painful extent. But surprised the little woman was, thoroughly. She kept repeating over and over again, "Prinz August! Prinz August! Why, his sister married the reigning duke of —! I saw her once in Munich, where she was visiting at our court. She was in an open carriage with the queen. Prinz August!"

As soon as Miss Hawk could get in a word, she broached the suggestion that Madame Krafft should forthwith return to her faithful Karl. But Madame Melanie had not the slightest intention of flying from the enemy. Go home! Why should she go home? She must go through the "cure." The cure lasted three weeks, whereas she had only been in Unter-Bädéli a fortnight. It would be very silly to rush off to Bâle just now. And besides—with a queer awe-stricken dropping of

her voice, like the tone of a well-trained servant in his master's presence—besides, Prinz August might take it amiss, if he fancied she went away to avoid him.

"Take it amiss!" echoed Miss Hawk. And I must say I had never seen her look so majestic as she did at that moment, nor so tall. "Let him take it amiss! Of all ways in which he could take it, that is certainly the most desirable."

Madame Krafft looked at her with a singular expression.

"His brother is the reigning prince," said she, in an anxious explanatory manner.

A dark red flush ran all over Miss Hawk's face—it was a pale grayish-tinted face in general—and she turned her head away abruptly. After a few seconds she turned it back again, and slightly stroked Madame Krafft's wavy dark hair as she said:

"What a child you are, Melanie! You really need someone of experience and savoir vivre at your side. Well, as I know you, I am only beginning to find out what a baby you are!"

If Madame Krafft were a baby she was a very obstinate sort of baby. She took her own way with true German tenacity and stolidity. She had apparently none of the sort of imagination which torments sensitive people, by vividly presenting to them possibilities of their being wrong, or at least of seeming wrong to the eyes of others. If you differed from Melanie Krafft on any point which interested her, you were wrong. That was all. She believed it with a firm—I had almost written stupid—kind of faith. There was no other alternative conceivable by her mind. Miss Hawk watched her and followed her about all that day with unflinching fidelity. She reminded me—I hope it does not sound disrespectful, I did not feel so at all—of a hen that has hatched a duckling. Towards evening, it being fine and warm and balmy, Miss Hawk proposed a stroll under the lime-trees to the whole company. I assented willingly; so did Monsieur Puits-de-fond; so did two or three other boarders. Only Mrs. Devaux and Madame Krafft said nothing. I suppose, however, that we all took it for granted that they were coming, for when we assembled to set off in a stately and genteel progress through the one narrow street of Unter-Bädéli towards the shady alley by the Kurhaus, there was a general surprised enquiry after the missing

ones. But they did not appear, and poor Miss Hawk was in a fidgety nervous state about Melanie's absence.

"Mrs. Devaux is with her," said I, reassuringly. "She is all right, depend on it."

"Of course she is all right," replied Miss Hawk, loftily rebuking my want of tact. "There can be no doubt about that. Only—only one misses her. She is so gay and amusing."

"Her friendship with Mrs. Devaux is rather sudden, isn't it?" sneered Monsieur Puits-de-fond. "I don't know that Madame Melanie has chosen the most judicious adviser for her inexperienced innocence, eh? Mrs. Devaux is a charming woman, though, despite her lack of judgment. Very charming! So free from prejudices!" And here Monsieur Puits-de-fond took a very noisy pinch of snuff, with his head on one side, and—I hope you will not think the worse of me for confessing it, but Mrs. Ruddiman's rude description of him as a "wry-necked malicious old magpie," did recur to my mind. Just then, who should appear in the alley but Mrs. Ruddiman herself. She looked very hot and fat and good-humoured, and greeted us all from a long way off, at the full pitch of her voice.

"Well, I declare! Here you all are!" cried she. "All but two of you, that is. Deserters, I call 'em; and I told 'em as much. We shall have 'em over at the Rütli for good and all before long. It suits me, to be sure. But then I'm different. I like good victuals; and at my time of life I needn't mind saying so."

We stared at each other blankly. I believe Miss Hawk would have given much to bow and pass on, without asking any questions at that moment; but Monsieur Puits-de-fond would not give her the chance. He pounced—he really did—on Mrs. Ruddiman, and had the whole story out of her then and there, in her loudest voice and most outrageously bad French. Mrs. Devaux and Madame Krafft were supping in the little beer-garden behind the Rütli in company with Herr Tiefenthal!

I will draw a veil over the scene which followed. But this one word I must say: Monsieur Puits-de-fond displayed the triumph of a fiend. Poor Miss Hawk! I was so sorry for her that the tears came into my eyes; but I tried to hide them, for fear of mortifying her the more.

Well, we didn't walk long in the pleasant

summer evening after that. When we got back to the hotel, Miss Hawk asked me to go upstairs with her, and we had a long talk in her room; and she actually cried, poor soul! But through it all she was staunch to Melanie. She was vexed with her, and disapproved her conduct; but she was convinced, she said, that the young woman meant no evil, and was only foolish, and inexperienced and ill-advised. For Mrs. Devaux, Miss Hawk had no such excuses to make. And, indeed, she said such severe things of her, in her most majestic manner, as made me quiver with nervousness. And I may as well say first as last, that I quite agree with Miss Hawk about Melanie. I don't believe that she ever had it in her mind to do any harm, but she was pigheaded—there, it's out!—and foolish, and—and couldn't understand the sentiment of "Britons never, never, never will be slaves."

We waited until she came home, which was as late as nine o'clock, I am sorry to say. Mrs. Devaux went swishing up the stairs past Miss Hawk's door in a great hurry, and didn't stop, or look, or turn her head. I saw her through the partly-open door, and she had her best black silk on, and a pink bonnet. But Madame Krafft came boldly up, humming a waltz-tune, and as she passed the door she looked in and said: "Bon soir, chère Miss Hawk," quite gaily. She did look very pretty, in a bright blue muslin gown, and a white straw hat trimmed with forget-me-nots, and her gloves fitting like her skin. That I must say. Well, Miss Hawk stopped her, and made her come in, and spoke to her—oh, so beautifully! I wish I could remember her words, so high-principled, so ladylike, so full of the most refined propriety. But as for Melanie, I assure you she did not appreciate them one bit. All she could say was: "But what harm could there be in it? Madame Devaux was with us. And Madame Devaux was delighted with the prince. Of course she was gratified by his notice. His brother is the reigning prince, you know." Just as if that made everything right, instead of making everything more wrong than before. And when Miss Hawk, at her wits' end to make her see the matter in its true light, said: "But, Melanie, remember, you were so annoyed by his staring and following you, and you thought him such a hulking, ill-looking, low sort of fellow," she only answered, as cool as a cucumber, and smiling as if she thought

it was Miss Hawk who was stupid: "But I didn't know who he was then. We none of us knew."

I cannot say whether it was with more pleasure than apprehension that we heard two or three days later that Herr Krafft was to arrive on Saturday, remain in Unter-Bädéli during the Sunday, and go away, taking his pretty wife with him, on the following Monday morning. When I say "we," I mean Miss Hawk and myself. Mrs. Devaux was certainly not pleased at the news; and Monsieur Puits-de-fond, whether pleased or not, certainly felt no apprehension on the subject. Herr Krafft had written to his wife to say that he should arrive by the last train on Saturday evening—that is to say about nine o'clock. Miss Hawk heard this from Monsieur Puits-de-fond, for Melanie never confided in her now. Not that the little woman seemed to draw off from Miss Hawk, or to bear her any grudge; but Miss Hawk herself withdrew from the intimacy, and left the field open to Mrs. Devaux, who was constantly supping and jaunting about with Madame Krafft and Herr Tiefenthal, and at the latter's expense. Melanie, indeed, never could apparently understand Miss Hawk's feeling on the subject. "It isn't wrong," she said to me once; "but even if it were, what harm could it do Miss Hawk? The prince don't invite her to supper." Well, to answer that, you see, one would have had to begin such a long way back, and to teach Madame Melanie one's own views on the subject of right and wrong from the very foundation. For my part I couldn't attempt such a task. Could you?

Thursday passed, Friday passed, Saturday morning came. Miss Hawk drew a breath of relief. "That foolish child will be safe under her husband's care before this day is over," said she. But we little guessed what was to happen first.

About six o'clock Miss Hawk, being in the drawing-room where we all were, walked up to Madame Krafft and said: "Melanie, my dear, we haven't had a stroll together for a long time. Will you take a little walk with me and Miss Griggs?"—I am Miss Griggs—"and hear the band, and then sup with me as my guest at the Rütli, where there is to be an Italian mandoline-player, who plays beautifully, Monsieur Puits-de-fond says—will you, my dear, for this last evening?"

Now I did think it very sweet and good and kind-hearted of Miss Hawk to

make this proposal after all that had happened; for I knew that she did it in order that Melanie's husband might find her in company he could approve of when he should arrive, and not be told that his wife was supping with that—that brute of a Herr Tiefenthal, as he chose to call himself. Madame Krafft looked at her with the pretty innocent-looking smile which I had really begun to hate, knowing how much stupid obstinacy there was behind it, and how little gratitude or feeling, and said she: "Oh, very well. I will go to the band with you if you like; but I can't sup. I am engaged to—to Mrs. Devaux."

This was too much for us all; too much even for Miss Hawk, who turned away with a stately bow, and said aloud to me: "On second thoughts, my dear Miss Griggs, we had better not sup at the Rütli. If you don't mind giving up the mandoline-player, we will eat our supper at least in respectability here."

Of course I agreed. But before seven o'clock, which was the usual supper-hour in Unter-Bädéli, Miss Hawk had changed her mind. She was really uneasy and unhappy about that little unfeeling woman, and she and I walked into the great room at the Rütli, and sat down at a little table by ourselves, and ordered coffee. "If I can but persuade her to go home, and be at home in good time for her husband's arrival!" said poor Miss Hawk. And her feeling was so clearly right that it made me ashamed of the angry words against Melanie that rose to the tip of my tongue, and I swallowed them down again.

Well, there we sat and sipped our coffee for nearly half an hour; and finally in marched Mrs. Devaux, leaning on Herr Tiefenthal's arm, and looking as proud of it as a peacock; and close behind them Madame Melanie, with a huge bouquet in her hand, smiling and bridling, and showing her white teeth, and flashing her bright brown eyes, in a most provokingly cheerful and unconcerned way. At first they didn't see us in our corner; but after awhile Melanie caught sight of us, and smiled and nodded, and Mrs. Devaux actually had the impudence to smile and nod too, although Miss Hawk hadn't spoken to her for a week. She received a bow in return that would have chilled me to the marrow; but she only tossed her head and said something to that—that wretch of a prince; and they both laughed in the coarsest way. Presently the landlady brought

them their supper, and they began to eat and drink, and to talk louder and louder. Melanie looked at her watch, and Mrs. Devaux said, quite loud enough to be heard all over the room: "Don't worry yourself, my dear. The train cannot arrive for three-quarters of an hour yet, and it takes twenty minutes more to drive from the station." She had hardly got the words out of her mouth when she gave a queer muffled sort of scream, like a person violently startled. We looked round—everyone in the room looked round—and there stood Herr Krafft behind his wife's chair, facing the prince, and looking at him with as thorough disgust and contempt as I ever saw expressed in an honest face.

"Karl!" cried Melanie, and she flushed very red; but upon my word I do believe it was from surprise, and not from a guilty conscience, whatever Monsieur Puits-de-fond might say or insinuate. Then she threw her arms round him and kissed him on both cheeks before us all, in her German fashion. "Come home, my dear," said he. "You have fallen into very unfitting company. I wonder there was no one kind enough to advise you better. That man is not a proper associate for an honest burgher's wife." He spoke very quietly, but quite distinctly, and "Herr Tiefenthal" must have heard every word he said. Melanie looked shocked at her husband's bluntness. But she thought to set matters right by whispering to him in a hurried eager manner the magic words, "Prinz August of X." I saw her lips frame the syllables. Herr Krafft, however, was in a white heat of indignation, and not one whit moved by this grand announcement. "Whether this person is skulking about under a false name or not, I neither know nor care," said he, just a thought louder than he had spoken before; "but I, who know the world, tell you, who don't know it, that he is not worthy to sit at table in my wife's company. Come, Melanie!"

By this time there was a breathless silence in the room; every eye, every ear, was intent on the little group at that table. And on nearly every face was expressed sympathy with and approval of Herr Krafft. Perhaps it was the sense of this general hostility which spirited up "Herr Tiefenthal" to make an effort of self-assertion. At first he had sat slouching and blinking in his usual "hangdog" manner. The phrase is Mrs. Ruddiman's, but so appropriate that I couldn't refrain

from using it. But now, just as Madame Melanie was being marched off unceremoniously, with her hand tucked under her husband's arm, he leant forward and thrust the big bouquet—his gift, of course—upon her with a jesting word or two in French, and as he did so he touched her arm. In one instant—it was as if a thunderbolt had fallen amongst us—there was a thud and a crash, and Herr Tiefenthal was lying prone on his back on a sanded floor, with Karl Krafft standing over him, looking quite terrible. He had knocked him down with one strong well-directed blow.

After a second or two, one or two of the men in the room came forward and hoisted up the prince, who looked rather dazed, and very wicked and vicious, as he growled out a string of oaths and threats in guttural German. "You're a low rascal, beneath my notice," said he, with his head turned towards Krafft, but his eyes on the floor. "I'll have you beaten by my grooms."

"Pooh!" cried the other. "You had better hold your tongue and be quiet. We are free men here. You've had a lesson—profit by it. And understand, that if I catch you presuming to address this lady again, or even to lift your eyes to her, I will flog you soundly, like an ill-behaved dog. I wish this honourable company good-night!" And with that out he stalked, taking his wife with him.

There was dead silence for a few moments, and then Mrs. Ruddiman stood upright in the centre of the room, and pulling out her handkerchief and waving it, called out "Hooray!" with such hearty loudness, you might have heard her a mile off. Well, then there was a regular roar of laughter. Everybody laughed until the tears ran down their faces, and Mrs. Ruddiman laughed too, and insisted on treating the company to wine, and went about shaking hands right and left. And said she, in her wonderful French: "That has done me good! That's better than champagne! Lord, I should like to hug that young man!" The last sentence she said in English, which I was rather glad of. Of course, this was not agreeable for Mr. Prince; who, indeed, slunk off in the confusion and noise and laughter, and was seen no more. And so ended our great sensational adventure in Unter-Bädeli.

That is to say, there it ended for aught the world knew; but of course it had consequences, as all conduct, good or bad, has. And I do believe that this event, which might have had a disastrous effect on all

the rest of Melanie's married life, really produced a beneficial result, on the contrary. For the fact is—at least, so it seems to me, but I never was a clever woman, and I may be wrong—that Melanie conceived a much higher respect and admiration for her husband after seeing him knock down a prince, than she ever had before! Fond of him in her way she had always been, no doubt. But now, she looked up to him with a reverence which was very wholesome for her. And he was very good to her; very gentle and tender and manly. He harboured no evil suspicions of his young wife; and I, for one, am very certain he was right there. What she had done was, however, wrong enough and foolish enough, and he pointed it out to her very plainly. Indeed, with Melanie Krafft, it was of no use to be too delicate and considerate. She was dull of apprehension in some things—very. One thing I liked Herr Krafft for, and always shall—he appreciated Miss Hawk, and did her justice. She never said a word about her having warned and counselled Melanie. But somehow Herr Krafft found it out, and spoke to her. And she, instead of making much of what she had done, made little; and gave all the testimony she could in Melanie's favour. Miss Hawk, indeed, behaved nobly, and Mrs. Ruddiman made it her business to call on Herr Krafft, and sing Miss Hawk's praises, so that she became quite a heroine. "And," said Mrs. Ruddiman, "if her manners were rather high, so were her principles! But height in manners, and lowness in behaviour, like that Mrs. Devaux, is enough to turn your stomach. And as to figure—well, some of us are too stout, and some too lean; but the great thing is to have your heart in the right place. And, would you believe it, that Tiffytal's gone off, leaving a score behind him as long as my arm at the Rütli, for beer and tobacco!"

OLD SIR PIERCE.

BY DUTTON COOK.

It professed to be a Photographic Saloon and Fine Art Gallery—and that account of it was inscribed in large and small letters here and there about the building over and over again, as though facts could be contradicted and totally routed by force of simple iteration and reiteration; for, in truth, it was a humble affair enough. The

small front-garden of a stunted suburban house, the centre of a row of like lowly and unpretending tenements, had been boarded over and covered in after a rude impromptu fashion, so as to form something between a booth and a shed. Little attempt at decoration had been made; but about the entrance were suspended numerous specimens of inexpensive photography—the kind commonly known as “collodion on glass.” Among these were to be found, presumably as a means of bringing home to the public the skill and success of the operator, portraits of various persons easily recognisable in the district, such as the milkman, the policeman, the crossing-sweeper, and a certain omnibus-driver of eccentric aspect. But, of course, the majority of the portraits represented very undistinguished people; the artist's chief patrons were, as it seemed, homely of feature, as of occupation. Many domestic servants had sat to him; nurses, or young mothers, with babies on their laps; tradesmen's boys in the habits of their trade; with a sprinkling of private soldiers in undress uniform, armed with peany canes; nearly all somewhat blank of look and distressed of expression: the victims of photographic art in its rudest and most ruthless form.

The neighbourhood fringed London on the north. What had once been a country road, was gradually undergoing conversion into a town street; private houses were one after another being changed into shops. Here and there some resolute occupant had refused to yield up his garden to the purposes of trade; and however elbowed and frowned upon by the adjoining structures, maintained his little sooty, shady enclosure, rich in vegetation of a dark-brown hue, as the courtyard of a private residence. The taverns, and there were many of them, still preserved something of a rural look, as though still pretending to be country inns; boasting old-fashioned signboards, swinging and creaking in mid-air, and rough-hewn horse-troughs straddling before the doors. A fondness for signs and signboards, indeed, characterised the locality. On all sides might be seen those trade emblems which are discarded as barbaric in the more central parts of the town; gilded hams and fitches; red and blue and yellow sugar-loaves; life-size Scotchmen, with very curly whiskers, severely taking snuff out of rams'-horns; goldbeaters' arms and mallets; barbers' poles spirally-streaked with colour; and

scarlet teapots of enormous dimensions. There was busy traffic in the roadway; up and down the middle glided unceasingly the tram-cars, to the music of clattering hoofs and jingling bells.

The wooden edifice, with its many inscriptions, in the small front-garden, was but a sort of photographic show-room; the studio was above, on the roof of the house, an apartment screened and covered in with glass and canvas in about equal proportions. A tortuous, unsteady staircase, that creaked and crackled at every step, was the means of approach to this chamber. The light was dim, the shadows perplexing, the atmosphere somewhat moist, heavy, and unpleasant; a smell as of poverty, and uncleanness, and want of repair pervading the premises. After the gloom of the staircase, the glare of the studio was rather overpowering. In such wise, perhaps, was explained the fact that so many of the photographs represented persons afflicted with bleared, weak, and watery eyes.

This upper chamber commanded a panoramic range of chimneys, and a view of the hills that border and shelter London on the north. A bright sun had been shining, and it was very hot in the studio; but it was one of those bright suns that are always attended by sharp, strong east winds. Every now and then came a whistling noise about the little room on the roof, like a burglarious signal for an attempt to break the panes of glass and burst into the premises; and at intervals there was much roaring and rushing round the stacks of chimneys, as though efforts were being made to hurl them bodily into the street.

The photographer—his hands, stained and soiled with nitrate of silver, black as though he had been picking walnuts or polishing grates, proclaimed him the photographer—sat alone in his studio, smoking a short pipe; the odour of tobacco combining curiously with the chemical smells inseparable from his pursuit. He was a shabby-looking man, with dusty hair and rusty beard, lean and angular of form, middle-aged, wearing a faded flannel-shirt of a brickdust colour. He was dipping small squares of glass in a pail of water, wiping them dry with a cloth, and then polishing them upon a ragged scrap of dirty washleather. Suddenly he suspended his labours.

“Was that a footstep?” he asked himself. He paused for a few seconds and

listened. "No, only the wind shaking the back-door. A fine day like this, and not a soul comes near the place! I suppose they'd come in shoals if the weather were dark, and foggy, and drizzly. But no, they wouldn't. It's plain to me they won't come at any price. What more can people want, I wonder? Only sixpence, with gold frame included." He held out one of the squares of glass, breathed upon it, and polished it with his leather. "Why, it's dirt cheap. It's too cheap, indeed, to get one's living by. But then," he added grimly, "I don't live by it; I only starve by it." Angrily he threw from him the little square of glass he had been polishing. It was shivered, as it dashed upon the floor. He shrugged his shoulders as he contemplated the fragments.

"Not that it's any good smashing the stock-in-trade," he said. He puffed at his pipe to keep it alight. But he put it from him again, and went to the door to listen.

"I'm right this time. There's really someone coming upstairs."

He put on his coat, hurriedly arranged an untidy necktie, and ran his fingers comb-wise through his hair. This was a sort of rapid toilet, accomplished by way of homage to the approaching visitor.

"That's a wretchedly crooked staircase," he said, as he listened. "It's no wonder that people blunder and stumble as they do. I'm always expecting those banisters to give way altogether. This way, sir. Mind the step, please. You're all right now."

But an expression of disappointment crossed his face. His visitor looked miserably poor. A man, whose shabby slouched hat half concealed a very woebegone face, pale, and pinched, and worn, stood in the doorway, wrapped in a threadbare cloak, beneath which he carried a bundle, as it seemed; round which a long, claw-like hand, gathered, for its better protection, the folds of thin frayed cloth. He was panting—was evidently fatigued by the ascent of the creaking stairs. Presently a fit of coughing seized him, shaking him cruelly. It was some minutes before he could speak. Meantime the photographer surveyed him with a puzzled air, which had yet something of commiseration about it.

"You take photographs; and cheaply, very cheaply?" asked the man hoarsely.

"Very cheaply indeed."

"I want a photograph taken, but——"

"Stay. I think there's something you need still more."

The photographer hastened to produce a bottle and a remnant of a loaf of bread.

"You're not strong, you know. One can see that with half an eye. And you're a trifle faint. You can't stand much exertion; and those stairs are trying. They've proved a little too much for you. And you need food. That's what's the matter with you."

"It's not that," the visitor said, waving his hand rather wildly. "I mean—you're very kind—you mean to be kind, and I am much obliged to you. But don't speak, please, only listen. Don't think me rude—only let me say what I've got to say and have done with it."

"Mad," muttered the photographer, resuming his seat and his pipe.

"You photograph the living—can you photograph the dead?"

"Mad, without doubt," the photographer again muttered. In another moment he started to his feet. His visitor had tossed away his cloak. He was carrying in his arms a child of some two years, simply robed in white—or rather, it should be said, the body of a child.

"Asleep?" asked the photographer, with yet a look upon his face that showed he knew what the answer must be.

"Dead—stone dead!" Tears streamed down his face as he said the words; his voice broke. "My poor little boy! My own little Hugh! He was taken from me this morning—only this morning. But I knew the blow was coming. I've known it a long while. He died without a moan—quite painlessly; even with a smile upon his lips, as you see him now. That was his good-bye to me—for he uttered no sound. He died with his hand in mine. I only knew he was dead by the little hand growing so cold, so icy cold, so dead cold." He turned away, trying to hide a grief that indeed could not be hidden.

"One would think to look upon him, that the poor little thing was still asleep," said the photographer softly.

"If I could think that! But then I know—I know. He's dead, dead, stone dead."

"Your only child?"

"My only child. Thank God!" Then he added, after a pause: "Should I not thank God? Could I wish for other children, to suffer as this poor little one has suffered? to die before my eyes as this little one has died? to own for their father one so fallen, and wretched, and degraded as I am? No. Will you photograph the poor little boy?"

"If you will have it so—yes."

"The light will serve?"

"The light will serve well enough."

"I wish to send the photograph home."

He broke into a strange laugh. "I call it home—though it's no home of mine now—though it can never more be home to me. But I mean my father's house. We quarrelled—years since. We're not likely to be friends again—or to speak to each other—or to meet face to face again on this side of the grave. He would have it so, and it has been so, and will be so now, until the end. I don't know why I tell you these things. They're nothing to you—they can be nothing to you. But it seems to me that sometimes trouble acts upon men—upon far stronger men than me—like drink; and makes them giddy, and weak, and garrulous, and mad, in spite of themselves, just as I feel now.

"I want the photograph to send home," he resumed, after a pause; "one of the photographs, I should say, for I must have another to keep myself. It will be little enough, but it will be something, to hug to my heart and to cover with kisses, when my poor little man is hidden away in his grave. You see, my father wanted possession of the child. He wanted to make terms with me—he would have given much if he could only have got the child away from me. I was cast off; he would have nothing to say to me. But it was different with the child; he would have petted and made much of him—have humoured and indulged him in every way, have made him his heir. Yes, and he would have taught him to hate his father. He would have parted us, you see; that was his object. But I could not have that. He was my own child. It would have been like selling him for gold. For it came to that. An allowance was to be paid to me, so long as I kept away from my child, so long as I helped to hide from him the fact of my existence. It could not be, you know. It was better for us to cling together, even though we suffered together, and starved together, and it has been something very like starving together in these latter days. Are you ready? Tell me how to place the poor child. Let the light fall on his face. You never saw prettier gold-coloured hair than that? There's no hint of death there, is there? But I've heard or read somewhere that hair lives and grows on even after death. On this pillow, with this drapery beneath and above? Yes, that will do. Touch

him gently, please. But I'm sure you haven't the heart to deal roughly with the poor little one."

"Heaven forbid!"

"For he was always used to gentle treatment, poor and miserable as I've been; and he heard only words of kindness, poor child; and he never knew, perhaps, the struggle I had sometimes to get bread for him. He did not feel, perhaps, how hard, how very hard, our life was. I tried to keep that from him. I tried so, for his sake, to make out that things were much better than they really were; to persuade him to think so, at any rate."

"His mother. Does she know?"

"His mother died in giving him birth."

"Poor child! poor child!" said the photographer, very sadly, as he brushed his hand across his eyes.

"They are both in heaven now. Is there need to pity them? How happy she will be to clasp her baby to her heart, for the first time! She died, you see, before she had time even to look upon her little one. Poor little mother! Poor tiny child. Well, well, they are together now, never to be parted again."

The photographer adjusted his camera.

"One moment," he said.

But he was absent some minutes. Meantime the father sat beside the body of his child, tenderly laid upon a pillow, with its white draperies neatly folded about it. The face seemed wasted somewhat, but wore no look of suffering; there was even a smile upon the pallid lips, that were as dead rose-leaves. The long, dark silken lashes cast soft shadows upon the colourless cheeks. A delicately-featured child, with a complexion of exquisite purity and transparency, it seemed not dead, but rather a waxen image of sleep.

The father sat motionless, his arms resting upon his knees, his face buried in his hands, a tangled growth of hair falling over his forehead. The photographer returned presently, bringing with him a handful of flowers. These he proceeded to strew gently about the body of the child.

"God bless you!" said the father, with a sob. "You're a good man. Your name's Osborne, isn't it? I saw it written up below. I shan't forget it. I knew an Osborne once. Jack Osborne, his name was, down in Devonshire."

"You knew him?"

"Yes. I'm speaking of years ago. Jack Osborne, the vicar's son, at Stoke Deverill, Devonshire."

The photographer remained silent for a minute; then approaching his visitor, he said: "I am that Jack Osborne, and you—yes, it must be so. But how you're altered! You're Hugh Challoner!" For some moments they stood still, earnestly gazing at each other.

"To think of our meeting like this! It was mere chance brought me here. You were the nearest photographer. I had no other reason. Strange! If anything's strange; and I begin to doubt it. I've gone through so much that nothing can seem very strange to me, except, perhaps, good fortune. I've known so very little of that." They shook hands with a sort of sad cordiality.

"I'm glad we've met again, Hugh, though certainly we might have met under happier circumstances. It's long since we've seen or heard anything of each other. Yet we've been travelling the same road, it seems, all the while—the road to ruin, I mean; an easy journey, downhill all the way."

"Somehow, I felt from the first that I was talking to a friend. I read as much in your eyes, I think. I am sorry you've had ill luck, too, Jack. Yet it can't have been so bad as mine. You've no dead wife or child to mourn?"

"No, Hugh, it's not been so bad as that with me. But it's been bad enough—thanks to myself, chiefly. I confess it. Mine is an old, old story of folly and error, wastefulness and wickedness. I've led a miserable, shifty, vagabond, worthless life. No one knows that better than I do. Of late I've been trying this trade. I used to think I was rather clever as an operator. But time and trouble certainly knock the conceit out of a man."

"I'm very glad it's fallen to you to photograph the poor child, Jack," said Hugh Challoner. His great sorrow had made him selfish; he could scarcely give attention to his friend's narrative. "You'd have loved the little one if only you could have seen him alive, Jack. He was the brightest, cheeriest, prettiest little man, eyes ever looked upon. Even now you can see for yourself what a little beauty he was."

Jack Osborne nodded his head significantly. Hugh Challoner stooped down to kiss, once more, the cold lips of his dead child. Jack Osborne busied himself again with preparations for the photograph.

"I must tell you my story some other time, Jack," said Hugh Challoner, sighing deeply. "It doesn't differ so very much

from your own. At least, misfortune has been the burthen of it all through."

"Is there no chance of your making peace with your father?"

"There is no chance. You've forgotten what Sir Pierce was like, or you would not ask such a question. Age has not changed him much—has not softened his heart in the slightest degree."

"And your sister?" The photographer averted his face somewhat as he asked this question. "Can she do nothing, Hugh? She was your firm friend in the old time."

"Poor Nelly! She is my firm friend still, for that matter. But what can she do? What can I ask or expect her to do? Nothing."

"She is unmarried?" asked Osborne, still with his face turned from his interlocutor.

"She is unmarried, Jack. Yet changed, I fancy, from what she was as you knew her, Jack. She is the old man's slave—bound hand and foot. She moves and thinks but as he bids her. She has no will of her own. She lives only to obey him, and tend him, and wait upon him."

"She loves her father," said Osborne. "She always loved him."

"Yes—if that can be called love which is so much made up of fear."

"Don't blame her, Hugh, for loving her father."

"I don't blame her. Who am I—what am I—that I should blame anyone?"

The photographer held up his hand by way of signal. There was perfect silence in the studio.

"I think I've been successful," said Osborne presently. He was speaking of the photograph—his voice issued from the recesses of a dark cupboard. He reappeared, drying his hands with a ragged towel.

"You must tell me where you are to be found, Hugh."

"I live in a very poor way, in a very poor place," Hugh said, with troubled looks.

"Let us hope for better times, Hugh. And—let me help you if I can. I'm poor enough myself, Heaven knows! yet I may do something. And you'll want money now, you know."

"To pay for the little one's coffin? Yes; I've been thinking of that. I've been reckoning over what I could turn into money. But there's little left me, very little, that's of any sort of value. I've a room at No. 12, Purton's Rents; it's a wretched place, but there was no help for

it. Beggars can't be choosers, you know. You know the place? You go over the canal-bridge, and turn down by the gas-works. Anyone thereabout will point out Parton's Rents; it isn't really a stone's-throw from here, though it's hard to find—hidden away as though people were ashamed of it; and certainly it isn't a place to be proud of."

So they parted.

"Poor Hugh—and has it come to this? I thought my own luck as bad as it could well be. Yet his is worse. Not that I find the fact so very consoling. What a change a few years makes! Why, it seems only yesterday that we were all so happy together down in Devonshire. What fools we are when we're young; and yet how happy we are. I don't know that we grow so much wiser as we grow older, but certainly we grow sadder. Then came the storm that separated us and sent us all adrift. I loved Nelly Challoner, and she—but what does it matter now whether or not she loved me back again? It was a mad dream. I was not her equal—I was unworthy of her in every way. And old Sir Pierce was furious. So ended that romance. And Hugh? I remember hearing something about it; but it happened long afterwards. He fell in love with his sister's governess. I forget her name; but it doesn't matter. Yes; his sister's governess—that was the story, I think. And he was sent away from home. If, afterwards, he defied his father and married her, and this child is their child, that would account for much. But it's terrible to think of. Can it really be that Sir Pierce is so unforgiving, so ruthless with his only son? Poor Hugh! How little did I think, when I first took up with this miserable trade of mine, that I should ever be called upon to photograph Hugh Challoner's dead child!"

Enquiring for Hugh Challoner in Parton's Rents, Jack Osborne could at first learn no tidings of him. People shook their heads—they didn't know the name. Didn't know as they had ever heard of such a name. Did he mean the gentleman on the two-pair back?—the gentleman whose little boy was dead? Ah! Yes! He was in. He didn't go out much. And wasn't likely to go out much, worse luck.

It was a wretched room, with a sloping roof. The ceiling was stained with the damp, and broken in places, exposing the bare rafters, and freely admitting the rain.

Many window-panes were patched with paper, or their places supplied with rags. The floor was carpetless, and of furniture there was very little. On a crazy-looking chair rested a child's coffin, of the plainest and cheapest sort.

Hugh lay stretched upon a ragged paillasse; the straw was forcing its way out at every aperture of the soiled cover.

"Is it you, Jack?" he asked faintly.

"It's very good of you to come."

"How goes it with you, old man? See, I brought a bottle of wine; and here's food—bread and meat."

"You're very kind, Jack. I want to get up my strength if I can; but I feel dreadfully knocked over, just now. The east wind plays the deuce with me—pierces through me, and seems to chill and pinch my very bones. But you see I must make haste and be well, to attend the little one's funeral. You've brought the photograph? I'll send it—home."

"You'll tell them in what straits you're in, Hugh? You'll tell them where they may find you, and render you help and comfort?"

"I'll send my father the picture of his dead grandchild. He shall see and know what he has done. He has sought to punish me; he shall judge whether I am punished enough. He may find, perhaps, that the blow fallen upon me has not left him unharmed. He has made me suffer. I hope and pray that he may suffer too."

"Hush, Hugh!"

"How can I hold my peace? Or if I keep back my words, do you think I can check my thoughts? Jack, that poor child's death lies at his grandfather's door. I say that he is verily guilty in this matter, in that he saw the anguish of my heart, when I besought him, and he would not hear! For I did beseech him for bread to give the child. Its death was hastened by sheer want, Jack. Can you think of a poor little starving child, Jack, and keep the tears back from your eyes? He could, Jack—the child's grandfather. Can I hope that he should not suffer?"

A carriage, containing a lady and a gentleman, had stopped in front of the Photographic Saloon and Fine Art Gallery. So unusual a spectacle occasioned some stir. For it was a carriage of a highly-fashionable description, with crests upon its burnished panels and tasselled hammer-cloths, with powder whitening the pomatummed locks of its coachman and footman.

"Here's a old gent going to be took," observed a street boy to a friend of his own age and position, as the gentleman with some effort descended from the carriage, and, leaning upon the arm of the lady, approached the Photographic Saloon.

"You're sure you're right, Eleanor? You're quite sure? What a place! What a neighbourhood!"

The lady consulted a card she carried in her hand. On one side of the card appeared the photograph of Hugh Challoner's dead son; on the other, was inscribed the address of the photographer.

"Yes; this must be the place," she said. And they entered the Photographic Saloon and Fine Art Gallery, and were presently mounting the stairs to the studio.

"Sir Pierce and his daughter," muttered Jack Osborne with a start. An expression of embarrassment flitted across his face, and for a moment his cheeks flushed.

"Your name is Osborne, I think," Sir Pierce began, in rather pompous and artificial tones. "I have called concerning a photograph which has been lately sent to me—a photograph of a child." As he spoke he took the card from his daughter's hand, and exhibited it to the artist.

"How he's changed!" mused Jack Osborne, as he affected to examine the portrait. "How old he looks, how feeble, and shattered altogether! And he doesn't recognise me in the least. Nor does Nelly either. Perhaps she will not."

Sir Pierce looked, in truth, very old, in spite of, or perhaps because of, the pains he had taken to look young. His tall lean figure drooped, and he leant heavily upon his cane as he walked, or rather tottered along. He was fashionably dressed, wore a flower in his button-hole, tight lavender-coloured gloves, and a very glossy hat. The pallor of his hollow wrinkled face was intensified by the dark dye of his moustache, the jet black curls of his wig. His eyes were dim and glazed with age; his movements were tremulous and uncertain; there was a suspicion of paralysis in the dragging method of his gait. The muscles of his face twitched curiously as he spoke, and his limbs jerked abruptly, imitative, or emulous, perhaps, of the jaunty restlessness of youth.

Eleanor Challoner was a faded, careworn woman, nervous, and always painfully anxious, as it seemed, concerning her father. Her sad eyes watched him unceasingly; her hand was constantly extended towards him,

in case he should have need of her feeble assistance.

"You—ah—you know this portrait?" asked Sir Pierce of Jack Osborne.

"I do. It is the photograph of a dead child."

"There is no trick——"

"Father!" interposed Eleanor.

"Pardon me, Eleanor. This—ah—this gentleman," he surveyed the photographer, as though doubting the perfect correctness of this description of him. "This gentleman," he repeated, "will understand me. Imposture is so rife in the world, we may be excused for being incredulous—ah—a trifle incredulous on almost every occasion. It seemed to me not impossible—I will even say not improbable—that this—ah—this photograph was designed to be a means of extorting money—ah—under false pretences."

"Father!" Miss Challoner again interposed.

"Pardon me, Eleanor," Sir Pierce repeated; "it is necessary—ah—very necessary to be explicit. You say this is the photograph of a dead child?"

"Without doubt."

"But you are not aware whose child?"

"I have not said that. The child is the child of Hugh Challoner."

Sir Pierce started back, he was unprepared for so sudden a statement. Miss Challoner hastened to proffer him support; with a wave of his hand he signified that he did not need assistance.

"You have been told that this is the child of Hugh Challoner?"

"I know that this is the child of Hugh Challoner."

"May I venture to ask your authority?"

"My authority is Hugh Challoner himself."

"Ah! You have seen him then?"

"Yes. He brought the dead child here in his arms. It rested upon that pillow. Those draperies were arranged about it."

The eyes of Sir Pierce and his daughter fell, with a sort of sad interest, upon the objects pointed out by the photographer.

"Hugh Challoner is my son, my only son," the old man said at last, in a faint tone. He made strenuous efforts to appear calm and at ease, but it was plain that he was painfully agitated. "The dead child was my grandson. I wished to be sure that there was no misapprehension, or—ah—fraud in the matter; for fraud is always possible, you know, and we are all liable to misapprehension. I am sorry—ah—if

I have seemed too peremptory, or—ah—too particular in my enquiries.”

His affected manner of speech had become perhaps too fixed a habit to be readily altered; otherwise a change had come over him. He had relaxed his efforts to appear young; his sprightly airs had vanished; he seemed to confess himself a very old man, broken and decrepid.

“Eleanor,” he said, “give this—this—ah—gentleman one of my cards, and—ah—one of your own. I wish him to know who I am. I wish him to know that we were not brought here by mere curiosity—ah—mere idle curiosity. I am Sir Pierce Challoner, sir, of Stoke Deverill, Devonshire, and of Portman Square. I sat in Parliament many years, sir, as Member for Stoke Deverill, until it was disfranchised—ah—by one of their infernal reform bills. This is my daughter, sir—Eleanor—my sole surviving daughter. I hope, I’m sure—ah—that we may have the pleasure of meeting you—down in Devonshire—down in Devonshire.” He appeared to have lost the subject of his speech, gazed about rather vacantly, and then turned helplessly to his daughter. “What was I saying, my dear? What did I come here to say?”

“It was about Hugh, father dear,” she said softly.

“Ah, yes—true; about Hugh. My son Hugh. He was a promising boy, sir; a very fine young man. But—ah—the fact is—yes, I remember—we’ve not met for some years, not for many years. I—ah—found it necessary to dismiss him the house, and, in fact, to disown him. He has been punished, as I have reason to believe. And he deserved to be punished. He had disobeyed me. I warned him of the result of his folly; but he took upon himself to dispute my authority and to defy me. He married beneath him—his sister’s governess—a young woman—”

“She is dead, father,” interposed Eleanor.

“As you observe, my dear, she is dead. I will only say of her, therefore, that she was not my son’s equal. I told him that I would never give my sanction to such an union. I told Hugh in the plainest terms that, if he married that woman, he should never darken my door again; that he should never more be regarded or treated by me as my son; that all would be over between us; that, in fact, I would disown and cast him off forever. As I

said before, I am a man of my word. I have kept my word.

“He has led a miserable life,” Sir Pierce resumed, after a pause; “a miserable life, as I happen to know. He endeavoured to support himself by his pen. I have heard of him, accidentally, from time to time. Now he was a teacher of languages, now he was seeking employment as a clerk, and so on; a wretched life. He wrote to me from time to time. I seldom read his letters; I usually destroyed them without opening them. Then I learnt—I scarcely know how now—that his wife was dead, and that he was in great want. I am a man of my word. I could not see him; but I offered to help him thus far—I would adopt the child that had been born to him. Hugh is my only son, as I said. My estates are not entailed. I offered to adopt my grandchild, and to appoint him my heir. I would have bequeathed him my whole property. I would even have departed, in a measure, from my original purpose, and settled upon Hugh some small allowance that would have saved him from absolute want. Would you believe it? He was so mad as to refuse my offer. He avowed that he was so fond of his boy he could not be parted from him. It was monstrous!”

“Some fathers are like that,” said the photographer calmly.

“What is the consequence? The child is dead.” He stopped abruptly, as though overcome with grief, or because mental infirmity had deprived him of power to express himself further. “Is there anything more I had to say, Eleanor?” he enquired, after a pause, turning with some effort to his daughter.

She whispered in his ear,

“I can’t hear you,” he said impatiently. “What? Ah! yes—true! The body of the child. I should wish,” he continued, addressing himself to Jack Osborne, “the remains of my unfortunate grandchild to be interred in the family-vault of the Challoners, in the abbey church of Stoke Deverill. I desire to pay every honour to his memory. I deeply lament his loss.”

“As to that, I apprehend you must address yourself to the child’s father. He is very poor, as you know. He had designed to bury his poor little one after a simple fashion—as cheaply as possible in the nearest churchyard.”

“That must not be.”

“Pardon me; that will be for him to decide, I think. He is the father in this

case, you see. It is his child that is in question. If it be his pleasure that his son shall lie in a pauper's grave——"

"A pauper's grave! My grandson! How dare you, sir. Where is this man, my son, to be found?"

"He lives but a little way from here."

"Let us go to him, father, at once," urged Miss Challoner.

"I will not see him, Eleanor. I will not speak to him. I have sworn I would not, and I will not. I am a man of my word."

Sir Pierce climbed back into his carriage, receiving considerable assistance from the powdered footman. Jack Osborne led the way on foot—the carriage following slowly—over the canal-bridge and down by the gasworks.

"What a neighbourhood!" murmured Sir Pierce. "Can it be that people really live in such places?"

It seemed the custom in Purton's Rents to leave the doors open both day and night, for whoever listed to enter without loss of time in plying bell or knocker. Certainly there was little there to tempt the dishonest, or, for that matter, the honest either. Only imperative necessity could have driven anyone towards a place so squalid, and miserable, and woebegone.

"You will not expect me to see him, Eleanor?"

"It shall be as you wish, dear," she said. "Only——"

"You're not frightened, Eleanor?"

"A little frightened."

"There is nothing to fear, my dear. But certainly it's a horrible place."

"Poor Hugh!"

"I'll not see him, Eleanor; remember that."

They were following Jack Osborne up a shattered staircase, to the room on the second floor. Osborne entered alone. All was very still.

"What a place!" Sir Pierce murmured again. He stood on the landing, waving a scented handkerchief to and fro—dabbing his white lips with it.

Osborne reappeared. His manner had changed; there was a scared look upon his face, and he spoke in a whispering tone.

"Come," he said to Miss Challoner.

"I may go?" she asked, turning to Sir Pierce.

"Yes. Let it be so. I will wait for you here. I'll not see him."

She entered the room, Jack Osborne leading her; for it was very dark. Her

hand rested on his arm. He felt that she was trembling violently.

"Hugh," she said softly. "Hugh—my brother. It is I—Nelly. Where is he?"

Hugh Challoner was seen to be lying upon his ragged pallet. He was only partially clad; it was as though he had fallen asleep in the act of undressing for the night. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and his feet were bare. He lay sideways, turned away from the light, his arm curled beneath his head. His pillow was the coffin of his child.

"He sleeps very soundly," said Miss Challoner, with a throb of fear in her voice.

"Very soundly." Presently Jack Osborne asked: "Is it possible that you do not understand? Hugh Challoner will never waken more in this world. He has gone to rejoin his wife and his child. He has been dead many hours."

"Dead!" she gasped.

"Dead," he repeated. "He has nothing further to fear or to hope from his offended relations, or the cruelty of the world."

"What is the matter, Eleanor?" demanded Sir Pierce, querulously, from his post outside the door. "What has happened? Why do you not speak to me? Why am I kept waiting like this?"

"We have come too late; that is the matter," she said, in a broken voice. But for Osborne's support she would have fallen. "Hugh is dead."

"Really dead? And in such a place as this? I may see him now, I think. It will not be considered that I have broken my word." He was led to the body of his son.

"And the little one lies in that coffin?"

Is it possible. So wretched a coffin, too. What was Hugh thinking about? How poor he must have been! What they must have suffered! You will understand—ah—Mr. — I forget your name for the moment—that I never contemplated things coming to such a pass as this. I am very sorry indeed that things have happened in this way. But, you see, my son disobeyed and defied me. And—I am a man of my word. However, all's over now." He staggered as he spoke, and leant for support against the grimy greasy wall. "I grow faint in this dreadful place. Let us go home, Eleanor. We can do nothing here."

With an effort he seemed to regain control of himself. He perceived, possibly, his daughter's weak and fainting state, and her need of his assistance.

"Everything that is proper and becoming shall be done. Hugh and his son shall lie in the abbey church. I am sorry, very sorry," he repeated, "that things should have happened in this way. You believe that I am sorry, Eleanor?"

"Yes, father."

"Courage, my dear."

They re-entered the carriage, and were driven quickly from Purton's Rents. For some time neither spoke.

"There's one thing I—ah—forgot," said Sir Pierce, presently. "I forgot to thank that man for his attention and civility. He was of real service to us. I forgot his name. He was not a gentleman, of course; but he was certainly obliging, and, for his station, his manners were really superior. I fully meant to have offered him some small reward for his—ah—his assistance and sympathy. Somehow his face reminded me of someone I had seen or known before, a long time ago. Did you notice him, Eleanor?"

"I scarcely noticed him. I should not know him again. There were other things to think of."

"True, true," said Sir Pierce. "You mean poor Hugh and his child. Yes, of course. But—Osborne—that was the name, my dear—Osborne. Surely we used to know once some people of the name of Osborne."

Again they were silent. Suddenly a strange hoarse cry broke from Sir Pierce. There was a drawn distorted look upon his yellow-white face; a deadly glazed sightlessness about his eyes; his hands twitched and wrestled convulsively. He rolled or slipped from his seat on to the floor of the carriage, crushing his glossy hat ruinously in his fall.

"She did not know me, had completely forgotten me, that's the simple truth. And how she's changed! And how lovely she was once! Well, we've arrived at the very last chapter of that romance. Let us close the book, and fling it away from us for good and all."

The photographer was sitting in his studio, smoking his black short pipe. He took up a newspaper.

"What's this?" he cried. And he read: "On the 12th inst., of paralysis, Sir Pierce Christian Dalrymple Chalonier, Bart., of Portman Square, and Stoke Deverill, Devonshire, in the seventy-seventh year of his age." In another column was to be found a brief biography of the

lamented gentleman, setting forth the facts of his life and his claims to distinction. It was stated further that the baronetcy was believed to be extinct.

"I wish I had taken his photograph," mused Jack Osborne. "After all, he was somebody. A swell in his way, and prodigiously obstinate. Moreover, he was poor Hugh's father; and the last baronet. Curious people, those Chaloniers!"

TINA.

BY ROSA MULHOLLAND.

I WAS up in my own little chamber putting the finishing touches to a bit of carving, which was my work. It was rather late for improvements; the carving was the frame of a hand-mirror, and already the mirror was in its place among the sculptured birds and flowers; but I touched and re-touched, and was hard to please, for was it not my wedding-gift to Donato's bride?

I leaned from my small window the better to view my handiwork. Around me were the village fruit-trees laden for harvest, the brazen campanile glittering in the declining sun; above me, girdles of olive and purple pines; still higher, the green Alps backed by keen ice-peaks, harsh yet beautiful, like fierce white teeth biting at the blue of the heavens.

In the mirror I saw my own face, small and pale, with large dark eyes, and feverish parted lips, the vine-leaves of my window trembling round it joyously. An unloved, wild, longing little face, it looked to me, but able to keep its sorrow out of sight. I passed my hand pityingly over my cheeks, and shifted the mirror so that it caught only the blue of heaven, and then I saw in it quite another countenance, fair and large, with crisp glowing hair, more like rust than gold, and eyes full of the colour of the mist behind the pines. It was the face of Elisabetta, of her for whom the mirror had been designed.

The sunlight flashed itself away behind the pines, burnt a minute on the ice-peaks, and vanished. The deep twilight descended upon me, the stars came out in the purple sky, and I heard a voice calling up to my window:

"Little Tina, come down out of the clouds, and sing to me. I have mended your zither, and you have no longer an excuse."

It was Donato calling; I put away the

mirror, and went down the little wooden staircase. In the kitchen his mother was sitting knitting, with the supper spread on the table near her; and outside, Donato was leaning against the vine-posts, with my zither in his hands.

"What shall I sing?" I asked, taking it from him and touching it.

"Something about love," he said, turning his bright bronze face to me with a happy glow upon it.

I turned away, and looked down the purple gorge beneath us, then up to the white peaks, to the stars. My heart shook and sank, then rose to its task as a melody came to me. Touching the strings, I uttered a few soft notes, chanted a restless recitative, and then broke into a wild, strange, joyous song, which sank suddenly into a broken minor, and ended abruptly.

"Where did you learn it?" he asked, looking at me keenly.

"The gipsies sang something like it when they were here last week. It has been ringing through my head ever since. I have only a few scraps of the words, you see."

"Why did you sob upon the last note, cara?" he asked kindly. "Was that, too, a part of the gipsy's song?"

"Her baby had died the week before, and still she was obliged to sing. Is it not enough to make one sob?"

He looked a little surprised, then took the zither and began to strum. I loved to hear Donato strumming. He turned his warm bright face to the stars, and hummed and strummed. Everyone loved Donato. He was so tall and strong, so merry and sweet-tempered, so good to animals and little children. I do not know how to describe his goodness, but anybody would have loved Donato.

"I am going to see Elisabetta," he said presently. "Go in to your supper, little Tina, and tell the mother that I shall sup with my bride."

After supper I sat with my cheek in my hand looking out of the doorway. "Mother," I said, "I am thinking of going down into the world to seek my fortune."

Donato's mother dropped her knitting. She had cherished me in her home ever since, at the death of my parents, I had been left forlorn to the care of the village. I called her "mother" as Donato did; but now I felt that it was time to seek a way of my own.

"Tina!" she cried. "A little young thing like you! Ah, I fear you no longer love us!"

"All my heart will be left behind with you," I cried vehemently. "I am not ungrateful—I should die of it if I were. But Elisabetta is coming, you know, mother; and the house is more roomy for three than for four."

"Go to bed," said the dear old woman; "but first ask Heaven's pardon for having vexed me. How do I know what Elisabetta will be to me?"

I wept myself to sleep, but awoke to see one large bright star shining in my little mirror, which was hanging by the window. It looked to me like Elisabetta's beautiful face, and I closed my eyes and turned to the wall. Suddenly I became aware, by an unaccountable feeling, that Donato was not in the house; and dressing, I went down, and found his door lying open. I knew by the stars that it was morning, and I went out to attend to my goats. The way between our house and Elisabetta's was slippery and steep, and my heart welled up with misgiving. A man came past, and stopped to speak to me.

"What is Donato about? He was to have met me half-an-hour ago, to set out for the chamois-hunting."

"He has not been home," I said, "not since last night."

"I left him a piece on the way home," said the man; and his face changed.

I put up my hands to my head.

"Now, you little Tina, don't scream out and alarm his mother," said Tomaso, eagerly. "I'll get to work with some other fellows at once. There's an ugly slip—but, Madonna! is he not a chamois-hunter?"

My face became cold, and all the waterfalls seemed to overflow and hiss in my ears. Tomaso vanished, and I fell on the ground. Donato, Donato, Donato! Lying at the bottom of the gorge, mangled and dead, like our dove that a kite let fall the other morning!

The next hours I spent holding the mother in my arms, and whispering hope that was no hope to myself. About noon all the men in the village had gone to look for Donato, when suddenly we heard a cheer. We knew it was for good news, and the mother fainted away.

They brought him in, broken and bruised, white and bandaged; a leg and arm were fractured, and there was an ugly wound upon his handsome face. They set his bones—awkwardly, as it proved—and a tedious fever seized upon him. Elisabetta arrived in gay attire, with more annoyance

than sorrow on her exquisite face; wept and sighed a little when she saw that he did not recognise her, and afterwards, up in my little chamber, bemoaned the untimeliness of the accident.

"Only think," she said; "our preparations all made for the wedding! Was anything ever so unlucky?"

"It will cost you another feast," I said.

"That it will!" shrugging her shoulders. "And, oh Caterina, do you think he will be maimed or scarred?"

"No one can tell," I said sadly; "but, whether or no, he will still be the Donato that you love."

"I will not say that; I did not promise to marry a cripple." And then her eye caught sight of my mirror, which she knew I had been preparing for herself. "You good little creature! I may as well take it with me;" and, slinging it to her waist, she took her leave.

Donato slowly grew better; but there was a scar on his face, and he was terribly lame. Limping on a crutch, he would go as far as he could to meet Elisabetta when she came to see him; but these occasions grew scarcer day by day, for the beauty did not care for an unsightly lover. He was pale and thin, and disfigured by a scar, and she took no pains to conceal her disgust at the change. She sulked, and was silent when they met; and evening after evening Donato would sit brooding on the bench under our vines, never saying a word about the zither or a song.

"Tina!" he called to me one evening. He knew I was near, though I was not in sight. I was knitting and weeping in the shadows against the gable. "Tina," he said, "you are a wise little thing. Do you think the love of a woman is likely to change?"

"Of some, Donato. But there are women and women; though men will talk as if all were the same."

"Of the best, then?"

"The love of a true woman will never change," I said eagerly, "until she changes herself—into the dust."

"Good little comforter! Elisabetta is of the best, and I am an idiot to fear she is ceasing to care for me. No wonder she should be shocked at my appearance. A cripple on a crutch, instead of her daring chamois-hunter! But I will never ask to wed her till Heaven restores my strength. If I could only see a physician, I should get well."

I knew Elisabetta was encouraging

another lover, but I feared to tell him, lest the news should break his heart.

I thought a great deal of what he had said about a physician, and his mother spoke to me of it weeping.

"How can we, up in the mountains, ever see such a man?" she said. "If I were younger, I would go down with him to the towns; but I am old and useless, and my boy has no one else."

"Mother!" I exclaimed, "I am not old. I will take him down through the mountains, and we will look for the physicians."

"You, child!" she said, and shook her head. "You are too young; and, besides, you are not his mother or his sister."

"I swear that I am his sister," I cried vehemently. "Have I not always been his sister? Do I not always call you mother?"

Donato refused to listen to my proposal at first, but the idea made him wistful, and little by little he came to look on our journey as a thing that might be accomplished. We could ride when we got a chance, and stop at a wayside village when we needed to rest. The hope took root in his mind, and would not be cast out. I silently made my preparations, and said to him brightly one day:

"Well then, Donato, let us set out to-morrow morning!"

"You are an angel, little Tina," he said radiantly, and the mother followed us with her blessings all down the winding road. We called at Elisabetta's house, but the beauty was away at some merry-making; "with a newer sweetheart," whispered her sister to me. And so we went on our way without his having bade her good-bye.

"No matter," said Donato, recovering from his disappointment. "When she sees me again she will be proud of me."

We got along but slowly. Donato was weak, and he limped sadly, and yet he would not lean on me, only laying his hand at times on my shoulder to make me fancy that I helped him. All that morning I chattered to him merrily; my heart rose and danced in my breast, for was I not going to make him well—I, little Tina, who owed him everything in the world? As I looked back on the heights we were leaving, I felt it good to have got him away into my own hands, out of reach of all pain from Elisabetta. I knew the time would come when I should have to lead him back to her, but of that I did not allow myself to think. At present he was my child, my nursing, depending on me for every present good and every future hope. Let the

time to come take care of itself; I only had to take care of Donato.

About midday we arrived at a little wayside house. The sun was hot, and we were dusty and thirsty.

"My brother is weak," I said, "and we are travelling to find the doctors. Will you allow him to rest on a bed for a few hours? I will play for the children, and they shall dance."

I began to play, and the little black-eyed elves pointed their toes and lifted their skirts. I played a fast whirling dance, snapping my fingers, and singing a few notes to give zest and variety to the performance. At parts of the dance we all laughed wildly in chorus. The children were crazy with glee, the elders clapped hands and urged on the fun. Donato, having rested, limped into the midst of it.

"Why," he said, "I have not seen you so merry for a long time, little Tina! But I hope you have also had a rest."

"I was not so tired as you," I said gaily, and the children danced on while the mother placed the supper-table under a chestnut tree, and Donato and I were invited to eat.

"You have earned your supper," said the woman kindly; and, as we ate, the sun began to set, and a great fringe of gold swept the dark pines upon the nearest height. Behind the pines and under the gold veil, I knew Donato saw the face of Elisabetta, for he gazed upward with that strange look, part pain, part anger, and part gladness, which always troubled his face when he thought of her. Also he asked me for a song; and I knew what that meant too.

A lump rose in my throat; a great wild unhappiness came over me; I had brought him so far, and I had been glad; but his heart had gone back to Elisabetta.

"I will give you a subject," said our hostess, quickly. "One of our neighbours has jilted her faithful lover."

I touched the zither, and turned away my face from Donato, for I did not want to wound him by showing through my eyes that I sang my song of anyone we knew. I began in a low voice trembling with indignation, but what I sang I do not now remember. I know that my face burned, and I quivered all over as I poured out my scorn for the woman who had falsified her troth. The glow went out of the sky while I sang; as I finished the twilight fell; and we sat in a world of

purple stillness, overhung by ghostly heights, and roofed with stars.

Our hosts applauded, and we were pressed to stay longer, but I slung my zither on my shoulder, and bade them good-bye, with a lip that still trembled.

"The moon is rising," I said, "the night is short and refreshing. It is better for him to rest in the heats, and travel in the coolness. The way is not bad, and we shall have plenty of light."

We walked along in silence; the moon shone big and bright; the Alps were veiled in silver gossamers; the gigantic shadows below stretched long wild arms upward; the tall magnificence of the pines had become black and awful. I knew well that Donato was angry with me. Elisabetta's golden head and melting eyes had shone out of my song and betrayed me. In the passion of the moment I had denounced her.

"Why do you judge her so harshly?" he asked.

A storm arose within me as I thought of her merry-making with her lovers, while this pale sad face would keep looking back at her forever over the shoulder. He had so far to travel, so many miles yet to remove himself away from her, so much to suffer before he could return to her with hope. And she, I knew, never thought of him at all. Should he return as he went, how she would scorn his faithful heart; if, indeed, we did not find her already a wife.

But I could not bear to grieve him, who was here beside me in the bitterness of his trouble, and who, after all, had nobody but me.

"I do not want to judge her," I said gently. "You know well that I wish her to be true."

And so we journeyed on; and he laughed at me, as we rounded a corner of the road and I shrank in fright from the glittering apparition of a torrent, looking like the genius of our mountains, gliding by night, and shrouded in a silver veil. When I heard him laugh, my heart rose, and I held by his hand as we went deeper into the mysterious shadows at our feet. And we quarrelled no more, till one bright morning found us standing on the brink of a precipice, in the sunrise, looking down into the gardens of Italy.

Step by step we descended through the bloom, while our mountains rose higher and higher in blue walls around us, at last falling back, and leaving us among the flowers in a fruit-scented plain. Neither

of us had ever been down in the plains before, and so it was all enchantment to us; though our feet were blistered, and we could hardly take a step without pain.

Little by little we left the blue ramparts behind us, and crept along the roads; resting at all the villages, and sometimes breakfasting or supping delightfully in a wayside garden, or bathing our feet in the stream of some shaded grove. We were welcomed everywhere, for all the people pitied and admired Donato, and were glad of a song from his little sister. Besides, we said our prayers at every shrine; and so the angels took care of us, of course.

At dawn one morning we entered the city for which we were bound, and made our way straight to the Duomo. Sitting on some steps, we wondered at the glory of the great coloured windows, and felt as if we had died and gone to heaven unawares. As soon as possible I found a lodging for Donato, and, having left him to rest, went to see about the doctors at once.

"It will be a troublesome affair," said our landlady, pityingly. "Doctors make long bills, I can tell you."

I showed her all the money we possessed, but she said it would not nearly be enough. I went out and made enquiries; and I had to weep out my heart in a corner of the Duomo before I ventured home again to Donato.

I set about trying to earn some money. In the evenings I sang on the Corso, and in the great arcades where ladies and gentlemen ate ices after their drive; I but only made enough to help with the expenses of our living in the town. It seemed to grow more and more impossible that I could ever obtain the fees for Donato's cure.

There was a pretty trinket shop in one of the arcades, right before the spot where I usually sang. All sorts of beautiful things sparkled in the window under the lamps, and a tall man used always to come out of the doorway to listen to my song. On one occasion he stepped out suddenly, and, going round the company with a little shiny saucer, he emptied a heap of coins into my apron. The next night he brought me a box of sweetmeats, which I was very nearly swallowing, when I remembered to control myself.

"Will you allow me to take them home to Donato?" I said.

"Who is Donato?" he asked, with a smile.

"My brother," I said, "who is ill and lamed."

He came with me himself and presented the sweetmeats to Donato, who was glad to see a friend in his little room. Pietro was a tall dark man—darker than our mountain people, and looking a little hard, although he was so kind. Every evening after that he came to visit us, and always brought some nice little treat for Donato; for he was a wealthy man, with a whole shopful of beautiful things.

One evening he asked me to step into his shop, and offered to clasp a necklace round my throat.

"I cannot take it," I said, shrinking back. "You already do too much for my brother, my friend; but I would rather keep your kindness for him."

"Never was a sister so devoted to a brother," he said; but he put the necklace back into its case. When I told Donato of all this he frowned.

"And you do not wish to wear the fellow's baubles, little one?" he asked, looking at me anxiously.

"No," I replied readily, laughing for joy because Donato had cared.

The following night Pietro came out of his shop with a bunch of roses.

"Oh," I cried, "for Donato!" and stretched out my hands for them eagerly.

"Donato, Donato!" he said, "always Donato! Do come for a walk with me, and let your brother wait for once."

I could not refuse, having already almost hurt him about the necklace, and away we walked into the moonlight out of the noise and glare of the arcades. I felt strange and uncomfortable walking side by side with that black Pietro, but this mattered little as Donato had found him so kind.

"Tina," he began suddenly, and the tone of his voice startled me at once.

"I know you are a good little girl," he went on, "innocent and true, like the people of your mountains. I have always wished for such a girl for my wife. When your brother goes home, I want you to stay here with me."

"Oh no," I said breathlessly. "At least, you are very good, but I could not think of deserting my brother."

"Sisters do not stick to their brothers forever," he said laughing; "and your brother will not need you when he gets well and goes home."

"How can he get well?" I cried sadly. "We came to look for the doctors, but we did not know the money they would cost."

I fear poor Donato must limp back as he came."

Pietro did not answer, and we walked on in silence for some minutes.

"Come, little Tina, he said presently, in a tone of determination, "let us make a bargain on the spot. I will give you the money for the doctors, and when Donato is cured, you will become my wife."

"Oh no, no!" I exclaimed wildly; and the world reeled round me as I saw what a temptation had opened at my feet. Donato could be cured. I could do it. And yet here I was refusing, as if I had been his enemy. My hands went up to my throat, for I felt like to choke.

"Take time to think of it," said Pietro. "I do not wonder you are astonished. I am a rich man, and you are a poor girl; but I am not proud, and I would rather have you than any other I know with a fortune."

"You are very good," I gasped.

"I will be very good to you," he said eagerly; "you shall have trinkets and pretty dresses, and a servant to wait upon you. And when your brother is quite strong, he can sometimes come to see us."

I grew every moment weaker and more bewildered. We found ourselves at the steps of the Duomo, and I seized the opportunity to make my escape.

"It is late," I said, "and I want to say my prayers. Ask me no more at present. Good-night!"

"I shall see you again to-morrow evening," he said, and squeezed my hands and went away.

I lifted the heavy curtain and went into the Duomo, and stood among the vast marble pillars like a blade of grass among the trees of the forest. A golden gleam touched the lilies and fruit upon the pillars above my head; away in the distance I saw crimson and purple, and pale lamps that glowed like moons. I slid down till I lay with my face upon the pavement, forlorn, miserable, and rebellious, fighting with my heart till there was no strength left in me, body or soul. Through all my struggling, I knew what it was that was coming upon me. With all my might I declared that Donato must be cured. Had I not walked from the mountains for him with aching limbs and blistered feet; would I not cheerfully have died to put him safely into the doctor's hands; and now was I going to fail him, because something was required of me

more difficult than travel or death? I knew that in the end I would not fail; and yet I struggled still, and had to go on with my arguments.

Had I not already resolved to return to the city as soon as Donato and Elisabetta were married, and what did it matter to anyone, whether I married or lived single, starved in a garret, or wore trinkets in Pietro's shop?

"But," said my heart, "Donato might not marry Elisabetta after all; she being far more likely to have married before his return. And in that case, might I not have lived a little longer with him and with his mother as before?"

I walked home with these thoughts buzzing in my head. Donato noticed my pale face and strange eyes. I said I was tired, and crept away to the little attic where I had my bed; and as I lay there, staring at the stars, I saw clearly again that Donato must be cured. With his future I could have nothing to do, further than sending him to meet it, whole of limb, and sound in health. This much the angels had appointed for me; and, afterwards, I would give him over into their hands.

Next evening, I was singing on the Corso, when through the dusk I saw Pietro coming towards me, with his hands full of flowers. My song died on my lips, and the people moved away thinking I was ill or out of humour. I bent over my zither shivering; and yet I did not dislike Pietro, whom I felt to be kind. Only it seemed that every step he made towards me was opening a gulf between me and my mountains and Donato.

"Well, little Tina," he said triumphantly, filling my hands with crimson blossoms. "You see I have come for my answer."

"Let it be as you said," I replied, hurrying to say the words, lest afterwards they should refuse to come. "But first, you must let me take Donato home. I shall want to say good-bye to my mother."

Pietro's face darkened, and he looked displeased.

"How could I be sure that you would ever come back to me?" he grumbled.

"I never break my word," I answered sadly.

"Well, then, you shall have your way," he said, after some reflection. "And perhaps, who knows, I may take holiday and fetch you."

"There is another thing I want to insist upon," I said. "You must not tell a word

of all this to my brother. When we get back to the mountains I will let him know it all."

"You think he would not agree; you believe him to be a fool!" cried Pietro, with indignation.

"I do not say that," I said wistfully; "but I have a notion that, if he knew it, he might spoil our plans."

And Pietro consented to be silent on our compact.

The following day Donato's cure began. The doctors understood his case, and promised to make him well; and Pietro paid their fees. Donato accepted the money as a loan, and was full of astonishment at the stranger's generous kindness.

Day after day, as I sat by his side, he talked to me of the efforts he would make to pay off the debt. Sometimes the thought of it overcast his cheerfulness, and then I found it hard not to tell him the truth; but I felt instinctively that he would be still more troubled at knowing I had been put in such a strait. For how could I pretend to him that Pietro was the husband of my choice?

Weeks passed; the doctors did their work, and I sang on the Corso every evening. I worked at wood-carving in the daytime, and altogether earned enough money for our support; accepting nothing from Pietro but the fees, which had been the matter of our agreement. Donato, feeling himself grow daily stronger, began to talk joyfully of our return. Sometimes he mentioned Elisabetta, but not so often as he used to do; and always with a look of anxiety on his face.

"He begins to fear that she has already deserted him," I thought; and now that he was looking like our Donato of old, I felt less sure that there was cause for his fears.

"Have courage, my brother!" I said, looking up brightly from my carving. "Your body is getting well; do not let your heart now get sick!"

He gave me a long grave look, which made me tremble all over, fearing he had guessed my secret; but he only said:

"I wonder did any woman ever do more for any man, than you have done for me, my Tina! You have wasted your strength, your beauty——"

"My beauty!" I cried aghast. Never had I heard such a thing mentioned before.

"Yes," he persisted, "your beauty. However, it is not gone yet, carina. Your eyes are too large, and your cheeks are too

white; but the mountain air will bring back your roses."

I smiled; while nevertheless a great stroke of sorrow clove my heart. I thought of our last days together journeying back, and of my return in my loneliness with Pietro. A little while longer, and my way would lie no more among the heights.

More weeks flew, Donato walked without crutches, and the ruddy bronze had returned to his face. The weather was deliciously cool, though winter had not yet set in; and we began to talk freely of our return to the mountains.

At last, one morning we set out, and Pietro walked a good part of the way with us. He had brought me, as usual, some roses, and looked pained and saddened when we bade him farewell.

"Remember your promise, little Tina," he said, at parting.

"What does he mean by your promise?" asked Donato, as we walked along, he holding me by the hand, like a child that had tired itself more than enough, and had now to be led tenderly home.

"I promised to be glad to see him," I said, "when he comes to pay a visit to our mountains."

Donato flushed and frowned; and I was vexed at not having hit on something better to say. I feared he might think Pietro was uneasy about his money.

"He is not at all anxious about the debt, however," I added. "He knows well that that will be paid."

"Of course he does," said Donato, "and I was not thinking about the debt. Tina, you are not thinking of marrying him?"

"Why should he wish me to marry him?" I said sadly. And though this was an evasion, it was also a question I was weary of asking myself. "Don't you see that I am coming back to the mountains?"

"Yes, you are coming back," he said, holding my hand more tightly.

As we went along I was no longer gay and angry by turns, as formerly, only spiritless and tired. Donato was now so strong and well, that he did not need my cheering; and when my songs died in my throat, he would play on the zither in his old merry fashion, shouting out his roundelays to the rocks and pines. He tenderly cared for me, as a nurse cares for a child, carrying me over the rough places, and seeking a draught of milk for me at

every opportunity. Higher and higher we rose into our sweet, blue native air, and the city with its crowds, and Pietro with his roses, all faded away, as if only known in a dream. Yet I never forgot what was before me, and that I was living my last moments by Donato's side.

As we came nearer to our home, Elisabetta's golden head began to glimmer among the sunbeams, and her eyes began to peer at me through the branches of the pines. But I was no longer jealous of her as I had used to be; only anxious to find that she was true. I felt that, when I must descend the mountains into sorrow with Pietro, it would comfort me to know that Donato was happy in his home.

We ascended the last steep in the purple dusk, and smelt the burning wood, and saw the fires of our village shining red through the doorways. Donato almost carried me in to his mother, and laid me in her arms. Never shall I forget her scream of joy when she saw him standing straight and strong before her.

As we sat together after supper, all our stories told, each of us thought of the same person, but nobody spoke.

"How is Elisabetta?" asked Donato gravely, at last.

The mother's face changed. "She is well," she answered, "and she is not married. She expects you to go to visit her at once."

And after that I saw that Donato became restless.

All the next day I lay prostrate on my bed; but in the evening I crept down into the kitchen, and sat in quiet near the doorway, looking out upon the glaciers and the pines. The mother was gone to talk over her joyous news with a neighbour, and I was all alone, when Donato suddenly came in. I was surprised, for I knew that he had gone to Elisabetta.

He knelt down beside me and took both my hands in his.

"My love, my Tina," he said; "I can love nobody but you!"

"Donato!" I cried, frightened out of my wits.

"Yes," he said, half laughing and half sobbing, "I have seen Elisabetta, and she is a fool and a coquette. Her golden hair is brass, and her eyes are beads. But you are beautiful, my Tina, for the angels have lent you your face!"

"Donato," I cried, "you must have gone mad! Have you quarrelled with Elisabetta, and has she refused you?"

"She has not quarrelled with me, and it is I who refuse her. She has been engaged and jilted since I left her, yet she would marry me to-morrow if I will. But I will not, my Tina, for I love another woman!"

I felt that I had got a blow, and my mind grew dark; but in a few moments all became clear again.

"You are engaged to her," I said, "and I—I am engaged to Pietro."

Donato gave a cry, and flung my hands away from him. "You," he exclaimed, "you—you love that Pietro!"

"I do not love him," I said wearily; "but he is coming—he is coming—and he will not take your money, Donato."

"You mean to say that you sold yourself to make me well!"

I could not say anything. I only hung my head.

Elisabetta insisted on claiming her lover, and I, sobbing on Donato's breast, had repeated to him all that I had promised to Pietro. Pale, wild, and sad, we two each went our ways, and scarcely dared to speak to one another. The mother only smiled, and predicted that all would be well.

She went about, making it known to the neighbours how a wealthy merchant was coming up from the cities to marry little Tina. He was a dealer in jewels, and his wife would be like a queen. The girls listened eagerly, and Pietro's arrival was looked for with anxiety. Elisabetta questioned me closely as to his means, his age, his appearance, and especially about the trinkets in his shop; and her manner to Donato again became scornful. Then I began to get a glimmer of what the wise old mother meant.

Elisabetta was fond of walking on the road with her friends in the evenings, when the sun shone on her burnished hair, and her beauty cast her companions into the shade. So it happened that she was the first to meet Pietro as he wended up the steep, and in her mother's house he first broke our village bread.

Need I tell how his fancy for me disappeared before her smiles; or how she gained the double triumph of robbing little Tina of her lover, and wedding a husband who could cover her with trinkets?

Pietro came up to me one day, looking so penitent and ashamed, that my heart began to reel for joy. Elisabetta had bewitched him, and he begged to be set free.

He wished to remit the debt, but I assured him it would have to be paid.

When he was gone, I climbed to the overhanging rocks to meet Donato coming home from the hunting; and he heard my joyful singing, before he caught sight of me running along the level to be folded in his arms.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S REALITY.

BY C. WARREN ADAMS.

"You don't really mean, Captain Sherley, that your Government refuses to allow medicine to pass their lines!"

The speaker was the white-haired old colonel of H.M.'s —th Regiment, quartered in that summer of 186— at Bermuda, and host, at this present speaking, of Lieutenant Jonas P. Sherley, commanding U.S. gunboat *Mohawk*, one of the squadron engaged in the blockade of the Confederate ports. It must be confessed, however, that the private feelings, not only of the gallant colonel himself, but of the two dozen or so of officers who shared with him the honour of entertaining at the regimental mess-table the captain and officers of the foreign cruiser, were by no means in such entire harmony with their positions as might perhaps have been desired. It was not merely that that English tendency to take part with the weaker, altogether irrespectively of any merit of the quarrel, had ranged the sympathies of the gallant —th strongly on the Southern side. The personal qualifications of Captain Sherley himself were by no means calculated to create any counter prejudice in favour of the North. How such fellows ever managed to get commissions was a question which had been already mooted with some freedom, and to which that worthy and highly popular citizen of Philadelphia, Mr. Samuel C. Slithers, sworn ally of every good fellow in the Islands, could only reply with the readily-accepted assurance, there were not many of them, and with sundry enigmatic allusions to "wire-pulling," "log-rolling," and other electioneering mysteries, which, in the eyes of those who professed to understand them, seemed clearly more than capable of accounting for anything.

Captain Jonas P. Sherley had put into the Islands in an exceedingly crippled state, and would already have made for New York to refit, had it not

been for the almost simultaneous arrival of a most unmistakable blockade-runner, figuring on the Custom House books as the *Mocking Bird* of Liverpool, and bound from that port to the Havannah with a general cargo. Now, it had already leaked out that the most valuable, if not the bulkiest part of this general cargo, was a consignment of quinine; and a romantic story was afloat to the effect that the *Mocking Bird* herself had been chartered chiefly with the view of conveying this sorely needed supply to a certain spot on the Southern coast, and that the charterer was no less a person than beautiful Miss Helen Sinclair, only daughter of the wealthy Confederate Colonel Sinclair, whose visit to the Islands in his magnificent steam-yacht *Ariel* is still a pleasant and festive memory. To be told that the hospitable old Southern gentleman and his family were "down" with fever, that the handsome and high-spirited girl, toasted among them under the title of "Queen Helen," was herself risking all the perils of the blockade to carry succour to them, and that this Yankee was bent on intercepting the supply, and carrying off Queen Helen to a Northern prison, was a sore trial to the feelings of H.M.'s gallant —th.

"You don't really mean," says Colonel Murray, "that your Government forbids medicine to pass their lines?"

"Yes, sir!" replies the other, leaning back in his seat with an argumentative air. "I don't know how it may be in your overcrowded old country, but we find we've got quite varmin enough without preservin' on 'em."

"We don't call Miss Sinclair and her father vermin," strikes in a young ensign, rather hotly, and a murmur runs round the table, where general conversation has for the moment come rather to a stand. For the moment it almost seems as though the little controversy, of which the American captain is the centre, were about to assume unpleasant proportions.

Fortunately, the president's chair is occupied by a man who has not only more control over himself, but more personal influence over his juniors than any other officer in the regiment. Perhaps, if truth were known, Major Hamilton's feelings are at least as hotly interested in the controversy as those of anyone present. Certainly, he has for some time past been fingering the stem of his wineglass in a fashion that might readily be interpreted as indicative of a rather strong desire to fling

it at the Yankee's head. But, if such be the temptation before him, he resists it manfully; and just as the instant or two of silence which follows upon Captain Sherley's outburst is about to be broken by some still warmer rejoinder, casts instead the much needed oil upon the troubled waters of the discussion.

"I think we have had almost enough of this, gentlemen," he says. "Let us change the subject. Have you thought any more of our ball for next month, Colonel?"

So the subject is changed, and the evening comes to an end peaceably, and without violation of the laws of hospitality. And when it is over one of the young subs rushes hither and thither in anxious search for that universal referee and arbiter, Charlie Hamilton. But Charlie Hamilton is not to be found. Not to be found, that is to say, in the ante-room, or in his quarters, or any other ordinary "draw." If the anxious sub had bethought him of the quay, off which the Mocking Bird was moored, it is by no means impossible that he might have found him there.

In truth, Charlie Hamilton's interest in Helen Sinclair and her doings, were both of a warmer and tenderer kind than his comrades knew. That famous visit of the Ariel was not the only occasion on which they had met. There had been a happy, eventful, fatal, miserable month at Biarritz, during Charlie's last long leave, wherein handsome young aspirants to Queen Helen's favour—American, French, Spanish, and half-a-score others—learned to hate with a deadly hatred the quiet, "ugly" Englishman, who had so unexpectedly and audaciously carried off the prize. And then had come catastrophe and chaos. Among Helen Sinclair's numerous accomplishments, by no means the least striking was her performance in the water. Such a swimmer was scarcely recorded in the annals of Biarritz. Unfortunately, the costume there held sacred to this healthful exercise was far from recommending itself to Major Hamilton's fastidious English taste, and in an evil hour he broached his objection; perhaps a little too authoritatively. Queen Helen's southern pride flamed out on the spot, and from that day to this no word had been exchanged between them. Now he leaned upon a capstan-head, and looked out in the moonlight upon the long low steamer in which Helen—his Helen—was about to risk death, or, if not death, then what was in truth but little more in-

viting, captivity in the power of Captain Sherley, U.S.N., and was not long in making up his mind what to do. It was impossible to sue for his own forgiveness or press his own suit now; but he could be at hand to watch over her. Whether such watching would be likely to have much practical result was a question into which he hardly felt called upon to enter.

So by eight o'clock the next morning Charlie had already made his bargain with the worthy Scotch skipper of the blockade-running craft, now, as he found, likely to be still further detained, not only by the presence of the Mohawk, but by an untoward accident to her engineer, who had managed to get knocked on the head in a pothouse quarrel, and was lying in the hospital with small hope of recovery. The major had time, not only to get his leave and pack up his traps, but to devote a couple of days to the energetic dissemination of strictly confidential statements, to the effect that the original plan of the Mocking Bird had been abandoned, and that he was going in her to Charleston.

On the third morning came a sudden summons. Not only had the Mohawk disappeared from her awkward cruising-ground, but a substitute for the disabled engineer had suddenly turned up in the person of one Josiah Pickering, native, according to his own account, of Maryland, and undoubted deserter from the Mohawk, who, before sailing, had had parties ashore seeking him angrily in all directions. He was not a very prepossessing individual, but, as Captain McDonald justly observed, "a ragged bush is better than nae bield," and "a' arena' thieves that dogs bark at." So Mr. Josiah Pickering was duly engaged, and that night the Mocking Bird sailed.

All went well. No sign of the dreaded stars and stripes appeared anywhere; no trail of smoke blurred for a moment the clear sharp circle of the horizon. The Mohawk had evidently gone off upon the wrong scent, so carefully laid for her edification, and was, no doubt, at this moment, lying in wait for the Mocking Bird on the well-frequented track which led to Charleston. It was strange, certainly, that her commander, who knew so well the point to which all Helen Sinclair's thoughts must needs be tending, should not have divined the little vessel's true destination; or, at all events, have so far suspected it as to induce him at least to lie-to awhile in the offing, just to make

sure. But they were already many a long mile beyond the point at which any such manoeuvre on his part must necessarily have declared itself, and there was the Mocking Bird, well out of any of the ordinary blockade-running tracks, and already cutting her way merrily through the masses of gulf-weed, which every now and then came drifting across her path, and running up her westing at a rate which promised, if all went to the end as well as it had begun, to bring her to the mouth of Helen's dearly-loved stream in time to get across the bar before the sun went down.

But absolutely uninterrupted good fortune is too much to look for in this workaday world. Again and again the panting engines had to be slowed to avoid the risk of fouling the screw among the dense masses of weed. Twice the ship had to be hove-to altogether, and the boat lowered down, to clear away the soft clinging tendrils that choked up blade and shaft in their slimy yellow embrace. The second time, the new engineer, who had come on deck for a moment's breath and comparatively cool air, suggested that it would save time if she were left in the water. The captain, who himself was growing a trifle aggravated at these repeated contretemps, assented with a silent nod; and, without waiting for further orders, the man turned on his heel, swung himself down the engine-room hatch by the stanchions, without seeming to set foot on the ladder, and had the ship under way again, at full speed, almost before the two men in the boat had time to make fast her painter, and bundle themselves on board again over the taffrail.

So much time had been lost among those troublesome masses of weed, that the two low hummocks, which marked the entrance of the Catawba river, were still but dimly outlined on the horizon, when the great red sun sank down behind them, and the scorching tropic day was at an end. Even then, indeed, had the Catawba only been, as the Scotch skipper grimly remarked, "in ony decent latitude," there would have been ample time for the little Mocking Bird, tearing along over the long oily swell at the rate of at least fifteen knots an hour, to find her way over the bar with daylight enough and to spare. But she had hardly covered three out of the ten or twelve which still separated her from the desired haven, ere the brief tropic twilight was at an end, and the darkness of a moonless night had settled fairly down.

Helen was in a fever. To be so near

the fruition of all her hopes, and now at the very last moment to meet with such a check as this, was really too much for human endurance. She even tried to persuade the captain to risk the passage of the bar by the light of the stars. Failing this, she begged hard for at least the loan of a boat. But the old skipper pointed to the long rolling swell, which had considerably increased within the last few hours, and declined.

Whereon my lady set her lips and intimated her purpose of swimming ashore by herself. To which determination the skipper offered no opposition; merely remarking that "Nae doot but a' the Almighty's creatures were made for some wise purpose; but that for himsel' he had never heard that shairks' lives were accounted sae valyable in these pairts, that it was worth a body's while to cocker them up with quinine." And then, while Helen was still divided between the irresistible feeling of vexation at being thus baffled at all points, and an equally irresistible inclination to laugh at her own discomfiture, the leadsman proclaimed that the limit of safe approach to the shore was reached, the throbbing of the engine ceased, the chain rattled hoarsely through the hawse-hole, and the Mocking Bird swung slowly round to the stream, to await the return of day.

"Shall we draw the fires, Captain McDonald?" asked the engineer.

The captain looked for a moment at the speaker, then slowly passed the knuckles of his bony hand across the point of his long keen nose, and gave vent to the low chuckle which was the only approach he seemed capable of making to a laugh, as he answered quietly:

"Eh! mon. 'Tis easy to see ye're no had muckle experiance of this kind of wark. Ye'd be for histing a ridin' light I reckon, and firing a gun for a pilot. Na, na, mon. It's ill clipping the chuckies' wings whan the tod's abroad. Just disconneck yere screw and let her run, and keep as full a heid of steam as ere ye can, wi'out blawing-off like a grampus in his flurry. Hout!" he continued, as the engineer turned silently, and as it seemed, a little sullenly, to obey the order. "Dinna be fashed. Ye're no the first wha's fund himsel young at ae trade whan he's grawn auld in anither."

"I don't like the look of that fellow, Captain McDonald," observed Hamilton, as Pickering disappeared below.

The captain shook his head meditatively.

"Deed, sir," he replied, "I'm o' the same mind mysel."

And with that Captain McDonald in his turn betook himself below, to see with his own careful eyes that all was in due order; all lights extinguished or carefully masked, engines in good trim, cable all ready to slip at a moment's notice, and so forth. Then the anchor-watch was duly stationed, the helm lashed hard over, so as to give the ship's head something of a cant to seaward, and the word passed for the remainder of the crew to turn in "all standing," ready for action at an instant's warning, and except for the dull throbbing in the engine-room below, all was quiet.

The night was very dark. The stars shone, indeed, but not with the usual brilliancy of the tropics. It seemed as though some sort of vapour had risen from the land, now little more than a couple of miles distant, and without amounting to an actual mist, had sufficed to veil to some extent the ordinary glory of the southern sky. As though, however, to make amends, what the sky had lost in brilliancy, appeared to have been more than gained by the sea. No breath of wind ruffled its glossy surface, but as the ship rose and fell upon the long smooth roll, now dipping her low side almost to the gunwale, now raising it high out of the water, with a thousand tiny cascades streaming down it, every drop as it fell became a momentary diamond, flashing and sparkling with its own self-emitted lustre. Aft, where the current swirled away from the opposing breadth of the rudder, and the sharp angles of the motionless screw, a long milky-way of soft white vaporous fire streamed into the distant darkness, crossed and recrossed by a hundred wandering moons, weaving their mystic dance in ever widening curves, till they glided finally out of sight. Far down below the surface, great globes of silvery flame moved hither and thither, or slowly rose until from within gleamed the wavering outline of some ghostly fish. Once a huge shark, sheathed from snout to tail in sheeny armour, that would have more fitly become some dazzling prince of Fairyland, came gliding up to the very side of the silent ship, the tiny pilot-fish darting playfully about round his hideous head, like little flashes of summer lightning. Just at that moment a bigger wave than usual slipped from under her on its shoreward path. The ship rolled heavily over with a splash that for the moment churned her whole

length into a blaze, and the startled monster, springing half out of the water in his fright, sped away, like some huge sea comet, his little satellites streaming like tiny shooting stars in his wake.

"Bad luck to you for a cowardly brute!" muttered honest Dan Rorke, leaning with folded arms upon the bulwark on his solitary watch. "'Tis small chance ye'd be giving a poor divil that comed acrost ye widout so much as a bit of a shtick in his fist to defend himself, and look at ye now wid— Holy Vargin! what's that?" and Dan wheeled round almost as promptly as the shark himself, as a noiseless step stole up beside him through the darkness, and a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

"Take it easy, lad," was the answer, in the voice of the new engineer. "No need to rouse out the whole ship's company to let 'em know what a bright look-out you're keeping."

"Look-out, is it," grumbled Dan. "Let me tell you, sorr, 'tis a mighty foolish thrick a stalin' up in the dark, widout wid yer lave or by yer lave; and me on sintry and wid lashins of beautiful belayin'-pins all handy-like. 'Tis gettin' yer brains blown out ye'll be some fine mornin', and then ye'll be sorry for it."

The engineer chuckled.

"Can you spell 'knife'?" he asked, with a low laugh, as he drew from a side pocket something which in the uncertain light seemed to him to gleam in sinister fashion. In a moment one of the 'handy' belaying-pins had been snatched from its place, and a blow aimed at the suspected weapon. The engineer drew quickly back, just in time. "Hold hard, you eternal idiot!" he whispered eagerly. "Creation and skittles, man! Don't ye know a rib-tickler from a rum bottle?"

Dan stood aghast.

"Begorrah!" said he, scratching his shock head with the hand that still held the belaying-pin. "Good liquor's chape where you come from."

The engineer lowered the bottle after taking—or seeming to take—a long drink, and drew the back of his hand across his lips.

"Wal," he said reflectively, "that's as may be. A dollar a bottle, and rank Demerara at that."

Dan stole back the belaying-pin to its place, and grinned insinuatingly.

"Yer honour 'll be right, no doubt," he said, licking his lips suggestively. "Shure it isn't ayquil I'd be myself to giving an opinion—widout tasting av it."

There was no doubt at all events about the reality of the pull that honest Dan took, when once the bottle found its way into his horny fist, nor of the heartiness of his assurance that "though it has a bit of a twang in it, sure enough, bedad he's drunk worse, and hopes to again."

Nor was there any doubt, after the bottle had made two or three more journeys to Dan's mouth, that the liquor, good or bad, was safe beyond the reach of any belaying-pin. Then, as Pickering turned to go below again:

"What's that?" he whispered eagerly. "Yonder—in white—on the starboard side."

"'Tis the young misthress, divil a less. She do be standing there iver since I come on deck, poor thing, alookin' and alookin' at the bit of a light over on the shore yonder. Musha! 'tis the soft heart the wimin have!"

"Wal! I guess I'll not disturb her—if it arn't by snoring. Good-night, Dan. I'll take a bit of a caulk till eight bells."

"Good-night, yer honour, and pleasant dhramas. Bedad! 'Tis sleepy I'm getting myself intirely."

So sleepy, indeed, that after a very few minutes of ineffectual struggle honest Dan fairly succumbed, and settled down in a heap upon the deck, with his head comfortably pillowed on an iron ringbolt. When Pickering stole on deck again ten minutes later, Dan was sleeping soundly. The engineer stooped and shook him by the shoulder, first gently, then sharply. A low grunt was the only answer, and with a satisfied chuckle he glided softly aft along the opposite side of the deck to that where Helen Sinclair still kept her loving watch, and disappeared in the darkness.

Another half-hour passed, and then Helen's reverie was broken by the sound of her own name, spoken softly in a well-known voice, and turning, she saw that Charlie Hamilton stood at her side.

They had not been alone together since that memorable day on the Biarritz sands. All through the short voyage from Bermuda she had studiously avoided all opportunities of private intercourse; and her intention had been so unmistakable, that Charlie had not ventured to avail himself even of those which, with all her care, the close companionship of shipboard could not but now and then throw in his way. Her manner, indeed, had not been unfriendly—poor Charlie would almost have preferred that it should have been,

for that would at least have afforded an opening for remonstrance. But it had been perfectly cool and queenly, with no more hint of the relations of two years ago, than if Biarritz itself had never been marked upon a map.

There was something decidedly cool now in the tone in which, after a moment's pause, during which Charlie could have sworn he saw her dash her hand hurriedly across her eyes, she turned slowly upon him with the encouraging remark:

"You are early on deck this morning, Major Hamilton."

The major winced, but his mind was made up. He would "have it out" before landing, at all events. And yet, somehow, it was terribly difficult work to begin.

"I don't think we have either of us slept much to-night, Miss Sinclair," he said at length; pausing as he did so in the hope of at least some sort of reply, that might, perhaps, give him something of a "lead" across this awfully stiff fence at which he found himself "craning" so unusually. But no response came, and the only thing was to ride straight and trust in Providence for what might be on the other side. So he went on, in commonplace phrase enough. "I can answer for myself, I know; and I don't think I have heard your step upon the cabin-stairs since you went on deck last night."

He meant that he had lain awake all night, thinking of and watching for her. And Helen knew what he meant as well as he; and flashed and frowned in the darkness, and gave a little tap with her foot upon the deck that was almost a stamp. But all she said, and in the quietest and driest of tones, was just—

"No?"

There was little enough sign of any lead here, and the major went on doggedly:

"And so at last I made up my mind—to—"

"To get up. Yes?"

"To see if you were really still on deck, and—"

"And remind me how imprudent I was. Thank you, Major Hamilton. It was really too thoughtful of you. I will go down at once. Good-night."

"Not just for one moment more, Miss Sinclair. I have been trying for an opportunity of speaking to you, of asking if"—"if I might hope to be forgiven," he was going to say, but at the last moment his courage failed. In his eagerness to detain her he had laid his hand

lightly upon her wrist, which had been drawn away, not hurriedly, but with a coldness and decision that seemed to freeze up the words on his very lips, and he ended lamely with—"if I might venture to call at Heathcliff. That is your father's place, is it not?" And then, in feeble apology, poor Charlie adds, blunderingly: "He was very kind to me last year, you know."

"Last year? Indeed?" was the reply. "Really, Major Hamilton, I need hardly tell you that Colonel Sinclair's—every Southern gentleman's house is always open. I fear, however, just now you may find but a poor welcome. This is hardly a time for visits of mere courtesy."

"Mine would not be a visit of mere courtesy, Miss Sinclair. I——"

"You are coming to join us—to fight for the Confederation?"

It was Hamilton's turn to colour now; and the almost insolent dryness of the speaker's tone did not by any means diminish that tendency.

"I did not quite mean that," he said, after a moment's pause. "I am hardly a free man, you know, in that way. But if you think——"

"I have no thought for anything now, Major Hamilton, but for my country and her trouble; and with that, of course, I cannot expect strangers to sympathise. Good-night."

And before poor Charlie Hamilton could get out more than a stammering word or two of eager protest against being counted among strangers, the girl had turned decisively away, and was gone.

The slender stately figure gleamed whitely through the darkness, and Charlie watched it with hungry eyes as it glided slowly along the deck, and began to disappear down the companion-ladder. Suddenly it stopped, turned, and with a low startled cry, sprang swiftly to the opposite bulwark to that against which the major was leaning.

"Hush!" she whispered, holding up a warning hand as he sprang towards her; but not for a moment relaxing her straining gaze into the night. "Listen!"

Hamilton listened almost as eagerly as herself. For some moments he heard nothing. Then through the heavy air came a faint, far-off "thud—thud—thud," that swelled for an instant, then sank, then died away again. So faint was it, that at first he was more than half inclined to think it must be mere fancy. But in

less than a minute it came again—rising, sinking, dying away once more into silence. And then both knew that the sound they heard was the lashing of some strange steamer's screw, as she lifted it for a moment half out of water under the influence of the long rolling swell.

"The Mohawk!" cried Helen, under her breath. And before her companion could reply she had vanished, and was already knocking eagerly at the captain's cabin-door.

It took but very few seconds to bring the old sailor on deck, and still fewer to satisfy his practised ear of the real nature of the ominous sound.

"Ay, ay," he muttered. "'Tis she, sure enouch. But she's no seen us yet, and gin we but lie snug, its unco sma' chance she'll hae o' setting een upo us afore the morn. We'll hae to rin the chance o' a lang shot or twa, lassie; but gin ye'r een an ye'r mim'ry sairve ye but half as weel as ye'r lugs hae done the night, we'll win through; never fear. But, body o' me! hoo comes it—— Look-out, there!"

But no look-out answered to the summons. Only the mate, sleeping dog-fashion, with both ears open, caught the muffled sounds of the captain's voice, and promptly joined the little group on deck. He too was soon satisfied as to the presence, not many miles off, of some strange steamer—and only one steamer was likely to be prowling along this unfrequented part of the coast.

Both captain and mate, however, were clear that, as yet, their actual position was undiscovered. "She's going dead slow, sir, and heading off-shore too," said the latter, carefully counting the distant beats, which indeed seemed now to come from yet farther away on their seaward bow. And as he spoke, both officers looked carefully round once more, to make quite sure that no betraying ray of light stole out incautiously from hatchway or skylight. All was safe there, however, and so long as the darkness lasted, it was scarcely possible that the position of the little Mocking Bird should be discovered.

"I'll just look up that lazy scoundrel of a look-out, captain," said the mate, "and give him something to keep his eyes skinned for the next hour or two, and then I think we shall be all right."

But he had not been gone many minutes on his search after the delinquent, before his voice was heard calling anxiously to the captain to come for'ard quickly. The look-out man was found, and sleeping soundly,

sure enough. But it was not any careless watchman's ordinary sleep. The emphatic kick with which his angry officer endeavoured to awaken him to a sense of his delinquency, instead of bringing him to his feet, produced only a grunt and a snore, nor could any amount of shaking or pommelling arouse him in the smallest degree from his lethargy.

"The man has been drugged," whispered Hamilton anxiously.

"Ay, that has he, lad," answered the captain, through his set teeth. "There's treachery amang us somewhere." Then with a bound he sprang from his kneeling attitude by the unconscious man's side, and laying one hand on Hamilton's shoulder, pointed eagerly with the other into the darkness, where, broad away upon the Mocking Bird's beam, a dull red glare showed up fitfully against the sky, and the one bright planet that has even now but just shown above the horizon, is blotted out by the thick rolling smoke.

"She's spotted us, sir," cried the mate, and even as he speaks came the distant "thud—thud—thud—thud," with a quickened beat that told its own tale. The mate needed no instructions. "Tumble up, there! tumble up!" he cried, in a loud hoarse whisper, that seemed to penetrate every cranny and corner of the little vessel, and soon brought her crew upon the deck. "See all clear with the cable there. Stand by to connect the screw. Mr. Pickering! Where the devil is that engineer? Rouse him out, some of you. Shall we slip and run for it, sir, or try our chance over the bar?"

There was a moment's pause. Even now Captain McDonald could hardly believe that their position had really been discovered, and hesitated before giving any order that might perhaps unnecessarily betray their whereabouts. And even as he hesitated, came news which, while removing all doubt as to the question of their discovery, told him that all power of decision is out of his hands.

"Sir! sir!" came a startled voice from the engineer's cabin, to which one of the ship's boys had been despatched to arouse the supposed sluggard. "Muster Pickering's not here, and——"

The rest of the sentence was lost in the hurried rush below, and, once there, the whole mystery was revealed with sufficient clearness. The traitor had fled, indeed; and the quick intuition of the old skipper—only too promptly confirmed by the report

of the seaman despatched in search of the boat that had been left floating astern, in readiness, if required, for reconnoitring purposes in the morning—speedily solved the, at first sight, difficult problem of his escape. But his own desertion, and the drugging of the sentry, had not been the only tricks he had played them. His cabin was empty; but there, lashed securely in the very scuttle, hung a large bull's-eye lantern—carefully shielded to throw no gleam of light either upwards, so as to catch the eye of anyone leaning over the bulwark, or downwards, so as to run any risk of reflection from the surface of the water; but throwing to seaward a straight steady ray, towards which the Yankee cruiser was even now steering at full speed.

"The scoon'rill!" muttered the skipper between his teeth, as, with one mighty wrench, Hamilton tore the treacherous signal from its fastenings, and dashed it into a dozen fragments on the deck. "It's a' ower wi' us, lassie, I fear."

"Not yet, captain," said Helen firmly. "We can, at least, try the bar."

The old seaman shook his head.

"We hae gien the wolf the wedders to keep," he answered; "and we'll no find muckle 'oo for t' shearin'. Hoo is't wi' f' engines, McFarlane? Eh, laddie! I e'en thoct sae," he continued, as the second engineer held out to him, with a silence more significant than words, what seemed a handful of broken and twisted nuts and screws. "We're clean cripplet, Miss Helen. And whether yon chap wait till the morn's light, or comes alongside, as he maist probably will, in a quarter o' an hoor's time, matters unco' little noo."

Helen's eyes flashed.

"Then I will go myself," she said. "You will not refuse me a boat now, Captain McDonald?"

"Na, na, Miss Helen. The men's lives are their ain, and gin any o' them chuse to volunteer, I'll no gainsay them. But 'tis a desperate venture, and there's mair 'an me 'ill be sair tholed to lose ye, my bairn. Dinna forget that."

The girl turned to him with a softened expression, and, taking the old seaman's hand in hers, pressed it heartily.

"I am fearing to lose them," she said simply. Then raising her voice: "Which of you men will volunteer to row me ashore? I will give fifty pounds—a hundred——"

But no immediate reply came. Crossing a dangerous and unknown bar, on a pitch-

dark night, in an open boat, and a heavy swell, was a prospect that offered very moderate temptation, even to the most adventurous. The pause of hesitation had lasted long enough to bring the indignant flush to Helen Sinclair's cheek, but not to afford time for any further offer, when a voice, at the girl's elbow, answered quietly:

"I'm not much of a seaman, Miss Sinclair, but I can pull a pretty fair oar. I am at your service, for want of a better."

"Are you quite sure that you are free for such a service, Major Hamilton?" was the not very grateful reply.

"Quite," he answered, with a low laugh. "There is nothing in her Majesty's commission against my getting drowned in any way I please."

Helen frowned, and bit her lip. Poor Charlie's light tone jarred upon her high-strung nerves; and assuredly there was not a man in the ship whose assistance she would not gladly at that moment have accepted in preference to his. If there was one thing in the world to which she had more fully made up her mind than any other, it was that never, at any time or under any circumstances, would she forgive this presumptuous Englishman. And now she was asked to accept at his hands the very greatest service a man could render. And then, perhaps— But no; that was folly. There was little real danger to a man who could swim, and who was daring and cool. And the English major was cool enough, at all events, and—and daring enough too.

It was her only chance. They were alone now. The sailors had gone forward. The captain had turned away to give whispered orders for the lowering of a boat. She must accept this offer, palatable or unpalatable, or give up all hope of helping those dear ones who were even now almost within reach of her hand. And then, "thud, thud, thud," came the sound of the approaching screw; slower now again, since she had lost her guiding light, but terribly nearer even during those very few minutes that had elapsed since they had first been heard. She swallowed her pride with a great gulp.

"Come!" she said abruptly, and almost brusquely. "We have no time to lose."

"I am ready," was the simple reply; and, following her down the companion, Hamilton hastily seized a sheet of paper, dashed off half-a-dozen lines, and had

just handed the envelope, with a few whispered words of direction, to the captain, who had come below to announce that the boat was in readiness, when Helen entered once more.

Charlie Hamilton started slightly, and the white cap-mark on his forehead—which was the only part where the thick bronze would allow of any change of tint—flushed as hotly as the girl's own cheeks, as she stood for a moment, returning his gaze with a flash of something very like defiance. The long white robe, in which she had looked so spirit-like on deck but a minute since, had been laid aside. The shining hair was knotted up in a tight coil; the rounded arms bare to the shoulder; the tall lithe figure set off to the utmost by the jaunty little serge jacket and knickerbockers. It was the identical swimming-dress which had been the original occasion of their quarrel.

The pause was but momentary; certainly not long enough on Charlie's part to justify the sharp question:

"Have you repented of your offer, Major Hamilton?"

"Not in the least, Miss Sinclair. On the contrary, I am glad to see——"

She cut him short with a frown. Poor Charlie! He had better have held his tongue. Helen felt that at that moment she would have given half her fortune to be able to annihilate on the spot this saucy Englishman, who thus presumed, not only to blame, but even to excuse her. She had to grip fast hold of the packet of dearly-purchased medicine, slung in its waterproof wrapping round her neck, to keep herself from repudiating any service on his part then and there.

"God be wi' ye," whispered the old skipper, as they passed over the side. "Dinna pu' ower hard, major. There's an unco' glint i' the water the nicht, and thae Yankee scoonrills hae gude een. Ance ye're ayont the shelter o' the ship, ye maun just let her drift till we're awa'."

The advice was too evidently sound to be rejected, even by Helen's impatience. Charlie gave a few score of vigorous strokes, driving the heavy boat swiftly shorewards, and leaving a glittering trail, which sufficiently enforced the old seaman's caution. Then slackening speed, he contented himself with just dipping his oars carefully into the water with a long slow stroke, that did little more than keep her head in the direction whence came the distant thunder of the bar.

And so they drifted for what, to Helen's excited imagination, seemed hours. Neither spoke. It was not likely that Helen should be the first to break the silence, and though, half an hour ago, Charlie Hamilton would have given the price of his commission for such an opportunity, there was a consciousness in his mind now, that seemed to make speech ungenerous.

It was a relief when the distant exchange of hails, and the sudden roar of escaping steam, as the Mohawk's engines were brought to a stand, showed that the Yankee cruiser had fairly pounced upon her prey. Helen's heart beat fast. So fast that for the moment it lost all memory of its quarrel, and turned instinctively to seek the once familiar sympathy. The night had brightened somewhat, and in the clear light of the tropical stars the bronzed features that had once been the girl's ideal of all that was strong, and true, and trustworthy in man, stood out almost as plainly as at noonday. For the first time since that unfortunate hour, their eyes met without any interposing veil of anger or reserve.

There was a look in his that, even in the full tumult of excitement and anticipation, struck her with a sense of uneasiness, almost of awe. It was not the anxious deprecating look she had seen so often of late, only nursing her resentment the more assiduously each time she saw it. Still less had it anything of the satisfaction, or even triumph, that might perhaps have been expected in the face of the obligations under which she had perforce allowed herself to be placed. Only a wistful yearning look, that even in its tenderness seemed to have something of the solemnity of a long farewell.

"We are friends?" he said quietly, holding out his hand. What could she do but place hers in it? And the strong brown fingers closed upon it, with the gentle firmness that had so often sent a thrill through her slender white ones in those pleasant days.

Yet still that strange look did not leave his eyes, and even as she withdrew her hand again, half angry with herself for the momentary concession, all unavoidable as under the circumstances it surely was, something of an answering feeling seemed to rise in her heart. Not exactly pain, certainly not pleasure; more like the shooting of a sudden anxious fear.

Surely the man was not afraid? No. The full calm pulse was beating too steadily

for any thought of that. And yet— Another moment, and she would have spoken; but even as she opened her lips, came the muffled sound of a sudden movement on board the Mocking Bird, and then, across the half-mile or so of slowly heaving water which separated them, came the clear tones of the skipper's voice:

"Boat there! Pu' awa, man! Pu' for yer' life!"

The major's oars were already in the water, and the little craft shot forward at a pace which promised at least to give the pursuers some trouble if they were to overtake her before reaching the bar, now less than two miles distant.

"Look to your steering, Miss Sinclair," he said quietly, as the girl involuntarily turned her head in the direction of the enemy; "we can't afford to give them an inch."

Helen bit her lip, vexed at having given way to a momentary weakness. For a few moments they sped on silently. Then suddenly came a flash, followed by a rattle, a boom, a curious hurtling in the air all around her; and before she had time to realise what had happened, a strong arm had plucked her from her seat, and laid her gently but swiftly in the bottom of the boat. Another rattling volley, another boom—boom—from the Mohawk's heavy guns, and again the curious hurtling filled the air, and the phosphorescent water flashed as the bullets dashed it over them. Then silence once more. The boat was at a stand now, and the treacherous glitter of oar and keel no longer betrayed her whereabouts.

"Are you hurt?" he asked, in a quick hoarse whisper, very unlike his usual calm tones, as he raised her to her seat again.

"Not a scratch," she answered laughing, half gaily, half nervously; for it was her first experience under fire, and she had a curious shaken feeling not quite describable. "And you?"

"We are," he replied gravely, and pointed to the bottom of the boat; where the water was already beginning to rise visibly above the flooring-boards. The boat was old and not over strong. Perhaps it had been only a bullet that had struck her; but it had struck in a tender place, and she was leaking rapidly.

Helen laughed again.

"Then we must swim for it," she said, gaily. "Come, major." And as she spoke she slipped off her shoes, and stood up for the plunge, her bare feet shining whitely

through the fast deepening water in the bottom of the boat.

The major rose too; but to her astonishment instead of himself preparing for the swim he held out his hand to her with a quiet, "Heaven speed you, Miss Sinclair. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" she echoed, wonderingly. And then her heart seemed to stand still, and a strange sick feeling swept over her as she asked with whitening lips: "What do you mean?"

"I can't swim," he answered simply. Then, as in the starlight he saw the delicate lips tremble, and the tears brim up into the great eyes: "It does not matter. Their boat will be up in ten minutes, and this will keep afloat till then."

He tried to laugh it off, drawing her attention to the distant sound of the approaching oars, which gave plain warning that no time was to be lost. She only set the trembling lips more firmly together as the big tears came rolling slowly down. Then, with a low cry, she flung her arms about his neck.

"Charlie! Charlie! forgive me! kiss me. Oh, if ever——"

A great sob choked her, and she buried her face on his shoulder. For one moment she lay in his arms as he strained her yielding form to his heart; then, with one more long clinging embrace, she glided gently from his clasp, and was gone.

"Wal, Mr. Philp, have you got the gal?"

The Mohawk had followed cautiously, but pretty closely upon her boat, sounding as she went. It was within a very short time of their parting when Charlie Hamilton found himself standing on the Yankee's deck.

"I've got him, cap'n," answered the lieutenant; "the girl had gone under."

"Gone under!" screamed his superior, with a volley of furious oaths. "Didn't I tell you she could swim like aarnation alligator?" Then, snatching up his night glasses, "Ay, by ——," he cries, "and there she goes. Fire on her, marines! Ready with that gun there!" Then, before his eager orders could be obeyed, before even the indignant remonstrance could pass Charlie Hamilton's lips: "Hold hard!" he shouted again, "not a shot, any one of ye!"

"I am glad you have thought better of it, Captain Sherley," said the English major, in a tone which pretty plainly spoke his disgust.

The Yankee pointed to a bright gleam in the water scarce a hundred fathoms from their bow, shooting swiftly shoreward, straight for the little glimmer of phosphorescence that, as it rose on each succeeding wave, just showed where the girl was pressing gallantly on towards the bar.

"Wal!" he answered with a chuckle, "I don't care to waste my powder. And they're skeery critturs, is sharks."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before, with a crashing blow, Charlie had levelled him with the deck. Another moment and he had sprung upon a marine, wrested his firelock from him, and fired one desperate shot in the direction of the shark. But even as he drew the trigger a dozen hands were on him, and in a very few minutes more he was lying heavily ironed on the lower deck.

Meanwhile Helen had pressed on steadily towards the shore. Those were anxious moments, during which the sound of the Yankee oars drew nearer and nearer, and she dared only swim below the surface, coming up every now and then to rest and breathe. But presently came the sound of voices—of one voice especially, which sent the girl's blood coursing through her veins with a warmer glow than it had gained from the familiar exercise. He was safe, at all events. And then the oars turned seaward again, and she struck out gaily for the bar. Presently, as she rose on the top of one of the great rolling waves, she could see lights twinkling upon the shore, showing that the recent firing had aroused the inhabitants. Each moment the roar of the surf seemed to grow louder. In another hour she would be there, her mission accomplished, her dear father saved. Then suddenly came the sound of that single rifle-shot from the Mohawk, and she dived swiftly expecting a volley. When she came again to the surface she was in the trough between two of the great rollers; but, as she rose to the crest of the succeeding wave she turned to look if there were any signs of pursuit—and saw her doom.

The girl's heart stood still. She was no stranger to those tropic seas, and knew in a moment the meaning of that glancing streak of light shooting so swiftly in her rear. All was lost now. Not merely her own life, though it was hard to part with that now, just when it had become so much more dear, but all the fruits of her gallant

struggle, the succour she was bringing the lives of father, brothers—all. As for escaping by any exertions of her own, she knew the monster's speed too well to dream of that. Already to her excited imagination the hideous jaws seemed closing upon her, and with a loud cry she struck out wildly, lashing the sparkling water with hands and feet in the desperate hope of even yet scaring him from his prey.

Boom! the loud report of a cannon-shot came pealing across the water, not from the Mohawk this time, but from the shore, and the great shell flew screaming over her, and splashed heavily into the lifting swell behind her. When the advancing wave lifted her in her turn, the menacing streak of light was no longer to be seen.

The girl's heart gave a bound, then stood still again, as the horrible dread came back with tenfold force.

The monster had not been struck by that fortunate shot, or his dying "flurry" would have lashed the water into flame for yards around. He was only frightened for the moment by the heavy plunge so near him, and would soon return to the chase. Perhaps he was even now close upon her in some other quarter. Perhaps he was at this moment actually beneath her, turning his huge jaws upward to seize his prey. The whole sea seemed to become full of sharks. It was only by a strong mental effort that she could compel herself to continue swimming, so paralyzing was the nervous terror that each movement might bring hand or foot into contact with the dreaded form.

Was it for minutes, or hours, or years, that she struggled madly on, not knowing, in what direction she was swimming; conscious of nothing but her own maddening fears? When at last the swift tropic dawn came upon her, and the great sun leaped with a bound from the sparkling waves, it seemed to Helen as though the time had never been in which she had done ought but battle wildly against a hideous death.

And then, just as, after the momentary ray of comfort brought by the returning sunlight, the nervous terror came rushing back more vividly than before at the thought that now even the brief warning of coming danger afforded by the phosphorescence of the water was taken away, came a sight at which every pulse began to throb with a wild revulsion of excitement.

Had terror driven her mad, or was that

indeed her own dear old yacht, her, graceful Ariel, already far across the bar, as if on its way to meet her? Strangely transmogrified truly, with all the delicate lines of her hull blurred and marred by great loops of heavy chain and huge clumsy masses of iron, but still with something of the old beauty, something she could not fail to recognise, unless, indeed, the whole vessel were but the creation of her fevered fancy.

She flung herself half out of the water, with a wild cry.

"Father! Father!"

And then she knew no more till the roaring of the great guns aroused her from her swoon in the cot of her own dear cabin.

It was not for some days after that she learned how it came to pass that, instead of putting back at once with her precious freight, the extemporised little ironclad stood on so boldly in chase of Uncle Sam's cruiser Mohawk; how she had clung about her father's neck, and told in incoherent words how "He" was there—a prisoner—and vowed if they put back on her account she would fling herself again into the water; refusing to be pacified till she had not only wrung from him a reluctant promise, but heard the order actually given, and then slipping quietly from his arms in a dead faint. And it was upon Charlie's shoulder that she hid her face as she laughingly protested that she didn't believe a word of it, and that if it were so, there was no very great heroism in the chase, for the poor crippled Mohawk had never had a chance even of getting in a shot.

Sixteen years have passed since then, but she and Colonel Hamilton have had no fresh quarrel—not even over the delicate question whether Baby Helen should learn to swim.

PROCTOR'S CASE.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

CHAPTER I.

TALK of the romance of love, indeed! There is twice as much romance in money, to my mind; even money by itself, to say nothing of it in combination with love. Am I serious? I never was more serious in my life; and as I've been for forty odd years clerk to Messrs. Nimmo, first father and son, and then son, successor to father, in this town of Ipswich, I'm likely to

know what seriousness means. Lawyers everywhere, and their clerks too, get a pretty correct view of human lives; but especially in quiet-going country towns, because you go on with people's history in places of this kind. You don't get it in fits and starts, seeing people in moments of difficulty and trouble, and all as they are with no make-believe about them, and then losing sight of them, never knowing what has come of them or their troubles, any more. You know all about them, their fathers and mothers before them, their wives with them, and their children after them; their small beginnings sometimes, and the bits of money they put by from time to time; how nobodies grow to be somebodies, and somebodies die out; how new places spring up, and old places change hands. It's all unstable, it's all dissolving views everywhere; but the sands are not quite so shifting, the canvas is not rolled off quite so quickly in country places as in your big city.

We knew a great deal about people's histories at Nimmo's, and most of the traditions of the respectable old firm were lodged in my head. How much surprised some of the people, whom I was in the habit of meeting every day for years, would have been, if they had been aware of all that I knew about them; and what a very little way their airs of consequence and their little fibs went with me. These airs and fibs are as plenty in country towns as in big cities, but they get found out more readily, because one has time to notice them. And I give you my word, going back to my point, that I have known no family secrets or troubles in which love played nearly so large or so romantic a part as money. Could I state a case off-hand? I could; there's the story of the Proctors—it's only one out of scores, but it comes the readiest.

When I first saw Bernard Proctor and his handsome young wife I was a youngster, newly promoted to a high stool in Mr. Nimmo's office. Very proud of myself I was in those days, and you could not easily have persuaded me that a greater man than Lawyer Nimmo was to be found nearer to the market-cross than Windsor Castle, or that King William himself would not have been the better of his advice. Bernard Proctor first came to consult Mr. Nimmo about a purchase, and his pretty wife came with him. Mr. Nimmo was busy in the back-parlour, and as his guest was Sir Henry Hartleup himself, he

could not even be told that Mr. Proctor was waiting, so that the new-comers had to sit down in the office; and so they did, very cosy, and very near one another on the horse-hair bench, and I had a good look at Mrs. Proctor while I pretended to be writing. She was as blithe and bonny as she could be, with blue eyes and a fine fresh complexion, and a happy look that did one good to see. Bernard Proctor was a good deal older than his wife, and had a hard look about him, as well he might have, for he had been money-gathering all his life, and I know nothing, except money-spending in evil pleasure all his life, that hardens a man's face like that. Mr. Nimmo went to the door with Sir Henry Hartleup when his business was settled, and then he looked into the office. Mr. and Mrs. Proctor both stood up, and I, who, even then, knew all the tones in Mr. Nimmo's voice perfectly, was well aware when he spoke that these were not such clients as he put on his very best manners for.

"Come after that house, I suppose," said Mr. Nimmo, as he opened the door leading into his room, and Mrs. Proctor passed on. "Rather odd. Sir Henry Hartleup has just been here about it."

Then he shut the door behind him, and that was all I saw of the Proctors on that occasion; which I should not have remembered at all, had it not been associated with a rumour that reached us in the office that very day, that things were going very wrong at Hartleup. Things don't often go wrong with a fine old family estate without some member or other of the fine old family being to blame in the matter; and in this case the helping hand was lent by Sir Henry's only son, Mr. Frederick, who would have broken the Bank of England if he had had a chance, and lived long enough. As it was, he broke all he could, including his mother's heart; and we began to hear that Sir Henry was parting with property in every direction, that the fine timber in the park was being thinned at a great rate, and that the Hall would shortly be shut up. At our office we had reason to know that a portion of these rumours was true, for Sir Henry Hartleup owned several houses in the town of Ipswich, and in the outlying country immediately adjacent; and he employed Mr. Nimmo to sell them, first singly, then two or three at a time. Finally they were all sold, and the Hartleup proprietorship in everything outside the gates

of the Hall came to an end. A good deal of copying of the documents relative to those sales fell to my share, and thus I came to know that Bernard Proctor was buying most of the house property that Sir Henry Hartleap was selling, and in a quiet unpretending way he was taking root in the place. I never knew exactly what his origin was; and it does not matter. He had been a workman in some trade, his pretty wife had brought him a little money, and a lucky invention had procured him a share in a factory, in which he had done very well. Nobody knew how well, until long afterwards. He was the luckiest man in money-making I ever knew, and perhaps the most distrustful of all others who had made money. He and his wife occupied a substantial house about half-a-mile out of the town, and though the gentry did not recognise them, they were taken up by many of the leading townspeople, and they were bidding fair to be reckoned among those somebodies whom I have seen in the course of my life developed from nobodies. All this did not happen very quickly; it might have been five years or thereabouts from the time I first saw the Proctors until the manner of Mr. Nimmo had entirely changed towards his house-purchasing client. To do him justice, it never changed towards his house-selling one; he conducted Sir Henry Hartleap as deferentially to the street-door on the last day Sir Henry was ever seen at our office as on the first, and I never saw him look more sad than he looked when the broken and feeble gentleman rode away. Only a few weeks later, Sir Henry Hartleap was dead, and Sir Frederick had left the country. It will not take me long to tell the story of the next ten years. First, the Hall was let to a rich manufacturer, with the park and gardens, all complete, for two years; and then, when he and his family left the place, the house was shut up, the gardens were neglected, and the park was all let for grazing, up to the very windows. We did not hear much of Sir Frederick, and the little we did hear was no good. I had been for some time chief clerk at Mr. Nimmo's, when we received directions from Sir Frederick to have "a corner of the house" made ready for the reception of Lady Hartleap and her daughter. Nobody knew anything about them, beyond the facts that Sir Frederick had married a foreigner, and had only one child, a daughter—a circum-

stance which was generally regarded as serving him right, for Ipswich people did not like foreigners. The mother and daughter arrived, and were installed at the Hall, literally in a corner of the great house, with two servants, one a foreign woman, whom they had brought with them to wait upon them there. The mother was a tall, pale, black-eyed, slender, silent lady, who looked as if she and sorrow had long been so familiar that indifference had come of it; the daughter was a lovely child of six or seven, a fair little darling, who would, it was easy to see, grow up the image of Sir Frederick's mother. The two lived as quiet as mice in the great house, on a very small allowance, that was paid to Lady Hartleap through our office, and very often advanced, to my knowledge, out of Mr. Nimmo's own pocket, when the remittances were in arrear. All this time things were prospering with the Proctors, and the more the Hall dwindled and waned in importance, the more Mr. Proctor of The Mount, as he called his big house, which stood on ground as flat as a table, seemed to grow in substance and position. Mrs. Proctor was rather more than blithe and bonny by this time; she was downright fat, and had a double chin. Her two fine boys, Bernard and Richard, were the pride of her life, and I don't suppose she had a trouble in the world then, or for some years after, except it was that Bernard, as he grew out of childhood, bade fair to be remarkably like his father. An odd source of trouble to a loving wife! Yes, that seems true, but it is readily explained too. Proctor had made his money, and, in the beginning, at least, had worked very hard for it; it was no wonder he should love it, and keep a close grip on it, and have it constantly in his thoughts. But it was another thing that Bernard should love money as he did, from the time when his nature could be read with any certainty, with a thirst and a concentration that could not be hidden or ignored. The boys were sent to an excellent school, and well-taught in all the schooling which their father had not, and there the ruling passion of Bernard came out strongly. His father laughed at it when the boy was a child, and used to hoard his halfpence, and sell his tops and marbles; he rather admired it when the child became a boy, but his mother disliked and feared it. She had not found it impossible to love a money-loving man; but then her husband

did not love only money; whereas, it really seemed that her son had no power of loving anything else. We knew a good deal about the Proctors at our office; Mr. Nimmo—it was Nimmo successor before the two boys left school—did all Bernard Proctor's business for him. It was of a simple kind, because he stuck to house-property as his invariable investment, being an uneducated man, with a firm conviction that every speculation was a swindle, and a rooted distrust of securities, whether Government or otherwise.

By degrees the Hartletop and the Nimmo business came to be regarded as peculiarly my affair—I had always known more about them than Mr. Charles—and, in particular, I always called on Lady Hartletop to take her any papers which she had to see, and occasionally to make to her certain communications which Sir Frederick sent through our office. I have reason to believe that no direct correspondence ever took place between them from the date of Lady Hartletop's arrival at the Hall. I felt a great interest in Lady Hartletop, and was sorry that she persevered in the extreme seclusion which she had from the first adopted. Her manner to me was always gracious, ladylike, and reserved; she would hardly ever make a comment upon any communication which it was my duty to make to her, but, when she had received it, would put the matter aside, and converse with me for awhile, in her pretty foreign English. Miss Sybilla was generally present, and she would talk to me too, and sometimes question me about the little world outside the park-gates, of which she knew so little. I suppose Lady Hartletop's rigid avoidance of her neighbours of every degree came from her being too poor to associate with her equals on equal terms, and too proud to associate with her inferiors on any. She never omitted to inquire for my wife, but she had never seen her; and I do not know whether she knew even the names of the families who resided close to the park-gates. Miss Sybilla was educated entirely by her mother, and, as I afterwards came to know, very well educated. She was a cheerful, bright, pretty creature, and her young glad-heartedness seemed to be proof against the influences of solitude, and that very trying form of poverty, which combines external grandeur with the lack of all that makes life beautiful or pleasant.

Miss Sybilla and her foreign attendant

were frequently seen in the suburbs, and even in Ipswich itself, though Lady Hartletop never passed the park-gates.

"And a sweet pretty creature she is, Mr. Forrest," said Mrs. Proctor to me one day, when Sybilla Hartletop was, as near as I could judge, "sweet seventeen," and the very picture of health and sprightly English loveliness; "for all she never has a silk frock, and scarcely a new bonnet to speak of, and cooped up with a foreigner, too."

"The foreigner is her mother," I objected; "and Miss Hartletop has never had any other companions, so I suppose she does not miss them."

"Ah, yes, that's all very well; but it won't last. Take my word for it, Mr. Forrest, though I have no daughters myself, it won't last."

Mrs. Proctor was right. It did not last, and it came to an end very shortly after Mrs. Proctor had thus given her opinion.

A little before this time we had received at our office a communication from Sir Frederick Hartletop of an unusual character. This time he instructed us that, owing to the death of a relative, Lady Hartletop had become possessed of a legacy of one thousand pounds, and the papers concerning the bequest were forwarded to us. When I waited on her to convey this good news, she displayed, for the first time in my presence, signs of emotion, but she speedily put them down, and proceeded to ask me anxiously whether Sir Frederick had said anything about reducing her income in consequence of this bequest, or had dictated any special form of investment for it. I answered both questions in the negative, and she seemed much relieved. At the moment Sybilla came into the room, and her mother, with an unreserve quite new to me, told her what had happened.

"Oh mamma mia!" she exclaimed, with the eagerness of a child, "may I not have a pony now, a little cheap pony? You know you said I could, if only we had the least little money over and above."

The mother looked at the girl with the fondest smile, and said to me:

"I think, Mr. Forrest, we may risk the pony."

Miss Sybilla had her pony, and she used to ride sedately about the park and along the quietest of the roads close by. I remember her well, with her long skirt and her broad-leaved hat and feather; and I chanced to meet her one day when I was

going to the Hall, looking so bright and pretty that I had not the heart to tell her what my errand was, but let her go her pleasant way with only a word or two about the pony.

"You manage him nicely, Miss Sybilla. He is very quiet."

"Very; only when there's a sudden noise. He hates that."

I went on, thinking that Lady Hartletop would be sure to prefer being alone when she must hear my tidings. If they were not grievous to her, Sybilla had better not see that it was so; if they were grievous nobody could help her.

I had come to tell her that Sir Frederick Hartletop had died suddenly, and that, when the new baronet should have taken possession of the Hall, as we presumed he would immediately, she must provide herself with another dwelling, without any increase of her means. Beyond the capital of the small income which was secured to her, Sir Frederick Hartletop left nothing. A fine estate, an honourable name, the peace of many lives, the traditions of a long line of worthies, had all been sacrificed to his selfish vices.

I told Lady Hartletop the truth as gently and considerately as I could; and I knew that, notwithstanding the strong restraint she put upon herself, it was grievous to her, and she would be better alone for awhile. So I merely urged upon her that she must come to a speedy decision as to what she would do, rather as a means of occupying her, than because there was any real reason to fear her being incommoded, and was about to leave her when she said:

"Are you to continue to manage the business of the Hall?"

"We have no instructions as yet from Sir William Hartletop. He is, we understand, an elderly unmarried man; and the entail stops with him."

"Yes, I believe that is so. He could, therefore, sell the Hall, which Sir Frederick would gladly have done if he could."

"I should think he would do so; he has never seen the place; and the—but what is this?" I rose and hurried to the window, with her back to which Lady Hartletop was sitting; I had caught sight of a man leading Miss Sybilla's pony, followed by another man carrying something in his arms. Lady Hartletop started up; I in vain tried to restrain her; she rushed towards the great empty echoing hall, the wide doors lay open, and in the act of carrying his burden up the steps was

Richard Proctor. In his arms lay Sybilla, insensible and with a broken arm.

"Don't be alarmed, madam," said Richard, "she has only fainted within the last minute or two, because it was impossible to carry her without hurting her arm. Let me lay her down, and then I will fetch a doctor at once."

When Sybilla had been laid down on a sofa, and her horrified mother was loosening her dress, I looked out for the other man, whom I had not recognised, and saw him walking off with his hands in his pockets, having tied the guilty pony to one of the pillars of the porch. The man was Bernard Proctor's eldest son.

CHAPTER II.

MISS SYBILLA HARTLETOP was not long laid up with her broken arm, but the accident was, nevertheless, productive of certain consequences; among which was the relaxation of Lady Hartletop's rigid rule of seclusion, in favour first of Richard Proctor and afterwards of his mother. Events followed each other at the Hall just then with rapidity, in proportion to the long stagnation that had existed there. Instructions were received at our office from Sir William Hartletop, to the effect that he wished the business of the estate to be conducted by Mr. Nimmo until such time as he could advantageously effect a sale of it, as he had no intention of residing upon it. But he made no allusion to the widow and daughter of his predecessor, and when I proposed to Lady Hartletop that we should apply to Sir William for permission for them to continue to reside at the Hall, as the place was not to be let, she refused to allow me to do so. A small house in the vicinity was taken for her, and on Miss Sybilla's recovery the fitting took place. The house belonged to Bernard Proctor, and was, indeed, the very one of which there had been a question so many years previously, on the first occasion of my seeing Mr. and Mrs. Proctor.

It would not have required the penetration of a sage, or the prophetic power of a magician, to foresee and foretell the effect, upon the persons chiefly concerned, of the occurrence that had introduced Richard Proctor and Sybilla Hartletop to each other. The terror of Lady Hartletop, and her helplessness in the presence of her child's injury and suffering, contrasted strangely with the stoical reserve of her usual demeanour so far

as I was acquainted with it. The readiness, the genuine kindness, the courteous helpfulness of the handsome young man who had, as she persisted in believing, saved Miss Sybilla's life—though the pony's misdemeanours had hardly involved so serious an issue as that—seemed to constitute a new revelation to the woman who had just received two such shocks as had come to Lady Hartletop within the same hour. "Richard Proctor had always been a favourite of mine, and if I thought Lady Hartletop made a little too much of what he had done, I was careful to keep that opinion strictly to myself. It was two or three days after the accident that, on going to enquire for Miss Sybilla, I found Mrs. Proctor at the Hall, and heard that Richard had proposed to bring his mother there, on finding that nobody in the house knew anything about broken bones, and that Lady Hartletop's nerves were entirely unequal to the occasion. Mrs. Proctor was the motherliest of women, and the curiosity she had long felt about the recluse lady and her daughter gave way to genuine interest—not a little assisted by the fact, that she and her son formed the only exception to the rule which excluded visitors from the Hall. When the new arrangements had been made, I felt almost as if I had got the mother and daughter off my mind; and shortly afterwards my wife and I went away for a month, on one of the holiday trips which were of rare occurrence in our lives. The first piece of local intelligence I heard on my return was, that Mr. Proctor had had a severe illness, and was recovering from it but slowly. The second was that it was said that he intended to purchase Hartletop Hall. The latter item of news was not generally well received. There was a rather extensively-spread feeling that self-made men were all very well in their way, and of course it was very commendable to raise one's-self in the world, and to make as large a fortune as possible; but that sort of thing ought to stop short of buying up old places with which none but aristocratic traditions were associated—transactions of the kind savouring of bumpiousness and bad taste. As no intimation of any such intention on his part had reached our office, I did not pay much heed to the rumour.

"The young man has been here several times," Mr. Nimmo said to me, "and he seems very discontented and ill-conditioned.

Proctor has made a great mistake in letting those boys of his idle about."

"A very common mistake for men to make, who have worked hard in their own time. Of course you refer to young Bernard?"

"Yes—I know no harm of the other; unless philandering with Miss Hartletop is to be counted as harm, and I suppose his father doesn't think so, or he would have put a stop to it."

"Indeed," said I. "Has it come to that? I should have said Proctor would not have liked anything of the kind, and that Lady Hartletop would have liked it still less. Besides, Richard is not much more than a boy."

"I suspect you and I thought ourselves a good deal more than boys at his age. He's twenty-four, if I am not mistaken, and a right good fellow; not in the least like his brother. That is a young man I don't quite make out. He showed a good deal more curiosity about his father's business matters, while Proctor was ill, than I approved of. His affectionate anxiety to ascertain whether all his 'temporal affairs' were settled, so that he might not have any 'mental disquietude,' struck me unpleasantly; in fact, I believe him to have been simply fishing to find out whether his father had made a will. Of course I did not understand him. He was anxious to know when you would return; and no doubt he will ask you the question point-blank."

"If he does, I shall give him a very unpleasing answer."

The next day I happened to see both the brothers. I have not said much about them, and may as well sketch them here. Bernard was remarkably like his father in face; not ill-looking, but sullen in expression, and lacking the openness and gaiety that rendered his younger brother attractive. He had never taken to anything more arduous in the way of work, than was implied in his having joined a militia regiment; and he lived at home for the most part, and, as was pretty freely said of him, waiting for a dead man's shoes. Richard also lived at home, but he had early developed a taste for art, to the astonishment of his father, to whom all the arts were alike incomprehensible, and to the delight of his mother, who chiefly understood them as sure safe occupations, which need not necessarily part mothers from their sons. After a prolonged tour in Italy, he had returned to the old town,

which has always had a peculiar charm and inspiration for painters. Between the brothers there was but little intimacy, as there was no resemblance; each went his separate way.

The elder brother called at our office, and very soon let me see that Mr. Nimmo had been correct in his surmise.

"My father has had a bad illness," he said, "and I don't believe he is so much better as he and my mother think. By no means out of the wood yet; and of course it would be well that his affairs should be all in order."

"I never knew a time when your father's affairs were not in order," was my curt reply to this speech, and it disconcerted him for the moment. He rallied quickly, however, and asked me the point-blank question I expected.

"That is satisfactory," he said, "and no doubt it includes future arrangements. I conclude you have drawn up my father's will?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Bernard," I answered, "if I decline to inform you on that point. You are of course not aware of it, but it is the custom among lawyers never to answer questions of the kind."

"Indeed! I was not aware of it. Have you had a pleasant trip?" And the object of Mr. Bernard's call was not again referred to. We spoke of Richard, and the grudging nature of the elder brother came out strongly then.

"He is constantly at Lady Hartletop's," said Mr. Bernard, "making a fool of himself about the girl; as he has done ever since the day he picked her up, and I caught her pony; which, by-the-bye, was much the more difficult feat of the two. It's no business of mine, if they all think it all right, as I suppose they do, or Lady Hartletop would not have him there. Richard is the only man who visits at her house, and my father and mother are as much in love with Miss Hartletop, to all appearance, as he is. Everyone to his taste; it is a queer one, to my mind."

"Don't you admire the young lady?"

"No, not particularly. She's well enough, but she is a mere child, has no manners, and no money. Besides, the daughter of a disreputable bankrupt, though he was a baronet, and a foreign woman, whom nobody knows anything about, is not the sort of person I should have thought my father would have liked even his younger son to marry."

He gave me a quick but searching glance

here; I was, however, prepared for and I baffled it.

"I cannot defend Sir Frederick's memory, but Lady Hartletop is one of the most estimable women I ever knew, and I cannot agree with you on a single point, except that there's no money on the lady's side; and, do you know, I am rather surprised Lady Hartletop should like it—if it is really to be—because she was always so proud in all her poverty, and so exclusive; and you know it is your father's boast that he is a self-made man, and has no notion who his grandfather was."

"Yes, he talks like that, and I am very much of his way of thinking. Ancestry is rubbish, but respectability, just one generation back, is not. Richard has that advantage over Miss Hartletop at all events, though her ladyship would not see it in that light. You have hit her off pretty correctly, but not quite. If I, instead of Richard, had been in question, she would have been in a fine fluster on the problematical-grandfather head; but she believes in art, and its 'aristocracy,' and is quite satisfied, because Richard daubs canvas, and sees more than bricks and mortar in an old house, and more than so much timber in an old tree. It is to be hoped he will be able to make something of it by-and-by. It has only cost money up to the present; but, of course, my father grudges nothing to Richard."

"I should not have thought he grudged anything to you."

I could not help saying this; there was such ill-will in the young man's tone, and such greed in his cold eyes.

"I never said he did," was the sullen reply; "but there's a difference when one is an eldest son." Very little more was said, and after office hours I went to pay my respects to Lady Hartletop. At her house, I found Richard Proctor studying, in Miss Sybilla's company, the effects of the sunset. The young people looked very handsome and very happy, and Lady Hartletop seemed to have wakened up to a new interest in life. Richard Proctor and I always liked each other's society, though we were on different levels in life, and we walked away from the house together. He gave me some details of his father's illness, and added that he was very glad I had returned, as his father had repeatedly said he wanted to see me.

"I believe," said Richard smiling, "he thinks Mr. Charles, as he always calls him, knows nothing about business, and

that you are the real, original, and only genuine Nimmo."

"He is so accustomed to me," I replied, "he associates me with his business matters since long before they were the important affairs they are now. But, have you not a little business of your own to talk to me about? I think you have."

"Ah," said Richard, with a pleasant embarrassment, which became his handsome manly face right well, "someone has been talking to you already. There's nothing settled, you know, only we—we understand each other. It's wonderful, isn't it, that Lady Hartleup should be satisfied with a nobody like me, and that such a girl should like me?"

I did not think either circumstance very extraordinary, but it was pleasant to see the real humility of true love in the young man, and I did not contradict him. They had not said anything to his father, yet, it appeared, on account of his illness, but his mother knew all about it.

"And she, God bless her!" continued Richard, "has no doubt it will all come right, though he will not take it quite as she does. When he is all perfectly well again, she is going to speak to him herself."

The further plans of the joyful young lover were as vague as such plans usually are. They included nothing positive except perfect happiness, and the resolution to achieve an independence.

Among the business communications of the following morning, was a request from Mr. Proctor that I would call on him in the course of the day. I did so, and found him so much changed in appearance since I had last seen him, that I felt anything but certain that his convalescence was so far advanced as his family believed it to be. He was thin, shrunken, and many years older in appearance, and the hard concentration of his expression had given place to a peevish feebleness. He received me in the small room on the ground-floor of the spacious and handsome house, in which the Proctors had now resided for many years; a dingy, but comfortable apartment, which had been exempted from the "new-fangling" that he freely permitted in every other part of the house. Mr. Proctor occupied his invariable well-stuffed red-morocco-covered arm-chair, but he could no longer be said to fill it. He scanned my countenance with that curious and always ominous eagerness of a sick man, to detect the real impression

made by his appearance, and said, as he sank back in his chair with a sigh:

"You did not expect to find me so out of it, did you, Forrest?" Then he added testily:

"I did not send for you to waste your time in discussing my looks however; I'm glad to see you again. And now we'll get to business."

We did get to business, of the kind I had been accustomed to transact with him for years, but I felt all the time that this was not the real purpose for which he had summoned me—that there was more behind. When the ostensible matters were disposed of, I said something about leaving Mr. Proctor, but he begged me to remain, and then, with a manifest effort, said:

"I wanted to tell you that I had done, some time ago, what you advised, though I have never liked to talk about it. I made my will last winter."

"Indeed, I am glad to hear it. That is a precaution a wise man never neglects."

"I can't say I liked doing it. You may call it an ignorant prejudice if you like, but I can't get over it. However, it is done, and now I want you to look over it for me, and see that it is all right. I should have asked you to draw it up for me, only that I could not bear to talk about it, and so I drew it up myself."

He opened a drawer in the writing-table at his elbow—the key was attached to his watch-chain—and took out the document. Its contents were very brief, and it was duly attested. As I read the lines, which only covered one side of a sheet of foolscap, Mr. Proctor observed me with the closest attention; so much so as to deprive me to some extent of my usual self-possession. I could not help glancing off the paper and up at him; and in doing so I saw something which made me start. Mr. Proctor's armchair and writing-table were divided from the back of the room by a large screen; just beyond it, a few feet from the fireplace, there was a door, opening from a passage, by which the room could be approached from the basement storey; and on the opposite wall, exactly on a line with the doorway, hung an old-fashioned convex mirror. The top of the screen was about two inches less than the height of the door, which opened away from it, and was of solid mahogany, very close fitting and well hung. As my eyes were raised to Mr. Proctor's face, they caught sight of the faintest possible movement of this door, seen above the screen top, and, at the same moment, of the

diminutive reflection of a figure in the mirror on my right, which was out of Mr. Proctor's line of sight. The whole thing passed in an instant, so quickly that it might have been a fancy, but that, keeping my eyes fixed on the door, I observed a second slight movement as it noiselessly closed.

"If you will allow me, I'll just see that the door on that side is shut," I said, and going towards it very quickly, threw it open. The passage, which was a long one, and lighted by a large glass-door giving on a flower garden at the end, was empty, and the garden-door appeared to be shut. A little sprig of stephanotis, lying on the crimson cloth covering of the passage, half-way down, was the only object to be seen. I returned to my place, and resumed the perusal of Mr. Proctor's will.

"Is it, or is it not all right?" he asked impatiently.

"It is in perfectly legal form," I answered slowly, "nothing could be more clear or explicit; but, I confess its provisions surprise me. I should have thought you would have been sure to make an eldest son, as it is called, of Mr. Bernard. But that is no business of mine. This"—I handed it to him as I spoke—"is a perfectly valid will."

"Had I not better let you have a copy of it?"

"Just as you like. There is no occasion, but it is easily done. Shall I take it with me?"

The document was in his hand, and he had half extended it towards me, when he drew it back, and replaced it in the drawer.

"No," he said, "not now. I will think over it, and take it to you to-morrow or next day. I'm going out if it's fine; I am tired of being cooped up here."

Then, seeing that I intended to go away without any further comment, he added uneasily:

"You do not approve of what I have done. There's no injustice, however; a man has a right to do as he likes with his own."

"Within bounds, yes. It is not so much that I don't approve, as that I don't understand the motive of your will. However, as I said before, that is not my business."

"Come, come, Forrest, you and I have been friends for too many years for you to come the mere lawyer over me now. I will tell you why I have made a will so

unlike what you expected. It is because I have found out, too late, that there are better things in the world than money, and that there is nothing worse than the inordinate love of it, such love of it as Bernard's for instance, that makes him grudge me the few years I have to live, and hate his brother because he is to have a share of the money I made by industry, which he is incapable of. A share! yes, such a share as Bernard little thinks of shall Richard have, my fine-hearted boy! I've worked hard in my time for what my son grudges me now; and if it could not buy me rank and position, that did not matter to me; I did not want them. At all events, I am not bound as men are who have those things, and I can do, as I said before, as I like with my own."

His face was quite strange to me while he spoke thus; the passion in him routed the commonplace, even in his appearance.

"Have you considered that this disposition of your property will put ill-will between your sons?"

"Not more than exists already—that is to say, on Bernard's side; there's none on Richard's, and never will be. I know the boy well. I have been studying him closely when he knew nothing about it, and I can trust him. His brother grudges him all I give him already. Am I to make no difference between the son who is the pride of my life, and the son who is its great disappointment?"

This was a strong argument, and I had none ready to oppose to it, even if I had felt more strongly than I did on the subject. I saw that Mr. Proctor was growing excited, and I took leave of him. In the hall I met Mrs. Proctor and her son Richard; and while I was saying a few words to them, Bernard came in by the front entrance, the door being open.

"Here are the flowers you wanted," he said, addressing his mother; "the conservatory is almost bare;" and he handed to Mrs. Proctor a bouquet, in which some sprigs of stephanotis were conspicuous. Bernard hardly noticed my presence, but turned abruptly into the dining-room, and presently Mrs. Proctor and Richard drove away in a little pony-carriage, and I also left the house. I was very busy for two or three days after this, and I hardly thought of Mr. Proctor and his will; but in a subsequent leisure moment I recurred to it, and was disposed to believe that, as I had heard no more of the document, he had changed his mind. Its provisions

were very simple; they merely constituted Richard Proctor the sole heir to all the property of every kind, of which the testator should be in possession at the time of his death, and charged him with the payment to his brother of an annuity of four hundred pounds. A similar sum had been previously secured to Mrs. Proctor by settlement; and beyond a strong, but, as the testator expressed it, "unnecessary" recommendation of her to the care of her son Richard, there was no mention of her. The testator added that in case an opportunity for the purchase of Hartle-top Hall should arise, he wished his son Richard to buy the place. There was not a word of explanation. The man, though strangely ignorant in many ways, was shrewd, and he wrote nothing that could lead to his will being impugned as a malicious act.

"Forrest," said Mr. Nimmo, as he entered my room, with precipitation very unusual to him, "here's bad news from the Proctors. Mr. Proctor has had a stroke of apoplexy, and is dying."

He died that same afternoon, without having recovered consciousness. The first intimation I received of the event, in my business capacity, was a formal letter from Bernard Proctor, in which he inquired whether our office was in possession of any will or other document, which it would be necessary to consult in reference to the arrangements for the funeral. To this we replied that no such document was in our custody. I, of course, knew that the will which I had read did not contain any instructions of the kind. I heard that Mrs. Proctor was in great grief, and that Lady Hartle-top and her daughter remained almost entirely with her. Knowing what good news there was in store for pretty Miss Sybilla and her lover, and also for her mother, I was glad to know that they were all meriting it by their sympathy with the poor widow, and their gentle tendance of her. Next came an invitation to Mr. Proctor's funeral, and an intimation that my presence, and that of Mr. Nimmo, were requested after the interment, for the purpose of arranging pressing business connected with the late event. During the week I did not see either of the young men, but I caught sight of Miss Sybilla Hartle-top, looking properly serious, although very pretty, as she was executing some commissions in the town.

The appointed day arrived, and the funeral took place. Without being a

popular man, Mr. Proctor had gained the respect of the community, and his funeral was largely attended. I saw Bernard Proctor for the first time since his father's death, standing beside the grave; and he saw me. I traced in his aspect something which was not sorrow, nor the affectation of sorrow, but an intense pre-occupation. At the conclusion of the funeral service he stood quite still, apparently unconscious that it had terminated, until his brother touched him on the arm, when he started and walked away without looking at Richard.

Two hours later, Mr. Nimmo and I were ushered into the room in which I had last seen Mr. Proctor. It had the painfully orderly look with which we are all acquainted on similar occasions; the screen was folded and placed in a corner, the arm-chair and writing-table were in their accustomed places, but there were no papers, books, or signs of the ordinary occupations of life in the place that should know its former owner no more. The early autumnal afternoon was chilly, a fire burned in the grate; the servant set chairs for us near to the fireplace and withdrew. After a few moments, Bernard Proctor entered the room by the second door, which I have before described as opposite to the convex mirror upon the wall, and almost simultaneously Richard came in by the other. After a few words of course, Bernard Proctor seated himself in his father's armchair, in exactly the same place that Mr. Proctor had occupied during my last interview with him, and Richard stood by the fire with his hand on the back of my chair.

"We have sent for you, gentlemen," said Bernard Proctor, abruptly, and not directing his glance towards either of us, "to inform you that, unless there be some mistake, and a will exists among the papers of our late father which are in your keeping, he has died intestate. There is no will here."

"No, indeed," said Richard; "every part of the house has been searched, and there is not anything of the kind. My mother, too, is confident that my poor father never made a will."

Though he was careful not to look near me, I detected an irrepressible gleam of triumph in the face of Bernard Proctor.

"As we know nothing about law," Richard went on, "and my father, as you know, Mr. Forrest"—he touched me lightly on the shoulder—"kept all his business

matters strictly between himself and yourself, and not even my mother knows anything about them, we thought it better to have this matter cleared up at once."

"Is it perfectly certain that there is no will among the papers in your keeping?"

It was Bernard who asked the question, and he addressed it to Mr. Nimmo, who, evidently annoyed by his tone, replied shortly:

"It is quite certain, sir."

"No will can be found in this house. It is therefore plain that my father never made one; and my brother and I wish to ascertain the exact legal position in which we stand. My mother is provided for by settlement."

A certain pomposity came into his manner towards the close of this speech, which increased my distaste towards the young man.

"I beg your pardon," I said, forestalling Mr. Nimmo, who was about to speak, "but you go too fast. Mr. Proctor did make a will, and I am acquainted with its contents; for I read the document in this room, at his request, ten days ago. It was duly signed and attested by two witnesses, who are no doubt forthcoming, and was dated less than a year ago."

I looked straight at Bernard Proctor while I spoke those words, and saw him turn pale in spite of a strong effort.

"Indeed!" he said quickly, "a very strange statement, Mr. Forrest; but if you really saw the will, there's nothing for it but to accept the fact, and to conclude that my father afterwards destroyed it."

"Who were the witnesses?" The question was Richard's.

"John Jenkins and Bartholomew Jenkins."

"The gardener and his son, who went to America in the spring!" exclaimed Richard; "great favourites with my poor father they were. The very two he would have selected if he did not want a thing talked about."

"He had an objection to making a will," said I, "and it cost him a great effort. If he destroyed the one which I read, some very powerful motive, produced by some extraordinary circumstance, must have induced him to do so. May I ask whether anything unusual occurred just before his seizure—within the three preceding days, I mean?"

"Nothing at all," answered Richard, "on the contrary, he seemed more cheerful than usual."

"Excuse me, if I ask a question which does not seem to be justified; but this is a serious matter. Was any communication made to him which could have changed his feelings towards you, or even made him feel temporary annoyance?"

"I know what you mean," Richard answered promptly, with his usual frankness; "and you are quite right to ask the question. We had said nothing to him respecting my hope of becoming Miss Hartletop's husband, but my mother, finding him so well and so cheerful, had made up her mind to speak to him about it on the very day of his seizure."

"Then it is very difficult to conceive what can have induced him to destroy his will. He had made it, to my knowledge, after long and mature deliberation, and was even unwilling to re-peruse it, when I suggested that he should do so before sending it to our office to be copied. However, I suppose it must be accepted, Mr. Bernard, as you say so, that the will has been destroyed."

Again I spoke very slowly, and looked full at him.

"It must be accepted that a will was in existence," he replied, with unbridled insolence, "as you say so, Mr. Forrest."

"Precisely so; but I think I can jog your memory sufficiently to induce it to recall something corroborative of my distinct recollection in this matter."

"My memory—I don't know what you mean. I know nothing about it."

"Oh yes, I think you do—I think you do. I was reading your father's will, he sat opposite to me, where you are sitting now, and in the same chair, when you opened that door yonder—it's capitally hung, and it makes no noise—and pushed it just sufficiently open to hear our voices, and to see, in the mirror there"—I pointed to it—"what we were doing. I could see your face for a moment before you withdrew, very discreetly, not to disturb a business interview in which you had not been asked to take part." He was more than pale now; he was livid, and he gripped the arms of his chair with savage force. But he did not speak; I think he could not.

"I looked after you, but you had withdrawn so quickly in your great discretion, that you were out of sight; there was no trace of you but this sprig of stephanotis lying on the carpet. I idly picked it up and put it in my pocket-book, as a little bit of circumstantial—shall I say evidence,

or detail? Your brother will probably remember that, when I joined him and your mother in the hall, you were just coming in with a nosegay from the hot-house, chiefly of stephanotis."

"In heaven's name, what does all this mean?" asked Richard, looking from me to his brother in amazement.

"Mean, my dear Mr. Richard! It merely means that Mr. Bernard had forgotten the little incident, which might have cleared up all doubt in his mind as to the existence of a will, but which, of course, does not aid us in the least in arriving at a conclusion as to what has become of the document."

Richard made no reply; he turned his back on his brother, laid his arm on the chimneypiece, leaned his head on his hand, and kept silence during the remainder of the scene.

Bernard Proctor literally gasped with rage, as I turned the withered twig about in my fingers, and affected to look closely at it. Mr. Nimmo looked at us both in bewilderment.

"Go on, sir, go on!" Bernard stammered; "I don't know what you are driving at, but go on. If you know so much about this will, you know what it contained."

"Perfectly," I replied, "but it is no part of my duty to tell what I know on that point. The knowledge was imparted to me in confidence; the document has been destroyed, presumably by the framer of it. His desires and intentions can therefore no longer be in question, the communication of them to me remains a confidential one, and I shall certainly not violate that trust."

"Enough of this, sir," said Bernard, violently; he had rallied from his brief panic. "We do not require to know any of your scruples, we demand from Mr. Nimmo his professional opinion upon our legal position under the circumstances of my father's having died intestate."

"I am very sorry, gentlemen," said Mr. Nimmo, with firmness, "to be present on so painful an occasion. I should prefer to have a little time to think over the matter; I could not answer such a question offhand."

He rose while speaking, with an air of decided leave-taking. Still, Richard Proctor did not turn his head or make a sign.

"It ought not to be so difficult for an experienced lawyer," said Bernard, "and

it is very unpleasant for us that there should be any delay."

"There need not be a moment's," said I, "if Mr. Nimmo will permit me to answer your question for him." Mr. Nimmo made a gesture of assent; Bernard Proctor rose, and took one step nearer to me; only Richard made no sign.

"Your position is a very painful and unfortunate one, Mr. Bernard Proctor," I continued, "you are absolutely dependent on your brother, being entitled to no share whatever in your father's property, he having died intestate."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Bernard, with an oath. Richard raised his head and listened, still standing with his back to us.

"Precisely what I say. Your father's will made such a division of his property as he thought right; that will has been destroyed; and, as he never would invest his money in securities, it is all in what is technically termed real property. He was not aware, and doubtless you are not aware, that the custom of borough-English prevails in Ipswich, as it does in many other towns in England. The meaning of that custom is that, on the death of an intestate, the real property goes to the youngest son. You are much to be pitied, Mr. Bernard Proctor; it is very unfortunate that your father's will was destroyed."

"It's false!" he gasped, almost inarticulate with rage; "it's false! There's no such infamous law, or if there is I'll fight it in every court in the kingdom! It's a vile plot between you and my brother; you were always confederates."

For all reply I made him a bow, and accompanied it by a slow and deliberate shrug of my shoulders. My feeling at the moment was, that anything which might befall him would be a great deal too good for Bernard Proctor.

"Now, Mr. Nimmo, I am at your service."

So saying, and without any reference to Richard, I was about to follow Mr. Nimmo, who had gained the door by which we had entered, when Bernard Proctor, pushing away the armchair so that it spun round upon its castors, rushed out of the room by the other door, thus leaving me alone with Richard. The young man turned to me with a very pale and wobegone face.

"Did he destroy the will?"

"I fear he did."

"Is all that you say true?"

"Quite true. All that your father died possessed of is yours by law."

"But by right? By his wish?"

"Come to me to-morrow, and I will talk to you about that. I will not stay longer now."

Mr. Nimmo and I walked a good way in silence. At length he broke it by saying: "That's a bad fellow."

"A thoroughly bad fellow; and his father knew it. He has defeated himself effectually, however."

"Evidently; though I cannot judge of that as well as you, not knowing the particulars. Oddly enough, it is the first time I have seen borough-English in action within my own experience, and I must say I consider this an example of its wholesomeness."

Bernard Proctor left Ipswich that same night, and was never again seen in the town. He did try to fight the case as he had threatened, but he had an honest man for his adviser than the adviser had for his client, and the suit never saw the dubious daylight of a court of law. When Richard pressed me for my advice as to what he ought to do for his brother, in spite of his ill conduct, I told him what had been the provision made for Bernard by his father before this latest development of his character, and Richard decided that he would carry out that intention. The first shock of the occurrence to Mrs. Proctor was great; but I believe she was secretly relieved by Bernard's absence, and had suffered much from the tyrannous greed of her eldest son.

We do not speak of him to the family who live at Hartletop Hall, where Lady Hartletop has her former rooms—very different now, and echoing to the patter of little feet and the sound of childish laughter, for her ladyship's grandchildren are numerous and noisy—but we hear of him at Ipswich from time to time. He is a very prosperous man; having induced Richard, five years after their father's death, to give him a large lump sum in lieu of his annuity, and forthwith departed to the West Indies, where he engaged in trade and married the richest and ugliest heiress in the region. He is much more wealthy than Richard Proctor, and, as he is childless, he has taken testamentary precaution against the possibility of his brother's coming in for any portion of his property; a proceeding which exactly meets Richard's views also. So

there is some sort of harmony between the estranged brothers; and I think I have proved that there was more romance about money than about love, in one case within my knowledge, at all events.

WHITEHOOF.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

I HAVE dined well in my time—perhaps as often as most men; but I never, in all my life, dined better than at The Braccialletto d'Oro. Judged by an artistic standard, the food was bad, the cookery was worse, and the wine of worseness double distilled. But I had brought with me a plentiful supply of hunger-sauce, and I had mixed the bad wine with the best spirits in the world.

Is love quite so incompatible with appetite as is conventionally assumed? If so, I was not in love; which is absurd. It was impossible to know Lucy Nugent without being in love; as impossible as to have ridden all the way from Foggia to The Golden Bracelet without being hungry, even though I had not seen Lucy for four whole years.

Yes: it was all that long while since she had gone off to her brother at Madrapore. Sometimes it felt like forty whole long years, sometimes like only yesterday, since we had said good-bye to one another down at Greenham, and had meant—well, a great deal more. Dick Nugent and I had been college friends, and it was at breakfast in his rooms in Trinity that I first met Lucy. Of course, it was in the May term, the season of boats and bonnets, when—but it made me old to think of it. In two years from that breakfast-party we had agreed that we might never marry, but that, if we ever did, I, George Vining, would have no wife but Lucy Nugent, Lucy Nugent would have no husband but George Vining.

But why should we ever have contemplated, in the face of such an agreement, the bare chance of our never being married at all? We had not contemplated it six months before. It might be some years before we could afford a house of our own, for Lucy's father was but vicar of Greenham—which was no prize—and I had just enough wherewith to live in chambers and go circuit, and not a penny more. Still, that does not mean hopelessness—Love conquers all. But all at once,

and without warning, came clouds, and out of the clouds came storms. Lucy's father died, without leaving a penny behind him. And, as fortune would have it, within one month of his death a political panic, for which I was in no wise answerable, reduced my own means to about a quarter of what was necessary to enable me to live at all. Then Dick Nugent wrote to his sister to come out to him at Madrapore. And there was no help for it—she had to go.

There was one comfort, only one. Madrapore is a very lonely station, and Lucy was not likely to console herself with a pundit or a rajah. Her brother, I knew, was the only Englishman, civil or military, within a district as large as Yorkshire. But her brother was not likely to spend all his days at Madrapore; he would be promoted or transferred; and the fullest trust did not prevent its being an article of faith with me that, wherever Lucy was, were it in Juan Fernandez, there would the eagles be gathered to wrest from me my beautiful quarry. No, the comfort that can be drawn from the departure to the farthest and remotest corner of Hindostan of the girl one loves is small indeed. And what grain of hope remained? None!

Fool that I was not to have been a reading man! A fellowship would have pulled me through—if Lucy could have waited some dozen years. With a sore heart, and after a hard fight—I may take credit for that—I made up my mind that the woosack was not for me. I need not recall the anxious days and nights I spent in making up my mind. It is enough that I decided as many have done before me. There is wool in the world besides that which stuffs the seat of the Lord Chancellor. I realised my capital, and took passage for Adelaide, South Australia. I had seen sheep at Greenham, so their look on the Murray River would not be altogether strange.

I was to leave Europe at Brindisi: and that is how I came to be riding south-east from Foggia through the Basilicata. And I think that, however hungry a man may be, he can hardly take his last ride in Europe without thinking of her whom he loved best at home in England, and still loves best in all the world.

And so I dined infamously well at The Golden Bracelet, and called for my horse and my bill.

"Instantly, eccellenza," said the girl who had waited upon me, and who had

hitherto represented to me the entire staff of The Golden Bracelet. She was unquestionably handsome, after the style of the Basilicata; tall, broad-shouldered, with arms that looked strong enough to knock a man down, and eyes black and bright enough to kill him. Her complexion was brown, her hair coal-black, and her name Tessa.

At least I had always understood that "subito," in Italian, means "instantly." But I presently found reason to change my opinion. Or, if it meant "instantly" through Italy in general, it bore another meaning in the Basilicata; or, at any rate, at The Golden Bracelet and with Tessa.

I had been dining in a rude kind of verandah covered with vine-leaves. As I emptied the bottle, I looked out across the country, and saw that the sun was lower than he ought to be, if I wished to reach Melfi by light of day. I rang with my knife on the rim of my glass.

"Tessa!"

"Subito, eccellenza—subito!" came from somewhere. And then I waited about twice as long as before.

I was about to tinkle on the glass with double energy, when,

"Eccellenza!" said another voice, just behind my left shoulder.

It was not Tessa's: hers was deep for a woman, but this was deep for a man. And it had a peculiar quality of its own—smooth, yet harsh, like the polished courtesy of a rough nature. I started, and looked round. The voice belonged to a splendid specimen of the peasant of the Southern Apennines—tall and broad, as strong as a bull, and as lithe as a deer, with a face that might have been justly immortalised in marble for its classical beauty. Tessa's black eyes were but a poor imitation of this man's, which, even in their present repose, seemed to flash and burn out of depths beyond all northern knowledge. He was dressed roughly, and not above his apparent station, but yet with an air that would have done him credit if he had been a prince instead of a peasant of the Basilicata. He was bare-headed, and held a flask in his hand—one of those delightful Italian wine-flasks, in which I could see the richest amber wine through the rushes.

"A thousand pardons, eccellenza. I am—I am the host of The Braccialeto d'Oro."

He drew himself up as he spoke; and I thought I had never seen such a specimen of a landlord in all my days, and never

would again. There was nothing of the landlord about the handsome Hercules who sold bad wine at The Bracelet of Gold.

"And I crave ten thousand pardons, eccellenza, because I have, until half an hour ago, been away from home. I learn from Tessa, who is a fool, that your excellency has dined; and I know but too well that he who depends upon Tessa dines ill. I cannot, even for the credit of The Golden Bracelet, invite your excellency to dine a second time—though there is some fish, and a lamb, that I have brought in with me, and that would tempt San Gennaro to make the Carnival longer by a day. But your excellency shall not at least have dined without wine. Ecco—Lacrima Cristi—and the best of it!" and, with a dexterous twist, he had tossed out the thimbleful of oil that did duty for a cork, and had filled a glass before I could say yes or no.

I did not say no, for, not to speak of manners, the wine was indeed of the very finest sort of the very finest kind.

I poured out a glass for my host, and a second for myself.

"It is sublime," I said. "And now let me have my horse"—I could not say "my bill" to such a prince among hosts—"and subito, subito, if you please."

"Your excellency's horse?"

"If you please."

"Impossible, eccellenza!"

"Why, what is the matter? Is anything wrong?"

"Only that in two hours it will be sunset, eccellenza."

"What, in two hours? Then I must be off indeed. I must be in Melfi before nightfall."

"Your excellency cannot be in Melfi before nightfall."

"But I must be. Why?"

"Because, eccellenza, no man can be in two places at once; so it is clear you will not be in Melfi if you sleep at The Golden Bracelet."

"But if I do not sleep at The Golden Bracelet?"

"Then, eccellenza, you will sleep—in the grave."

"What, in the name of nonsense, do you mean?"

"It is no nonsense, eccellenza. You are an Englishman."

"True. But Englishmen are not in the habit of going to bed in graves, until they die."

"But you will die. Drink, eccellenza."

And he poured me out another glass of the Lacrima Cristi.

I threw myself back in my chair. "Will you kindly tell me what you mean? And you had better help me with the flask while you do. I am pressed for time, and your wine is too good to drink alone."

"Thank you, eccellenza. If you stay at The Golden Bracelet, I can find you better still. Surely your excellency has heard of Piedebianco?"

"Never. But if you are going to tell me it is better than Lacrima Cristi, I tell you beforehand that I will not believe."

"Piedebianco is not a wine, eccellenza."

"What is it, then?"

"A brigand."

"Oh!" And I hummed the first bars of "Agnese la Zitella."

I suppose there was something a little contemptuous in my manner, for he frowned.

"He is not one of those who keep for ransom. His rule is: A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and Dead men tell no tales."

"Indeed! Yes, I have heard of brigands; I have read of them in the newspapers, and seen them at the opera. But, somehow, I don't think I am likely to meet them on the road to Melfi."

"One always meets Piedebianco when it is not likely; that is his way."

"You seem to know his ways very well."

"He takes care of that, eccellenza. Ask in Foggia, ask in Ascoli, ask in Naples itself, what are the ways of Piedebianco. San Gennaro! I would as soon think of riding alone, after sunset, between Ascoli and Melfi, as I would—as I would of drinking that vinegar, eccellenza. No, you may not meet with Piedebianco; but then you may meet with La Santissima, and that would be worse still."

"And who is La Santissima?"

"His wife, eccellenza. He rides a brown horse with one white fetlock; that is why they call him Piedebianco. He has a wife, who is a devil; that is why they call her La Santissima. They go mostly together; but sometimes one meets one of them alone. And I would rather meet La Santissima than Piedebianco, and Piedebianco rather than la Santissima. And I would sooner meet them alone than together, and together than alone."

"Many thanks. It is all very interesting indeed. And now I will have my horse, if you please." I suggested the bill by

taking out my purse—which, for the first time in my life, was well filled.

"Pardon," said the host of The Golden Bracelet. "I will not be answerable, eccellenza."

"You will not bring my horse—have it brought, I mean?"

"Ten thousand pardons. No, eccellenza."

"Then I must get him myself; that is all. And pay yourself, please," I said, throwing down a piece of gold on the table, with all the improvidence of a man who carries his whole capital with him. "I have lost too much time already, and, Piedebianco or no Piedebianco, I must be at Melfi to-night, and at Brindisi to-morrow. The P. and O. won't wait for Piedebianco, nor even for La Santissima."

Some of my readers may think that even those extra glasses of *Lacrima Cristi* were not reason enough for going on with my journey so late in the afternoon, after all I had heard; but I had good reasons, nevertheless—or, at least, what seemed to myself to be good reasons at the time. First and foremost, I did not believe in Whitehoof, as I mentally translated Piedebianco. Brigands at large in the Basilicata! They lingered still in Sicily, I knew; but I also knew that Il Re Galantuomo had rooted them out from the mainland long ago, for good and all. Nor even at Foggia, not so far away, had I heard one word of gossip about either Whitehoof or about his wife. It was plain, I thought, how the land lay. It was not every day that a little country locanda, like The Golden Bracelet, got the benefit of an English traveller; who, of course, was a milord, with a million pounds sterling in his pocket. All is fair in love, war, and trade, and a little brigand-romance would not be a lie if it had the effect of keeping a guest a second day, or even one night more. And, above all, it was necessary, if I did not wish to lose my passage, to reach Melfi that night, in order that I might sail from Brindisi the next day but one. And, lastly, I doubt if there is any man so strong-minded, at six-and-twenty, as to say: "Very well; I will not go on because I am afraid." And, honestly, I did not believe in brigands, and therefore had no reason to be afraid.

I put down the gold piece so quickly because I thought, I hardly know why, that my host, if he had the wish to detain me, might, unless I hurried, play some trick with the horse I had hired at Foggia.

I certainly had no help in getting off, either from him or from Tessa.

As I led my horse past the verandah, my host was looking out across the country, shading his eyes with his hand.

"Addio!" I said, as I mounted. "And if any friend of mine wants to know what *Lacrima Cristi* means, I shall send him to The Braccialeto d'Oro."

"A rivederci, eccellenza. I shall expect to see your excellency again in two hours."

"What—you still think I shall not reach Melfi to-night?"

"I am sure of it, eccellenza."

"And that I shall spend the night here?"

"Yes. Unless——"

"Unless?"

"Unless you spend it with Piedebianco."

"If his wine is half as good as yours I shall not complain. Addio!"

"A rivederci, eccellenza; if Piedebianco——"

I was getting sick of the name; and so I left the shelter of The Golden Bracelet, with Piedebianco in my ears.

Though a little late for starting, it was still a clear and cloudless afternoon when I renewed the pleasure of feeling myself again a free horseman on an unknown road. It was the first time I had been in Italy. And though I—we—had once dreamed of an Italian tour in another fashion, still, perhaps at least one man in every hundred will agree with me that mine was the best and pleasantest way of seeing a new country, and of letting at any rate one's heart take a holiday. By the time I had left The Golden Bracelet half a mile behind, I had forgotten the very name of Whitehoof, much more that of La Santissima. I was reckoning whether the Thames or the Murray is the nearer to Madrapore; not that it mattered, when both alike were removed by a life to come from where Lucy was, unless indeed she had found her way to Calcutta by now. Every step my horse made led me nearer to her in distance, farther away in time.

Such rides as this pass always through the heart of Dreamland. They are romances in themselves, even when the horseman does not carry his own dreams behind him. My horse, for an Italian hack, went well, but I let him—who would not?—drop into little better than a walk as I looked and lingered along the road. To north, south, and west were the mountains in the half-distance that form the spine of

Italy; in front, the fairly good road led over a broad undulating plain, on its way to the sea. The sun was moving towards the mountains, and already made my mounted shadow long before me. All was so wide, and bright, and open, that my spirits rose in spite of myself, and the wish almost turned into a thought that I was in truth a knight-errant, who might hope to win his heart's desire with his own good sword, in days when brigands might really be met with, and assistant-commissioners were wholly unknown.

Somehow the road from The Golden Bracelet to Melfi grew longer than I had expected. No doubt I had been going slower than I supposed. I gave another look at the receding Apennines before reminding my horse that I had hired him to trot and not to crawl. And a glorious sight they gave me. No cooped-up traveller knows the mysterious grays and the royal purple in which I saw them bathed as their points and ridges drew nearer to the sun. For some minutes I could not go on: I could only look and wonder. I doubt if such a glory of colouring is often seen, even there, where such a splendour happens not once in a lifetime, but every day, and is wasted upon the eyes of people like Tessa and her master. I, who had eyes to see, could not tear myself away or set my horse's head fairly towards Melfi. The gray whitened, the purple deepened, when—what was this? As if in an instant it had grown night, and the sun was gone.

I had forgotten the Southern suddenness of night, especially where mountains lie to westward. Happily for me, the road was plain enough and straight enough before me, or the host's prophecy about not reaching Melfi before next morning would have run a very fair chance of being fulfilled. Nevertheless it was awkward, even as things were. It is not so easy to ride after dark, on a hired horse, on an unfamiliar road, which might not chance to run straight to the end of the journey. I had lost every sort of reckoning as to how far I was from Melfi—it might be ten, or even fifteen miles more, for aught I knew. Who could have guessed that night would have come on so soon? I had counted on a long twilight, at least, and there had been none. For a whole minute I wished that I had stayed at The Golden Bracelet; for nearly half a minute I seriously thought of turning back. At any rate, I and my horse between us

would be able to retrace the road we had come. But even the half-minute's half-thought was unworthy a candidate for the bush. I pushed on.

Not since I left The Golden Bracelet had I met a human being. That was not strange; but I now wished for the unlikely good luck of asking how far it was to Melfi, and if I was for certain in the right road. Perhaps I might, after all, fall upon some farm or locanda, where I could make sure of my distance and my way.

Was it the night, or the road itself, that grew darker? I began, after awhile, to fancy the latter, but I could not tell. What made me fancy it the road was that the gloom appeared doubly opaque to left and right, as if I were passing between trees—or more likely rocks, since my horse's hoofs gave an echo. As I went on, listening to these double footfalls, and noticing how they seemed to come sometimes from before, sometimes from behind, I perceived another phenomenon about the echo—the farther on I rode, the nearer it seemed to come. Presently it gave up all pretence of coming from in front, and took to following only—harder, faster, nearer. It was easy to imagine that I was being pursued by another horseman, or by more than one.

I am not ashamed of having nerves, because I am not ashamed of being a man. It is nervous work, at best, to hear such echoes and not to see them. After a little I could not get it out of my head that the echo was not only an echo. I reined up—and it was not only an echo. The hoofs that followed me still came on, and at a quicker trot than mine had been.

Well—and what then? I had just been in need of a guide, and I needed one still. It was a public road, and all the horses in Italy had as much right to it as mine. Other people than I might have occasion to go to Melfi; and why should I let a nonsensical tale, that I did not believe, trouble my nerves? So I waited, and in less than a minute a real horse was beside mine, and a rough voice said, in some execrable South Italian patois:

“Good evening. Are you going to Melfi?”

My own Italian, such as it is, is Tuscan, or rather Dantesque, and the Basilicata dialect of my host of The Bracelet had puzzled me a little, though compared with this it had been pure. Still, I understood, and answered “Yes” only; there was a brusqueness and air of rough command

about the voice and the question, which seemed out of keeping with the patois of a contadino.

"It is a dark night."

"Very dark indeed. Is it far to Melfi?"

"Don't you know?"

"No. I am a stranger here. I left The Golden Bracelet about two hours ago."

"Ah!"

I don't know why, but I wished I had kept to my Yes, that I had not said I was a stranger, and that I had said nothing about The Golden Bracelet. My companion fell into silence, and so did I; but he made his horse keep pace with mine.

"Are you going to Melfi?" I asked at last, for the sake of saying something.

Before he answered, my ears, now beginning to grow quicker, caught yet another sound—the selfsame echo I had heard from before, and unmistakably following us from behind.

"And are you riding alone?" I asked again.

"Yes"—shortly and brusquely. "Are you?"

"Quite alone."

"Ah! Two are better than one. Not that I believe what they say. But still, after dark, it is best to be on the safe side."

"What do they say?"

"That there are more brigands than ever, since they were put down."

"You mean—Piedebianco?"

"Who?"

"Piedebianco."

"Perhaps so."

"La Santissima?"

"May be. You seem to know their names very well. Do you believe all these tales? Or half of them? But no—or you would not be riding here—alone."

"Then, for the same reason you don't believe them either," said I.

"The people are cowards. I don't mean you, because you are alone; unless you have nothing to lose?"

But that was just it—I had everything to lose; all I had in the world. Why should this strange specimen of a contadino ask if I had anything to lose? He did not believe in Piedebianco. But then I have always understood that the only man who did not believe in Cartouche was—Cartouche in person. And still that distinct echo followed from behind. Was it likely that there would be a third solitary and benighted horseman on the road to Melfi?

"That is true," said I. I have nothing to lose—except my way. Have you?"

Just then happened the loveliest sight of all—lovelier even than the mountain sunset which had beguiled me into this delay. The whitest of moons sailed out from behind the darkest of clouds, which she left edged with silver. She made the road as it led through the plain like a path in Fairyland. I saw then that at least half the darkness had been caused by a long and thick avenue of pines, which now stood out from the phantom night-mist at their feet like a forest of masts with black shrouds and green sails. A wind was rising, and curled the mist about into the likeness of a noiseless sea—utterly noiseless, but for the beat of our own horse-hoofs and for that goblin echo behind.

I looked at my companion; and did not like what I saw.

He was a very tall man in the very prime of life, wrapped from neck to ankle in a large black cloak with a hood. But I could tell that he was singularly broad of shoulder and long of limb. I should say—so far as the folds of his cloak did not hide all they covered—that, though inferior in symmetry to the host of The Golden Bracelet, it would be hard to say which would get the better if it came to a struggle between them. But there the likeness came to an end. Under a nondescript kind of hat, with a broad brim and a high crown, I saw a face, browned and tanned with wind and sun, which most assuredly would not have gratified a sculptor—especially if that sculptor had met it after dark on a lonely road. It was harsh-featured, with an expression half fierce, half sullen, or rather all fierce and all sullen at one and the same time. The expression could not be called precisely stupid, if only for the look of habitual power which always comes into the faces of those who command their fellow creatures. There was no mental force in this ill-looking contadino's heavy mouth and dull uncertain-coloured eyes. Over his upper lip was a short bristly moustache; his jaws and chin were covered by a thick and coarse brown beard, and his hair was cropped short—by the prison barber, I should have said, had he been an Englishman. And, from above one eye and right through one cheek-bone, was a long, villanous, scarlet scar. The man belonged to the voice, and the voice to the man.

Our eyes met in the moonlight, and, while we looked, I saw his right hand—he was on my near side—drop under his long cloak, he keeping his left hand on the

bridle, and never moving his dull eyes from mine. I thought I heard a click, like only one thing on earth—but I was not sure. And still the hoofs of the unseen horse beat on, nearer and nearer, from behind.

I did not let my look fall; but I saw something else without looking. He was mounted on a great brown horse, with one white fetlock.

I saw it all—fool that I had been! So much for my wisdom at The Bracelet of Gold. I had taken it for but a knavish hostelry; it was a house of call for highwaymen. It was doubtless there that the brigand had heard how an English milord, with a purse filled with notes and gold, was on the way to Melfi—alone. The host had done his duty to the law by warning me, and had doubtless, to follow, done his duty to his patrons by warning them; and I had, with my own lips, identified myself with him who was riding alone to Melfi, and had been dining at The Bracelet of Gold; and no doubt the *Lacrima Cristi* had been brought out, not to detain me for the paltry price of a bed, but to give me Dutch courage to reject it and to go on.

Yes, the trap was complete. According to the laws of sentiment, I should have been willing to die, since life with Lucy was not to be. According to the laws which rule real men, I drew out the revolver I had bought for the bush, and, before the brigand's right arm came out from the cloak—

"Piedebianco!" I said instinctively, and fired, and fired again.

Over went horse and man together. I heard a cry behind me, and the clattering of hoofs, which told me that the brigand was not alone. I made my hack from Foggia go as he had never gone before, keeping my remaining shots for the close quarters at odds that were likely enough to come. My hack from Foggia must have gone like the wind; the pursuit ceased, and, before I knew where I was, I had ridden into the midst of a company of Bersaglieri.

At first they took me for a madman, but when they found I was only an Englishman they were reassured.

The next day I was the hero of Melfi.

But who would be a hero? I have tried it, and I say, with all my heart, not I. I had killed Piedebianco, and all had been well that ended well, had that been all—if

the Southern Cross were not to sail from Brindisi next day.

I never studied Italian law; I can give no coherent account of visits to and from the *sotto-prefetto*, and the *sindaco*, and the rest; I do not know to this day whether I was myself in custody or no. I only know that every inhabitant of Melfi had something to do with the matter, and that I was not permitted to leave the town. So I had to put up at the hotel, by no means at free quarters, and submit to be lionised, as the English milord who had shot Piedebianco.

On the second day I rose at daybreak, and reflected that the Southern Cross was due to sail in two hours. Well, there was no help for it; she must sail, and I must make the best bargain I could with the company. The English milord who had shot Piedebianco managed to get a cup of coffee, and then, while waiting for his next interview with the *sotto-sotto-sindaco*, went into the courtyard of the inn.

Nothing was doing there; but suddenly I found myself face-to-face with—Piedebianco! whom I had left dead or dying on the road to Foggia.

I believed in brigands now only too well. But this was the ghost of one, unless all the stories of impudent brigandage I had ever read of in romances, or even in newspapers, were beggared by the impudence of Piedebianco, or Whitehoof, who walked into this very inn at Melfi as if it had been his own. Not for one moment was there any chance of mistaking the scoundrel; that villanous scarlet scar was alone enough to identify him at the antipodes, where I was not to go; and—sublimity of impudence—he was walking with the *sindaco*.

But—I must do him justice—he started when he saw me.

"There," he said suddenly to the *sindaco*, "that is the man!"

The *sindaco* rubbed his spectacles, and then his eyes, and then his spectacles again.

"Impossible, signor! That is the milord who shot Piedebianco. It is in the *procès verbal*, so it can't be otherwise." And he nodded at me as at an old acquaintance, of whom he was proud.

"Impossible or not," said Whitehoof, in his horrible patois, "that is the man. I saw him as close as I see you now; the moon was as bright as day. I bade him good evening, and asked if he was going to Melfi; for I thought, if he was, that a companion, where there was a chance of brigands—"

"There is no chance—" began the

sindaco, but stopped suddenly. Was there not before him the man who had killed Piedebianco, though now too bewildered by Piedebianco's impudence to say a word?

"— Where there was a chance of brigands would be as well. He evaded my question, and told me he was a stranger."

"You are not upon oath, signor."

"What—do you say one thing in Melfi when you don't swear and another when you do? Then he asked if I was riding alone. I chose to say Yes for reasons of my own. Then he began to talk about brigands by name, and I began to be glad I had been prudent enough to say I was alone. I told him I did not believe in them, nor did I, then. I fancied your law had been strong enough to sweep them away, since your king went to Rome. Then he asked if I had anything to lose. I had a great deal to lose; and when a ruffianly-looking fellow like that asked me in vile patois if I had anything to lose, I thought I had best cock my revolver. Then, before I knew what he was about, the fellow fired two shots at me, killed the horse, and left me lying on the road. He didn't stay to rob me—those fellows are bound to be cowards; and I suppose the lady's galloping up at the sound of the shot frightened him away. What he is doing here is more than I can tell. I call on you to arrest that man."

I a ruffianly-looking fellow—I speaking vile patois—I murdering a traveller and running away from a woman, though that woman was La Santissima! Had I also a scarlet scar? Did I also ride a brown horse with a white fetlock? Or was I in a dream?

The sindaco rubbed his eyes twice, and his spectacles three times.

"If what you say is true, signor—"

"It is true, every word."

"Pardon me," said the sindaco, with dignity. "One is entitled to assume anything—in law. If what you say is true, then the procès verbal must be untrue."

"Quite so," said Whitehoof.

"And, in that case, we must commence proceedings de novo."

"Good Heaven! When the man is Piedebianco himself!" said I.

"Piedebianco! When you shot him," asked the sindaco calmly, "with your own hand? If what you say is true, signor, then once more the procès verbal must be untrue. And, in that case, we must commence proceedings de novo once more; indeed, de novissimo."

"Signor Sindaco," said Whitehoof,

with impatient submission, "I am a gentleman I hope and believe, and it is clear enough this fellow is none. But I know it is the custom in some places to take the word of a native against that of a stranger as a matter of course, whatever the circumstances may be. But I know of no place on earth, none, where magistrates, who, like you, Signor Sindaco, are gentlemen, take the word of any man before that of a lady. If you will kindly let me bring the signorina, who was with me, she will say whether this is the man or no. She saw him when he turned in his saddle and fired as well as I."

La Santissima!

"Signor Sindaco," said I, in my turn, "that I fired at this gentleman, I own, because I fired at Piedebianco. I have not the least objection to being identified by La Santis—by the signorina. But I must ask you to send a gendarme for her."

"I can recall no precedent," said the sindaco. "But," he said, at last, as if struck by a happy thought, "I will make one. Let the signorina be summoned."

But it was some time before a gendarme could be summoned to summon La Santissima; and meanwhile the three of us remained in the courtyard. As for the Southern Cross, she had sailed. There was nothing to gain by thinking of her any more.

At last, however, the gendarme appeared, disappeared, and returned again. I was beginning to take no further interest in Whitehoof, except to see how far impudence would carry a man. That I could be seriously detained on the charge of trying to murder a fellow-traveller, never entered my brain, so long as there was a British minister at Rome. No doubt the authorities were bent on smothering the affair, and, after all, I had saved my life and my purse, though I had not shot Piedebianco. So I hardly looked at the gendarme when he returned with La Santissima.

La Santissima? Heart of hearts! This was no virago from the Basilicata, this fair girl with those eyes—with Lucy Nugent's eyes, with Lucy's lips, and hair, and smile! If she herself were not at Madrapore—

"What is it all about, Dick?" she said to Whitehoof in English, and with the sweetest voice in the world.

"Look at that fellow," said Whitehoof, in his Italian. "Did you ever see him before?"

La Santissima looked at me a moment—strangely, almost wildly.

"Yes!" she whispered, so that I could hardly hear. "Four years ago—at Greenham! Oh Dick, what does it mean?"

"What the devil do you mean?"

But by that time Lucy Nugent's hand was in mine.

And there it has been ever since; and there it is now.

But it was not all at once that Dick Nugent and I could convince one another that we were we. For example, there was that terrible *procès verbal*.

"Harsh featured, with an expression half fierce, half sullen," read Dick Nugent from the document, for a copy of which he had paid. We were drinking *Lacrima Cristi*—not so good as at The Golden Bracelet, but fair. "Eyes deep set, dull, of doubtful colour, and stupid-looking. Complexion, brown and tanned. Nose, long. Moustache, short and bristly. Hair, cropped short. Jaws and chin covered with a thick, coarse, brown beard. Voice, harsh; manner, rude and abrupt; speaks very bad Italian, or rather, some sort of patois." So, George, that is what I am like, according to you? I'll forgive your trying to murder me—but—*et tu, Brute!*"

"And you forget the scar," said Lucy.

"Never mind the scar. Do you know, George—?"

"But I will mind the scar," said Lucy. "I'm prouder of that scar than of anything—most things—in the world. George, that was given him by a sepoy; and some day I'll tell you how."

Dick coloured as scarlet as his scar. Madrapore might have tanned his skin and roughened his manners, but, somehow, in spite of his ugliness, I could see in his eyes that he was Lucy's own brother, after all.

"And I am 'an ugly-looking fellow, and no gentleman!' But, oh Dick, I could forgive you that if you had not accused me of speaking vile patois." Not a word was said of the shot, just then, that might have made me the murderer of Lucy's brother, and of as good and gallant a gentleman as I had ever known. Not even Lucy knew as yet how nearly we

had skirted the edge of tragedy. But we knew; and we had shaken hands without a word. And when Lucy had gone to bed, and before I had had time to realise that we had met thus only to part to-morrow, or to think over all that this would mean to me—

"Old fellow," said Dick, "I don't see why you should go out to shear sheep in Australia. It's not your line. You'd be mistaking your own shepherd for a bush-ranger, some moonlight night; and next time you might miss the horse and hit the man. Go to India, and practise there—before me, I hope, before very long. We shall be out again, I and Lucy, in six months' time."

"But—"

"Of course I know what that sheep-farming notion means. But if our great-uncle, Lucy's and mine, hadn't left us—never mind how much—we shouldn't have been riding homeward, *viâ Brindisi*: and if you hadn't taken that pot-shot at me, I shouldn't be able to lend you a thousand pounds, and give you a start. No nonsense, old fellow; you'd do the same by me. Only on one condition—that you'll never betray my personal appearance to a soul."

"But—" and I held out my hand. I could not, if I would, say more.

"There's no need for that 'but,' any way. Lucy's no more engaged than you are. I was going to say than I am, but that wouldn't be true. Holloa!"

There was a noise in the street—a noise, even in Melfi.

"Piedebianco! The Bersaglieri have taken La Santissima and Piedebianco!" everybody in the inn was saying, as Melfi turned itself out at doors and windows to see. Out we went, and looked too.

There, in the middle of a company of Bersaglieri with loaded rifles, dragged a cart; and in the cart was an iron cage; and in the cage stood, bolt upright, and with the pride of fifty murders in their flashing eyes, Tessa, and the landlord of The Bracelet of Gold.

Alas! I was no longer a hero, not even in Melfi.

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